



Wits School of Arts
Master of Arts by Coursework and Research Report

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RESEARCH TOPIC:

Uhambo Lwabo: A Narrative Study of Black Dramatherapists' Perspectives on the South African Drama
Therapy Field

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Ethics Protocol Number: WSOA20211005

Research report submitted to University of the Witwatersrand in partial fulfilment of
requirements of Master of Arts in the field of Drama Therapy.

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

School of Arts

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Translations

Abantu- people

Abelungu- white people

Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu- a person is a person through a people

Ukuzuzazi ukuthi ungubani- self-knowledge/pride/

Imbungulu- tick

Ubuthakhati- witchcraft

Ubuntu- principles of co-existing between abantu

INKONZO YOKUBONGA ABAKAPHI BOHAMBO LWAMI

I would like to express my gratitude for all the people who have played a role in the culmination of this masters' thesis. Firstly, all glory and honour belong to God. Secondly, I would like to express my profound gratitude to the living dead: my first home, my mother Innocentia "Phumzile" Mthembu, for bringing me into this world, for loving me and for being the best teacher that I knew. My father Benjamin Vusi Shabangu, for teaching me to have *isbindi* to dream big by instilling in me a confidence that even I, at times, am afraid of, and who imbued in me discipline and self-leadership. My grandmothers, abagogo, *uManzima* Juliet Nomusa Mthembu and Judith Pinky Shabangu; so much of my strength and resilience comes from you. Bo gogo you imbued me with skill of observation that is to be used for critical thought and life application. You were my first progressive thought teachers, you loved me as I am, instilled in me the value of education and cultivated the researcher that I am today. *Ngiyabonga! Thokozani!*

I would like to extend my humblest respect and admiration to my supervisor Dr. Sinethemba Makanya and Dr. Danai Mupotsa who contributed largely to shaping this thesis. My deepest gratitude to the dramatherapists who came forward, availed themselves for the research and shared so generously about their training experiences.

I would like to thank the Drama for Life department (lecturers and staff) for their continual support over the duration of my studies.

My love goes out to my friends who were gentle, understanding, and offered some much-needed academic support as well as the occasional "distress sessions" during this research process.

Lastly, with great humbleness, I want to express that I am eternally grateful to my funders who made this journey possible: the Wits Postgraduate Merit Award (PMA), the Equality in Development and Transformation (EDIT) Scholarship, the National Arts Council (NAC) and National Institute for the Humanities Social Sciences (NIHSS). I would also like to thank myself for holding on.

FOR SAHUDA:

The financial assistance of the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, in collaboration with the South African Humanities Deans Association towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NIHSS and SAHUDA.

What cannot be said
will be wept.
— Sappho, fragments

ISQEPHU SENDABA

The question of visibility as a representation gap in Drama Therapy underpins this research. Official department records show that approximately 80 percent of the total student cohort between 2014 to 2021 were women and of that percentage less than a third comprised of Black female students. According to Jones (2013), the “drama” part involves theatre, embodiment, impersonation, personification and shamanistic qualities of performance, dance, ritual, witnessing, audience, symbol, and metaphor form part of the therapy process. As such, metaphor becomes a language for the exploration and expression of traumas, furthermore its power lies in interpretation for the means of psychoanalysis through psychodrama. Additionally, the practice is informed by classical psychology: the empirical scientific study of human cognition and behaviour. Linking back to metaphor, the research argues that despite the foundational underpinnings of the field, Drama Therapy relies on notions of the person that are still conditional to a universalising and standardized notion of the Human that make the practice of the field alienating. Similarly, Tamale (2020) articulates the practice of invisibilising as a by-product of colonialism, an exploitative force present in universities founded on coloniality. Therefore, the research examines how dramatherapy is affected through invisibilisation and as such interrogates its complicity. Consequently, the research takes on an Afro-feminist onto-epistemological response and a grounded theory approach. Five semi-structured interviews were conducted with Black women dramatherapists. Chapter 1 outlines the background of research as an outsider to the dramatherapy field and learning of the discipline from dialogues outside of the institution thus forming my rationale. Chapter 2 is the literature review which reveals the trend of invisibilising of Black students within psychology, dramatherapy foundations and the post-colonial conditions of becoming a dramatherapist. Chapter 3 summarises the methodology of narrative, the analysis method, and the role of being an insider-researcher and reflexivity. Chapter 4 presents the narratives and themes that signal to invisibilisation. Chapter 5 provides Black women dramatherapists perspectives in response and resistance to being invisibilised. Chapter 6 is the conclusion which surmises the composite implications of this research. The research demonstrated an enduring practice of invisibilising Black dramatherapy students through the low annual student intake. Secondly, that invisibilising takes place within the master’s year through teaching material and the role of clinical supervision. Lastly, the invisibilisation of Black dramatherapists extends into the profession within professional representative bodies as well as through department cultures.

ISAHLUKO 1: EKUQALENI KWENDABA

In this chapter I introduce the background of the research starting off with the baseline research that statistically corroborates the observations and suspicions that I had made in the lack of visible Black drama therapists. Secondly, I relate my own story of arriving to the discipline from an autoethnographic storytelling mode that informed my creative research process which ultimately motivated the narrative enquiry for this research. Thirdly I relate my own training experiences during my master's year coursework through the voices of friends and former students and lastly, I proffer the rationale and appeal for the matter to be investigated further as it relates to decolonising the university as well as upholding the tenets of The Constitution (1996) of human rights and transformation in all spheres of life in South Africa.

Statistical annual data received from Drama for Life revealed that over seven years between 2014 to 2021 the department had in total registered 94 Drama Therapy students, 18 of whom were males and only two were white males. The inverse trend is found for the female cohort with Black females being in the minority with 28 of 76 were female students attributed to the Black female student population. Between the years 2014 to 2021 the total number of Black female drama therapy students enrolled annually at Drama for Life was far smaller when compared to the white drama therapy students and never went above the number of 6 with the lowest number being 3 Black female drama therapy students enrolled in 2021. The year 2020 which was the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and also collided with Drama for Life's department's HOD change saw only four students registered for drama therapy and all four were Black females. To contrast, in the year 2014, four out of the ten female drama therapy students were Black whilst in 2015 only one Black female was registered for the course out of a total of seven students, whereas in 2016, seven out of the 14 students were white females compared to the four students that were Black females, one coloured female and the rest of the two comprised of two Black male students. The trend of the number of Black female students being in the minority when compared to white females is found to be typical even when enrolment numbers hit the highest total of 20 registered students in 2018 and 18 students in 2019. Therefore, while 81 percent of the total drama therapists between 2014 to 2021 were female, Black females make up only 30 percent and white male students make up 19 percent. The prevailing low number for Black female students is evident for the years 2017, 2018, 2019,

2020 and 2021 which were 2, 6, 4, 4, 3 respectively. It is also imperative to note that particularly for the years 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 discrepancy is applied when analysing the statistics because of the number of re-registrations that was found only in non-white populations for both Black males and females, therefore both the total number of students and Black female students for each year are actually inflated. *Figure 1* provides a graphical display of the stagnation in the enrolment of Black female drama therapists over the seven-year period which has maintained an average that is below five Black female drama therapy students every year.

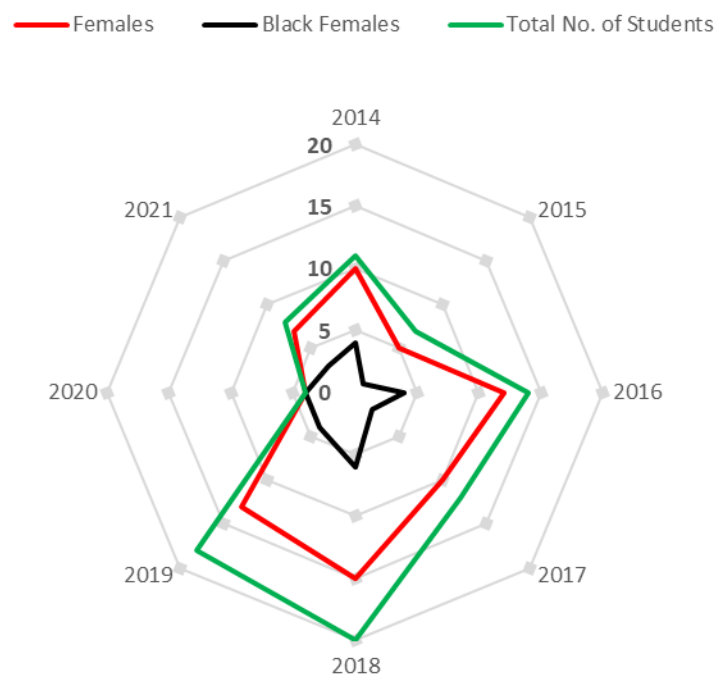


Figure 1: A comparison of Black female masters dramatherapy students between 2014-2021

This research aims to investigate the correlation between Black drama therapy students’ training experiences and visibility in the professional field. The objectives that frame the method were to compile the narratives of Black South African drama therapists’ training experiences from a first-person perspective, to describe the factors that Black South African drama therapists take into account during their master’s year that inform the decision of going into a formal practice, to define obstacles that are present during training particularly for Black South African drama therapists and to offer recommendations to enhance the training experiences of Black drama therapists.

1.1 Imvelaphi yendaba yami

This section is largely informed by embodied learning and the analysis of the transmission of intergenerational trauma, the process of grief and the process of grievance in search of justice as it relates to the Apartheid legacy. The concepts of embodied learning and knowledge, grief and the grievance process are articulated through tacit knowledge imbued to me through my Zulu culture, specific to the way I was raised by my grandmother and mother. I then transpose these learnings to frame meaning-making through a creative process that reflects my embodied knowledge:

“Meanings are the cognitive categories that make up one’s view of reality and with which actions are defined. Life experience generates and enriches meanings, while meanings provide explanation and guidance for the experience” (Krauss, 2005).

As such, the training that goes into becoming a drama therapist entails a significant amount of reflection as it informs an ethical practice as a therapist when handling the clients’ stories. Critically reflecting on my own journey of becoming a drama therapist was therefore essential for me to do through my creative research as I knew that for my thesis I would be asking this of my research participants (Cunliffe, 2016). I had to investigate my own timelines and experiences that preceded my dramatherapy journey.

Part of my drama therapy training included an intensive component whereby we are required to reflect creatively on the moments that led to and during our training to ensure that we are ready to practice and to ensure that in the therapy space, we are able to differentiate our own journey from our clients therefore in order for the reader to understand the root and purpose of this research, it necessitates that I share my own story.

I was experiencing a lot of grief when I entered the masters’ drama therapy course. I grieved the short life of my mother who passed away in my early teenage years and the long painful life of my grandmother who died at the beginning of 2021. Both had been adversely affected by the Apartheid system not only in limiting their financial and material progression, but it also negatively affected their mental states, that is how they self-identified and interacted with others. This awareness made me realise how much I had indirectly lost because of my Blackness and made me question wholeness especially regarding that I was going through the

Drama Therapy training course where my purpose amongst many others, would be to help clients find their own wholeness.

Tracing my arrival to the drama therapy course was therefore paramount especially when reflecting on how the women that propelled me forward were limited in the education that they received. Frankish (2009) frames trauma as having a socio-political frame and that transmission of intergenerational trauma, such as Apartheid, leads to the contagion of the trauma. According to Knight (2019), efforts to counter intergenerational trauma and inheriting broken or ill-fated narratives results in overachieving especially academically to counter the shame of the former generation. Meaning-making that shifts from shame to pride therefore come out of restructuring stories about oneself (Frankish, 2009).

Consequently, I experienced both an overwhelming yearning to prove myself through the university but also experienced tinges of resistance against going into the academic path along my journey because not proving myself would mean achieving the utmost freedom (Knight, 2019). Kubler-Ross and Kessler (2014) who formulated the five stages of grief explain that these stages are not only for those who are bereaved but for any major unforeseen significant losses and life transitions. I was and still am transitioning into the identity of being a drama therapist, however, I was also stuck in the problem-saturated story of my life.

My creative research is the stem of this research as it implored me to investigate my identity through the hoarding of the psychological junk that I kept, consciously and unconsciously. I now realise that this hoarding was a practice/coping mechanism that I inherited from my grandmother for fear of sudden losses due to her adverse experiences during apartheid which were firstly, displacement from her homeland in KwaZulu-Natal, to the loss of her language, husbands dying, almost losing her son in exile in Swaziland and working piece jobs as a domestic worker for families and private companies all her life. As such my creative research process led me to interrogate the negative and positive voices and labels that I had inherited from my maternal line. I chose to focus on the numerous used plastic bottles that I collected as these items were the most prized items for my grandmother; when she was alive there would be boxes of plastic bottles under her bed and the garage was filled with plastic bottles which she hoped she would one day exchange for money and build a better life for herself and her grandchildren.

In the process of my creative process, I imagined that each bottle had a story to tell, I read the labels on each bottle carefully even when they were from the same brand to the point where I automatically knew the ingredients of the substance that were once contained. I played with my bottles for approximately three months, switched the caps and tried to fit them on bigger or smaller bottles which was sometimes successful and other times not so successful. I relabelled the plastic bottles by ripping them off from other bottles and sticking them on another bottle and then in the end I completely removed the label leaving the bottle bare and ready for a totally new label of my own creation which I added using a permanent marker. After completing this creative research process, I realised that the narrative about myself and my Blackness could positively be changed by myself. I was the bricoleur of my own identity. Moreover, in reflection I realised that both my mother and grandmother were my first psychologists and teachers of critical thinking because of their animated nature of interacting with objects, for my grandmother everything was alive, she spoke to her plants and the various objects in the house and encouraged me to do the same and as a result my imagination, like a slow-burning fire, was stoked. Most importantly I garnered the ability to empathise with people, animals and even objects through the act of projection which is what she was essentially teaching me to do as a child. Near the completion of my psychology studies I realised, that according to the DSM-V under psychiatric review, my grandmother's behaviour could have been read as manifestations of either Cluster A personality disorders or schizophrenia spectrum disorders which have positive and negative symptomology (Barlow et al., 2017). However, this reflection is not about whether this diagnosis would be fitting for my grandmother but rather how her magical thinking in that the material state between what is seen and unseen, what is real and unreal, what is said and unsaid are transformed through projective play which is central to dramatherapy techniques. Contrarily my mother was the opposite of my grandmother as she espoused concrete thinking which she did by engaging me in strategic board such as chess, checkers and card games. My mother only entertained magical thinking when narrating traditional Zulu folktales. As such this reflection is not meant to pathologize my maternal ancestry but rather to acknowledge the gifts imbued upon me that led to the development of my intellectual and emotional capacity.

The creative research culminated in a performance whereby I played with my plastic bottles, taking all the collected bottle caps, shaking them in my hand throwing them on the ground and then observing the patterns in which they landed on the ground like how sangomas read bones; a practice that I had observed on my maternal side from aunts and cousins that were practicing sangomas. Then I would pick up the bottles, bring them to my ears to their open mouths as if they were vessels with stories to tell, like I did as a child listening to sea shells during the December holidays and afterwards I would draw or write a new label on the bottle like “happiness” and then reorganised the bottles in a standing formation of my own liking in relation to the new labels like an apothecary. In this way the premise of my master’s thesis research was complete, it was also the entry for a healthy shift of becoming a drama therapist and led to the enquiry of what insights Black dramatherapists, particularly Black women dramatherapists had to offer.

This section has outlined the intuitive-led approach to the methodology of this research, furthermore it points to the pervasive racial effects that are at play for therapists i.e., the healers of the modern democratic age because of the weight of intergenerational trauma and a collective grief that cannot be escaped even through economic class mobility. Most importantly, it highlights the value of the Black body as historically solely a tool for work in the Apartheid era to the post-democratic era whereby determining selfhood through a redefinition of self-objects, embodied language and embodied knowledge. Thus, conducting this research as a grievance process to find solutions and reprieve within the training of Black drama therapists.

1.2 Indaba zaba kaphi bemfundo nabangani

This section examines the interrelated nature of racial experiences within the context of Black dramatherapy students over a period of two years. I bring to the fore casual encounters with the former students that pointed to the gravity of the matter of visibility or invisibility in the field. Additionally, I relate experiences of classmates who experienced being treated as invisible bodies in predominantly white spaces or spaces where white authority was dominant. Furthermore, this section highlights that the research has been ongoing before entering my master’s year as I am naturally a collector of stories thus bringing to the fore importance of valuing narrators and their narratives as evidence enough to inform a formal investigation.

Dramatherapy is a psychoanalytical approach and method that branches off from traditional psychology. Jones (1996) states that the therapeutic intention of each session is to enter meaning-making with clients in order to achieve therapeutic change. Dramatherapy sessions are admittedly emotionally as well as cognitively immersive and call on the therapist to create an environment that is conducive to the excavation and expression of deep psychological contents (Yalom, 2002). The nature of dramatherapy positions the therapist as a co-creator along with the client, however, multiple factors affect the ability to enter this space of openness, creativity and the capacity to hold what comes out in the session for the dramatherapist (Corey, 2012). Nebe (2016) cites drama therapy as one route of social transformation regarding the oppressive history of South Africa with Black people being the majority yet the most oppressed and arguably the population that suffered the most loss. Consequently, colonial and Apartheid history has affected the intrapsychic functioning of the Black population with other races and amongst themselves because of the “violence of the colonial encounter” (Hook, 2004).

My focus on Black dramatherapists field experiences is driven by the inherited and personal experience with “violence of the colonial encounter” stemming from my creative research. I mean grief not in the singular sense of bereavement but of loss, loss of a person who is living because of circumstances, loss of traditions, unfulfilled dreams, and injustice etcetera. Through hearing the same stories of the many losses inflicted on grandmother and mother, they sounded more and more like cries for justice much like a formal grievance process. Their voices often vehemently plagued my own mind like a ghost of inferiority. I in turn internalised all the narratives. I hoarded them and formed an unhealthy relationship with my identity:

during the process of development or "ideological becoming" an individual enters dialogue with a number of social and cultural voices or perspectives. These voices, which may be composed of utterances by parents and grandparents, including collective group understandings as reflected in cultural and religious prescriptions, are preserved in the psyche, where they can engage in an inner dialogue with each other (Mkhize, 2003: 4).

In my own life I was the one called to hear their grievances through the retelling of their life experiences as domestic workers and was constantly reminded that I was to alter the entire path

of my family line, such high expectations conflicted with their parroting of negative core beliefs that they held about the possibilities of their achievements for Black women. It is this schizoid ghost of complex inferiority that requires interrogation as it has often entered my therapeutic sessions in placements. As such I am propelled to enquire on how the field is experienced particularly by Black drama therapists

I entered this research as a Masters dramatherapy student who had encountered other drama therapy students during my postgraduate diploma year at Drama for Life and I had not decided on a particular path between applied theatre and drama therapy. I had studied a year of psychology in my undergraduate studies but my main interests at the time were politics and public administration. Suffice it to say with this background my interest in human behaviour, whether psychologically or politically, has always been piqued and it was compounded by the interest in the administration of either discipline.

I consulted with two Black masters dramatherapy students before deciding on enrolling in the course and they told me that it was a difficult course because the qualification required patience, the course content was dense and informed by Western forms of spirituality and included Western articulations of psychology, yet they encouraged me to register because it was possible to attain. Complaints about the course seemed to be especially centred around clinical supervision in the internship year and placements which are form the practical components of the coursework. The two students claimed that the institutions in which they were placed were racially discriminate towards them in the way they were addressed in formal meetings, and this affected their sessions with individual and group sessions. Another example is one that could possibly be read as a misunderstanding between a hospital and its interns whereby in one event, food and snacks were placed in the communal area and the dramatherapy interns ate the food but later were reprimanded for doing so despite initial communication that the food was for all interns in the hospital. They expressed that to their knowledge, these experiences were not shared by their white colleagues.

Furthermore, they relayed to me that the training of becoming a dramatherapist requires the completion of masters' degree and an internship year with a total of 1000 clinal supervision hours. The two masters' students who were also both females agreed that the pressure to fit all

of it in two years was near impossible for them regarding funding and personal commitments as women, artists, and new mothers. With all that said, they implored me to join them in the field. These stories of training experiences were told to me over two years ago.

Conversely my experience with the first semester placements went well for me in that I did not experience any racism or microaggressions due to my race, gender, or sexual identity. However, during supervision class, two Black female classmates shared that they had experienced racially inclined encounters that had affected the relationship with the school where they were placed which consequently affected the rapport building stages with their prospective clients. The two students claimed that they were addressed with a somewhat lack of respect and that the staff spoke ill of the client in the presence of both client and dramatherapy student; this occurred in a school that was headed by a white principal. These encounters doused the confidence of the masters' student and the client's perception of the masters' student's capability. I advised that they confront this behaviour with the principal in their next visit, but the two students said that they would rather focus on their clients and work around the matter without directly confronting the staff or the principal.

These shared experiences which are two years apart demonstrate that the Black dramatherapists' experiences are of particular interest and that the complexity of factors that influence retention of this particular population make for resourceful research that can aid in and deepen the understanding of transformation in the field. The anecdotes from four Black drama therapy students, two currently training and two who had qualified highlight the gap that exists within drama therapy training that could possibly affect the decisions taken by the population to continue the professional trajectory.

1.3 Inhloso yoku hlosisa indaba zabafundi abes'fazane

This section justifies the reason for focusing on Black female dramatherapists and outlines the process of acquiring the participants.

The study of Black women's career trajectory in the therapy and psychology fields is of importance because historically the population has been in the margins of career development studies (Fabiano, 2010). According to Conquergood (2002), knowledge travels not solely in academic texts but from human to human as such professional Black women's experiences of interacting with various institutional bodies (including universities) through a system that was

constructed to leave them out; save only as helpers to clean and make tea despite their historical reproductive and productive capacities in the intellectual arena; offer more value than statistical inferences (Daymond et al., 2003). The purpose of this research study is to investigate Black drama therapists' narratives in order to illustrate the career trajectory of the population as well as to contrast them with the story of democracy as prescribed by the Constitution of South Africa. Democracy herein refers but not limited to the freedom of choice, freedom of expression, freedom of association, and the urgency for redress in all spheres of the South African society including the university and the drama therapy field. Moreover, these stories are saturated with knowledge that aid in understanding the qualities of a drama therapist, the gap in academic texts that are needed to cater to a multicultural society, the power of agency for Black women, the perspectives of regulatory bodies in the mental health services, the role of department culture and the role of supervisor-supervisee relationship in clinical placements. The study was open to all qualified Black dramatherapists, however the need for Black female dramatherapists was emphasised. The call for participants primarily utilised the social media application, WhatsApp and an email list of approximately three dramatherapists that were previously known to the researcher outside of the university institution. This therefore initiated a snowball sampling method because the majority of available emails were limited to student emails addresses of the potential participants who had long graduated, and it was unclear whether those addresses were still being actively used. The research initially aimed to have a single participant from each year of study between 2014 to 2020, however this proved to be difficult as purposive sampling would be required, furthermore, participants were interested yet elusive when it came to being interviewed.

Five Black female dramatherapists availed themselves and four semi-structured interviews were conducted online, and one was conducted in-person due to the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic at the time in 2021. Additionally, the participants were scattered in different geographical locations.

1.3 Iskhalo sendaba

This section aims to proffer the appeal of this research from a democratic premise, centring Black women's voices, decolonising the university, Black consciousness and fulfilling transformation at a university level.

Drama for Life is the only department that offers drama therapy at the University of Witwatersrand. The field of dramatherapy is fairly new; it was formalised in 2003 in the United Kingdom through the Health Professionals Council in 2003 (Langley, 2006). The discipline formally emerged in South Africa several years later in 2014 and is taught side by side with applied drama and theatre; both disciplines have a focus on social transformation and healing (Drama for Life, n.d). Academic research literature on retention rates of dramatherapists let alone Black dramatherapists in South Africa does not exist. The knowledge around this subject can be attained through conducting this research and lays the ground for further research as the discipline grows.

Personal observations in my three years at the Drama for Life show that the racial representation of students across the applied theatre and drama therapy fields vary across the years and particularly in drama therapy Black student numbers decrease when it gets to the master's year. Research by a previous Black dramatherapy student demonstrated that race and gender have an influence on the experience of the field. Qhobela (2016) master's thesis investigates the performance of race in the therapeutic alliance with clients. She extrapolates that the research focused on experiences of Black women gives credence to subjugated knowledge and in support of this statement Qhobela cites Moposhe (2013) work on critical race theory and feminism:

It seeks to give voice to the experience of black women and holds the view that the needs of black women are exceptionally important because of the level of oppression they experience racially and from a gender point of view (Qhobela, 2016:20).

Sheppard (2006) states that race and gender influence the nature of relating with the world and functioning as therapist because of how personal experiences are mirrored by the socio-cultural context. This legacy creates discordance with the national and institutional goals espoused by Drama for Life for social justice and transformation. Therefore, this research aims to add the missing links to understanding the intricacies of transforming the dramatherapeutic field (Makanya, 2014).

This research is led by the ideological concept of Black consciousness which was born out of the struggle for liberation in South Africa, the United States of America and Europe (Snail,

2008). The motivation for this research is in the democratic goal for a decolonial research pursuit for emancipation in all its forms, for space-making and knowledge production from an onto-epistemological perspective (Chilisa, Major and Khudu-Peterson, 2017).

The role of the researcher and the participants is integral in filling the valence of ideological search for uplifting social conditions that counter progressive in that a proactive researcher who invests in the relationship with their participants can provide in-depth findings (Haverkamp and Young, 2007). Of significance are the common values held by the participants and the researcher/practitioner (Haverkamp and Young, 2007); for instance, the common value of uBuntu and non-normative education received from various forms of interactions with maternal elders across South African cultures which makes the case for onto-epistemological knowledge. Furthermore, systems and dominant social structures do not operate in a vacuum and thus interrogating the interacting forces between systems and a person is a prerequisite for redressing institutions that determine visibility and progressiveness. These forces can be examined through an onto-epistemological perspective.

It's critical realist ontology and epistemology hold that a discernible reality exists, but that this reality reflects the oppressive influence of social, political, and historical factors (Haverkamp and Young, 2007:268).

In the background section I traced this out by outlining my personal narrative of how I came to a new understanding of my Blackness and personhood through my creative research and this was contrasted with how Blackness is treated in the training experiences of Black drama therapists.

Another reason for this research is that female drama therapy students have historically outweighed male drama therapists and knowing that Black women are historically vulnerable to socio-economic and political factors, conducting this research with a particular focus on Black drama therapists will give voice to these women who often become casualties during training due to several factors including familial, traditional, societal expectations for example as new mothers in real life, lack of funds, the need for safety and shelter, transport dynamics due to the Apartheid spatial planning that are still in place today, and many other circumstances (Fabiano, 2010).

1.3.1 inguquko

The interest of this research is informed by a desire for a personal, professional, and political shift that aligns with the themes of social justice and transformation in a democratic South Africa as espoused in the Bill of Rights section 29 (2):

Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. To ensure the effective access to, and implementation of, this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including—
single medium institutions, considering—

(a) equity.

(b) practicability; and

(c) the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices.

(The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996:12).

Section 29 (The Constitution, 1996) clearly beholds the values of transformation in how education should be administered as a route for political redress. Being born in 1990 on the cusp of a democratic South Africa have been deeply affected by the democratic dispensation especially regarding my education in contrast to my parents. My grandparent's education was limited and sporadic with my maternal grandmother starting her education at the age of ten, a year before apartheid policy was officially instated. Despite the late start, she was able to catch up to her peers but had to stop at age of 19 as she was proposed for marriage. My parents were taught under Bantu education which meant that they were not afforded the freedom of receiving education in their desired location or the freedom of association with other races professionally on the same level (Gallo, 2020). Bantu education was an education policy created by the Apartheid government to maintain the system of Apartheid not only materially but also psychologically. Gallo (2020) states that the intention was to keep the Black people's aspirations lowly and to indoctrinate inferiority to the white Afrikaner, most importantly it was a control mechanism that ensured the continual exploitation of Black labour for generations. With this generational experience foreshadowing my birth, my parents and grandparents deliberately chose for me institutions of learning that were white and valued Western ideals of

education in order for me to be granted access into the privilege that is inherent for white individuals. Historically institutions of higher learning did not value Black people and their intellect until vigorous policies for transformation were enforced from Black consciousness movements which were active in student bodies to ensure transformation (Snail, 2008).

While this research is informed, in part, by a political responsibility, it is largely driven by the experiential value of being Black and woman across different timelines:

Such an approach allows us to see the shifts between apartheid and post-apartheid realities in terms of rupture- even as we recognise what has changed- but also in terms of association . Put simply we are both free and not entirely free of apartheid. These meanings rub up against each other and inflect our lives in material ways. This new country, post-apartheid South Africa, is a site of affirmation, where speaking begins and silencing ends. It is also marked by contradictions where the textures of this newness remain contested, questioned, and are constantly being refashioned (Gqola, 2012).

Overall, for Black women, there are implications for the professional roles occupied within various systems that influence the functioning of the world (Boswell, 2012). The personal shift began for me in early adulthood when I realised and became aware of what it means to be Black and woman in a relatively new democratic country that aimed to achieve transformation through equitable means. The promise of securing a job because of the need to right past injustices is accompanied by an overwhelming feeling of being at a deficit. For instance, the personal experience of being celebrated for Black excellence or exceptionalism whilst feeling totally inadequate and shameful about my past in white dominated spaces which contrasted with my inclination for natural confidence. Msimanga (2011) writes on the trauma of this awareness from a position of one who was born a few years before South Africa was declared a democracy:

The sense of responsibility is what our situation as Black women born during the state of emergency and living in post-apartheid South Africa has given us in paradox to our freedom. It is a similar feeling to that described by Sartre, although he finds it under different circumstances. The intuition of responsibility is severe, and it is this emotional connection with freedom that causes anguish when one is confronted with one's own

choice. The pain of freedom is in being aware of the multiplicity of choices that face us even in our restrictions as well as the corresponding weight of the responsibility that this autonomy places on us to be true in our selections (Msimanga, 2011:15).

The practicability of drama therapy is interrogated through this research by centring the voices of Black female drama therapists. The ways in which political redress can manifest is in collecting perspectives of training experiences found in the narration of Black dramatherapists training experiences which can offer newfound insights. Additionally, little literature exists on the subject matter as the discipline is still emerging as such the research can offer recommendations that can contribute to transforming the practice.

1.3.2 ucwaningo nefundiso lwabantu okumele upathwa ngendlela yesintu

The implications of Black existence when measured insofar as Black progress politically, socially, economically, and psychologically as compared to other races evidences the influencing factors of colonial systems in the 21st century. Sharpe extends on this thought and states that Black existence: is still imperilled and devalued by a racial calculus and a political arithmetic that were entrenched centuries ago (Sharpe, 2014:60)

Sharpe (2014) further explains that psycho-intellectual struggles are compounded by being Black in that transformation at any level, be it individual, societal, communal, intellectual is adversely influenced by the precariousness of being Black: the ways that we are constituted through and by vulnerability to overwhelming force though not only known to ourselves and to each other by that force (Sharpe, 2014).

South Africa is a multicultural country and as such training drama therapists require support around cultural and racial sensitivity. The knowledge around this subject can be attained through collecting and examining the narratives of Black dramatherapists because while the existing literature on racial minorities' experiences of supervision are telling of a need for clear transformation, they only identify problems of training experiences in psychology from a third perspective.

Nielsen (2011) on the other hand states that research that uses narratives from a first-person perspective is an act of decolonisation:

While recognizing that colonization and the construction of colonized subjectivities are contingent creations and hence malleable, Fanon nonetheless understood that the process of decolonization and re-narrating new, positive identities and conceptions of ‘blackness’ would take time and would proceed in stages” Nielsen (2011:378).

Therefore, decolonial research is an extrapolation of intentional acts whereby decolonising institutional centres of knowledge go beyond achieving the final goal of “enlightenment” for the advancement of white, elite institutions of higher learning, rather, the intentional re-narration of subjects’ experiences is a way to empower one’s identity in the perpetual evolution of becoming in a post-colonial world.

The lived experiences cannot be undervalued because they invariably inform the experience of the course and the approach to the practice once the academic qualification is attained. Fanon’s reflection on encounters that

Reflecting upon his own and others’ negative experiences of embodied difference in a racialized context, Fanon develops his historic-racial schema as a corrective to phenomenology’s failure to acknowledge that a black person has a world quite differently than a white person (Nielsen, 2011:378).

The need to affirm the value of Black dramatherapists’ practices is evidenced in the reflections and observations found in the aforementioned experiences. Additionally, for a discipline that is majorly influenced by Western proponents of the practice, this research presents as a resource for local recommendations to inform and transform the training of all drama therapists in South Africa. Therefore, the training experiences as narrated particularly by Black drama therapists deepen the understanding of how the academic journey reflects systemic racism and other socio-economic issues as well as the underlying effects of microaggressions and gendered expectations within the practice. Lastly, the concept of resilience is drawn through analysing accounts of overcoming adverse training experiences.

Chapter 1 has carefully revealed the layers of the research background from the personal, to the public and the political which are the three different modes that we operate in as humans. The notion of becoming is navigated and negotiated through the three modes through relationships with each other, as such becoming a drama therapist is no different, in fact it calls on one to be extremely invested in the community of drama therapy professionals from the beginning of the master's degree. Race relations consequent to the Apartheid hangover and colonial injury affect how space is negotiated from birth to death for Black bodies, this is further exacerbated in spaces that are haunted by a colonial atmosphere i.e., the university and other major public spaces which were constructed under Apartheid spatial planning. Most importantly are the ways that Black bodies learn to navigate and negotiate space through embodied knowledge and the transmission of trauma, even in the absence of white bodies because space holds memory and ghosts of past injustices. Black consciousness delineates reality into what it means to be visible and what it means to be invisible in a system of interacting forces which are rendered visible and invisible because of the standardized normalcy of the precarity of Black lives. While the location and occurrence of invisibilising Black dramatherapists is clear, insights of resistance and response to these forces require a decolonial turn and feminist ethics and therefore, calls for a historical gleaning of scholarly documented occurrences whereby the invisibilising of Black therapists in the professional field is apparent.

ISAHLUKO 2: UPHENYO LWENDABA NGESO LOCWEPHESHWE

In this literature review I cite literature that speaks to the events that are significant to understanding the kind of experiences that influence the invisibilising of Black drama therapists. This literature charts the entry way into clarifying the assumptions that institutional and systemic factors affect the practice. Firstly, the literature captures the colonial act of invisibilising Black people through racial identifiers such as “non-white” whilst annihilating core cultural identity through the decimation of language, land (displaced from one’s environment) and livelihood. Subsequently in section 2.1, the literature reviews the effects of being racialised as a non-entity i.e., non-white in previously white academic streams, citing specifically psychology and medical disciplines. Additionally, section 2.2 focuses on the supervisee-supervisor relationship in interracial dynamics between white supervisors and non-white students. Bringing it back to dramatherapy, section 2.3 analysis the foundations of dramatherapy in South Africa and section 2.4 excavates the links between drama therapy and the ways of being and relating with others particularly within client relations i.e., *ubuntu nokuba ngumuntu* which white practitioners are alien to. More importantly the discussants in this literature review profile the socio-political effects on the therapeutic space and the therapeutic alliance between clients and therapists.

Lastly, the literature surveys the trends of retention over the past 30 years as well as to formulate a methodology of research that produces preferable insights for understanding the rigours of training to become a psychologist or therapist. Additionally, the literature analyses research articles that explain the racial and cultural issues that arise during supervision.

2.1 Indaba zabafundi bakudala

South Africa’s first Black psychologist, Chabani Manganyi states that the stories of one’s experience in academia serve an intellectual purpose that contributes to the history and formation of the discipline (Manganyi, 2013:278). Writing reflectively in a democratic era, Manganyi’s 2013 paper titled *On becoming a psychologist in apartheid South Africa*, highlights systemic racism as a barrier he had to overcome at all academic points of his life, especially during his master’s research where his clinical findings pointed to racism as a reason for high employee turnover in the population of Black salesmen. Manganyi further explains that the historical structuring of South Africa: administratively, spatially and infrastructure-wise were not built with Black people in mind, in mental health spaces this was evidenced in that the

biggest hospital, Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, which had no supervision or training for Black psychologists:

What I had not taken into full account was the fact that in those days, psychiatric hospitals such as Tara in Johannesburg and Weskoppies in Pretoria, catered for White patients primarily and were, for that reason, largely unavailable for the training of Black professionals. Indeed, judging by the course of events that followed my approach to Professor Hurst, it was as if Africans were not expected to train as clinical psychologists Manganyi (2013:280).

Being the first clinical psychologist, Manganyi took to teaching himself by reading psychiatric books and observing psychiatrists in his ward and by the end, he had trained himself to be proficient in interviewing and taking clinical report writing from patients (Manganyi, 2013). However, due to racism, the skills and knowledge he attained during his internship year sans supervisor and the three years spent at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital were nullified:

Regrettably, the goodwill which prevailed in the neurosurgery department could not be claimed for race and overall social relations in the daily life and administration of Baragwanath Hospital. In that regard, there was a great deal to be unhappy about. All the statutory racist prohibitions and practices of the apartheid era were enforced unreservedly (Manganyi, 2013:281).

The tenets of freedom and affirmation for Manganyi were found in the impromptu discussions held with the Black doctors in Baragwanath. It was then that Manganyi felt safe, seen, and supported on his perspectives on the professional and political topics for Black practitioners, this kinship informed unconstrained conversations freely and affirmed the oppressions within the field thus his experiences were acknowledged (Manganyi, 2013).

Stevens (2016) states that Manganyi's narratives of his training experiences are relevant and an important study with regards to the personal perspectives that run concurrently with the developments of transformation in the South African psychology field. In essence, change does not occur in isolation and is not solely objective. Manganyi additionally reignites the power of story and memory to deepen the understanding of race relations, the construction of the Black selves, and how that affects interactions with others and the institutions in which they operate (Stevens, 2016).

The awakening of the mind and the expansion of its horizons happened during my first stay in America all the same. As an academic and mental health worker, I have always tried to be alert to the circumstances in which I do my professional work. Being alert helped me to identify the challenges as well as the academic and practical skills necessary to meet those challenges (Manganyi, 2013:287).

It is in narrating his training experiences that Manganyi reaches a reflexive disposition that raises his critical awareness in how he overcame certain obstacles by intentionally confronting the bitterness and rage that he had felt from his works being unacknowledged by the South African psychology field at the time.

In a study on career development, Mkhize and Frizelle (2000) focuses on the meaning Black individuals attach to the trajectory of their vocational identity. The study uses a hermeneutical approach to extricate and evaluate narratives. South Africa's Apartheid past is identified as an obstacle in understanding the factors that inform the career development of university students insofar as the research conducted before the 1990s sampled only white individuals (Mkhize and Frizelle, 2000). Subsequently, the achievement of career maturity for Black individuals was grossly negatively affected as seen in the low scores on their tests and this is because they were disadvantaged materially and were provided with inadequate education (Mkhize and Frizelle, 2000).

Personhood and vocational identity intersect for Black individuals who are brought up in collectivist cultures; meaning is derived from who a person is in conjunction to their occupation and position in society (Mkhize and Frizelle, 2000). Therefore, a job title is not just a title for Black individual's vocational identity it is the reflection of their inner motivations, cognitive processes, socio-cultural experiences, and political experiences; this explains the high volume of Black students who want to enter the helper's profession through social sciences as, for Africans, a connection with others is paramount for a wholistic personal identity (Mkhize and Frizelle, 2000). While African cultures are primarily collectivist, this does not mean that individual narratives are homogenous, monolithic, static, or unidirectional.

If we wish to study the process of career development, we need to listen to people's narratives and to interpret them both in terms of what they know and understand of themselves and their

context and what they may not necessarily know but can be brought into play by the researcher (Mkhize and Frizelle, 2000:4).

Leading from the quote, it is clear that the value of narrative inquiry in researching career development is in the fact that it factors in self-understanding and the reality of the student beyond statistics (Mkhize and Frizelle, 2000; Mkhize, 2005). Furthermore, careers are born out of human action and narratives capture that action explicitly from multiple perspectives.

Mkhize and Frizelle (2000) study excavates the divergent views of what it means to be a Black person with upward career mobility; for instance, navigating between individual ideals and collectivist ideals as a Black person. More specific to my research is that it seeks to portray the difficult landscape that Black female students must traverse whilst at university because of institutional demands with its financial implications and familial roles that have particular expectations of gender as part of their personhood (Mkhize and Frizelle, 2000; Fabiano, 2010). Insofar as the gendered aspect of career mobility high performance and display of competence were attributes that were found to be highly valued by Black female students as they are closely scrutinised in their careers because of the historical circumstances informed by the legacy of Apartheid legislation (Mkhize and Frizelle, 2000:6). This finding echoes Qhobela (2016) self-reflexive research in which she reflects on the subconscious performance of race in the drama therapy space.

In a study of medical students, the narratives of Black and White medical students on reported racist cases that occurred during their classes in addition to the self-reported complicity of the white students in the events were collected (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2015). Through the study Gobodo-Madikizela (2015) writes on the value of witnessing and hearing out voices in Black communities especially in the democratic dispensation where past and present injustices are confronted through storytelling. Additionally, Gobodo-Madikizela (2015) signifies the importance of witnessing by all individuals including those who are oblivious to the discrimination, microaggression, prejudice and silencing of the affected parties as the result of

ongoing depravity, humiliation, and degradation, rather than from spectacular and extraordinary violence (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2015). Witnessing is purposeful in mitigating the insidious trauma that is carried by Black bodies.

For example, a central focus of the study is on the reported case of deliberate exclusion of Black students in a class whereby a white cadaver brought out defensiveness from the white students who protested for the protection of the dead white body insofar as only white bodies were the only ones allowed to work on the body (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2012). While Gobodo-Madikizela's research positions itself for social transformation by means of a critical dialogue between those oppressed and those who consciously benefited from the oppression, splitting and denial often presented as barriers when difficult discussions around the complicity of negative racial incidents:

I consider the kind of denial represented in the AA Narrative as a sign of brokenness of the self. To deny the painful reality of another person is to render the person invisible. The tragic part of this is not so much the denial of the Other, but rather the silencing of the protagonist's own conscience, that is to say, the dehumanization of the self. (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2012).

It is because of this that I have chosen to only focus on Black drama therapists so that they can be witnesses to each other's experiences and have the space for free authentic sharing without fear of invalidation from their white counterparts or the self-policing that inherently follows when Black persons are in the midst of white people. Gobodo-Madikizela (2015) expands on the phenomena of self-policing in Black people's construction of their narratives when interviewed about racially oppressive experiences:

Intergenerational mistrust, hatred, and resentment born out of violence—both the physical kind and the kind that results from decades of humiliation, carried across generations—create boundaries between self and others in relationships both in the external world and in the world of internal objects. (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2015:1099).

Therefore, oppression for the Black people has been so normalised that it was internalised thus influencing self-trust insofar as their judgements of interactions between Black and Black and

Black and White or even Black and Indian or Coloured. Consequently, a space for the Black practitioner participants to reflect unencumbered is needed for this research.

Seedat, Mackenzie and Stevens (2004) conducted a content analysis study of community psychology journals published a decade after the first democratic elections. The findings revealed that the subject of race and gender as transformation factors for knowledge production and dissemination of clinical services were the least written about:

The relatively low representation of gender- and 'race'-specific issues in the corpus of texts analysed suggests that there may still be silences with respect to 'racialised' and sexist forms of domination (Seedat, Mackenzie and Stevens, 2004:607).

The findings remain pertinent almost a decade later. The call for a critical voice in psychology which confronts South Africa's Apartheid past requires that psychologists review their roles and political neutrality in order for the practice to act as a liberatory route inasmuch that the formerly oppressed are now the recipients of mental health services that were originally designed to control and dehumanise them (Seedat, Mackenzie and Stevens 2004:598-599; Ahmed and Pillay 2004:631). Making this radical shift, according to Seedat, Mackenzie and Stevens (2004), carries with it the work of critical reflection on one's positionality:

Similarly, psychologists who advocated social action and defined themselves as empowering agents, whose function was to mobilise and conscientise oppressed communities for collective socio-political struggle, were challenged to consider the fact that the differences in skill between themselves and participant communities cannot simply be resolved by professionals declaring themselves as 'part of the people' (Seedat, Mackenzie and Stevens, 2004:598).

Ahmed and Pillay (2004) study on the training of psychologists' state that psychologists' training should not solely be evaluated by the ability of psychologists reaching professional competence through scholarly work, rather the efficacy of higher training institutions should be evaluated by the ability to mitigate issues of social justice and social transformation in the South African context (Ahmed and Pillay, 2004). Moreover, the need to retain Black psychologists is evident as the study found that approximately 75% of qualified clinical psychologists were white and English speaking which contrasts with the majority of the South

African population being 90% Black wherein English is the second or third language (Ahmed and Pillay, 2004). Furthermore, access to psychologists is limited due to socio-economic issues that are a consequence of Apartheid legacy and Apartheid spatial planning (Ahmed and Pillay, 2004). The disproportionate number of practicing white psychologists, according to Ahmed and Pillay (2004) makes no sense because first-language African language speakers are the target population to deliver psychological service as a majority African population.

The lack of incentives, poor entry level salaries and finding more attractive posts in a totally different field were also cited as possible reasons for the low retention of Black psychologists. However, the training which is framed by the regulatory body the Health Professional Council of South Africa (HPCSA), is in itself problematic as stated by Ahmed and Pillay (2004). In addition, the study found that recently qualified psychology graduates found it difficult to set up their services, market themselves to other industries and educate referral agents about appropriate referral process (Ahmed and Pillay).

Training still appears to be largely framed within the stated (HPCSA, Form 104, not dated) core competencies. While course titles and the number of hours devoted to them cannot capture the richness of trainer-student interaction, nor the extent to which trainers infuse context with other approaches and adapt competencies, the failure to make major structural adjustments to training programmes severely constrains the development of a more contextual training. Furthermore, this infusion is dependent on the trainer's life experience, worldview, and willingness to engage with context. Our observation is that unless structural changes create space for context and other competencies, they will always be part of a marginal, rather than a dominant discourse (Ahmed and Pillay, 2004:642).

Kagee (2014) provides an overview of the psychological field's developments over 20 years since the first democratic elections finds that criticality is still missing in the field and that the psychological practice is far from reaching the goals espoused in South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP). The identification of the problem between training and retaining of Black South African psychologists is echoed in the study in the following quote:

There exists a risk of squandering valuable resources if proper attention is not paid to the effectiveness of psychological and social services and if appropriate methods are not applied to carefully evaluate and refine interventions (Kagee, 2014:353).

The gap between training and retention for the population of Black South African therapists is perhaps found in the capitalisation of mental health services. Inasmuch as the lack of long-term therapeutic services for economically disadvantaged communities were reasons cited in the study for the slow or rather lack of development of a critical psychology that demarcates itself from the conservative empirical roots of psychology and sets itself to interrogate the normalised yet questionable methods of dispensing mental health care to marginalised communities (Kagee, 2014). Most relevant to this research is the under-representation of therapeutic models that employ a non-Western paradigm and enjoy the National Health Insurance coverage (Kagee, 2014). Therefore, mental health transformation cannot occur within a vacuum; economic emancipation invariably goes hand in hand with equitable and adequate mental health services and that lead to a wholistic social transformation:

There is some evidence to indicate, for example, that interventions aimed at treating mental disorders may improve the economic status of households and conversely that financial upliftment may ameliorate high rates of mental illness among poor communities (Kagee, 2014).

Kagee (2014) study illustrates the impact familial intergenerational dysfunction has on self-performance therefore the enduring mental health problems in South Africa which remain untreated should be incumbent in the foregrounding the type of mental health services and the dispensation thereof by mental health practitioners. Consequently, it is the integral role of Black psychologists and therapists alike to indigenise and decolonise the mental health services that are targeted at Black communities for the creation of a transformed and effective psychological field.

2.2 Isiko lokfundisa elibolile

Ecklund, Aros-O'Malley and Murrieta (2014) study on multicultural supervision in the United States of America identify supervision and the internship phase as the capstone experience of training to be a psychologist. Additionally, the authors state that academic literature on the subject, particularly with a focus on cross-racial supervision, is limited and that non-white students who at the time of the study made up a third of the psychology students described experiences with white supervisors as less empathetic, disrespectful and culturally insensitive (Ecklund, Aros-O'Malley and Murrieta, 2014). Furthermore, students who belonged to the

racial minority reported feeling vulnerable and this affected the subsequent client-therapist relationship:

A client can be negatively affected when racial and cultural issues are ignored within the context of supervision. Supervisees who are not provided training or opportunities to develop multicultural competencies may feel that they are unable to successfully address client concerns regarding racial identity; they may also be unaware of how their own cultural background and biases will influence their reactions to culturally diverse clients (Ecklund, Aros-O'Malley and Murrieta, 2014).

These findings reflect the stories that were revealed through secondary experiences of the dramatherapy course and motivate for a research focus on the supervision and the internship phase of the training.

More concerning was that white privilege, as experienced by white students, was found to be contributing to negative supervisory experiences. White privilege in the study is described as racially inherited power and influence emanating from a colonial history that is active in systems which uphold and maintain colonial values (Ecklund, Aros-O'Malley and Murrieta, 2014). This privilege extends to the university system which imbues white individuals with overt and covert advantages which are not afforded to racial minorities. Furthermore, university systems centralise western knowledge and suppose that white experiences are absolute, accurate and universal and in so doing have a totalising effect on the education received (Ecklund, Aros-O'Malley and Murrieta, 2014). In the context of supervisor and supervisee relationship, where the supervisor is white within a historically white university, the dynamic plays out in a subconscious or conscious power play that is further exacerbated with trust issues between supervisors and students which then ultimately culminates in a system that impedes progressive cultural and knowledge shifts in psychology.

A lack of trust within the supervisory relationship may also cause supervisees to reluctantly implement the supervisor's recommendations or withhold their work by only submitting high-quality work samples for evaluative and corrective feedback that might not be as useful in assisting the supervisee to develop necessary professional skills (Ecklund, Aros-O'Malley and Murrieta, 2014:197).

Therefore, power at an academic level has different facets, however, the authors explicate the covert nature of racial power especially at a university level with academic personnel that are far removed from the 21st century and are resistant to not only administrative transformation but relational transformation between the races. Qhobela (2016) expands racial performativity through accounts of first-person experiences of drama therapy supervision. Reflecting on the incident that took place in her class whereby her white classmate received lengthy feedback on their supervision whilst she patiently waited for the lecturer to finish, however, when it was her turn to receive feedback, the lecturer was succinct and curt (Qhobela, 2016). The moment defines the decision that caused her to overcompensate in her interactions with Black clients especially in group settings where she was co-facilitating with her white classmates:

As I left that space, I felt a strange bitterness and sadness choking at my throat. For a second, I developed the desire to be white because being white availed a possibility of receiving an opportunity to express my intelligence just as well and elaborately as my classmate. I took the bitterness and sadness into my clinical placement and instead of practicing a client-centred approach to my practice, I attempted to redeem my ego by playing power games with both my white clinical placement partner and my black client (Qhobela, 2016:41).

This reflection demonstrates that race and gender have an influence on the training experiences and in addition motivates that research focused on experiences of Black women gives credence to their subjugated knowledge as Black dramatherapists:

It seeks to give voice to the experience of black women and holds the view that the needs of black women are exceptionally important because of the level of oppression they experience racially and from a gender point of view (Qhobela, 2015:20).

Afro-feminism proffers a lens with which to clarify these experiences to deduce its effect on the profession. Lastly, Sheppard (2006) expounds on the stance that race and gender do indeed influence the nature of relating with the world and functioning as therapist because of how professional experiences are mirrored by the socio-cultural context.

2.3 Imfundiso elidibana nesiko labantu

Though Black people are not a minority in South Africa, they are a minority in the upper echelons of Drama Therapy. The discipline was formulated by Americans and Europeans including Jones' (1996) nine core processes of dramatherapy which frame the activities of each therapy session; these have since been reduced to seven principles. Another foundational scholar is David Reed Johnson who authored the *Principles and Techniques of Drama Therapy* (Johnson, 1982), as well Robert J Landy who focuses on the taxonomy of roles and introduced the use of role profiles for client assessment in 1997 (Landy, Luck, Conner and McMullian, 2003). A core tenet is psychodrama which was further developed by Joseph Moreno who also developed sociometry and the social atom to evaluate individuals' relationships with themselves, family, friends, society, institutions in order to assess psychological well-being (Dayton, 2005). Sue Jennings, who has an extensive background in anthropology and is considered the godmother of dramatherapy, authored *The Handbook of Dramatherapy* which is the cornerstone of the drama therapy course (Jennings et al, 2005). These theories inform the South African curriculum, however a limited number of culturally specific practices formulated by Black DFL alumni have been included such as intsoni i.e., African storytelling and narration which Busika (2015) used for psycho-education purposes in order to build resiliency in youth. This inclusion sets the premise for a call for more Drama Therapy theory building from Black female drama therapists as currently an overwhelming amount of the course content caters Eurocentric thought.

Drama for Life is the only department in South Africa that offers drama therapy at the University of Witwatersrand. The formalisation of the drama therapy practice is fairly new as it was formalised in 2003 in the United Kingdom through the Health Professionals Council (Langley, 2006). The discipline emerged in South Africa several years later and is taught side by side with applied theatre with a focus on social justice, social transformation, and healing (Drama for Life, n.d). Academic research literature on retention rates of dramatherapists let alone Black dramatherapists in South Africa has not been discovered at the writing of this research and does not seem to exist in its entirety.

The dramatherapy practice invariably, through techniques like psychodrama, offers an avenue for spiritual application in its processes, furthermore individual and group processes inherently

call upon a certain degree of intimacy that is arguably special to the discipline. Traditionally these realms have been demarcated and psychologists and therapists alike are typically advised to starve spirituality in psychotherapeutic processes. However, West (2003) challenges the nature of this tradition by highlighting specific problem areas of power and control where the supervisor has more power and acts to intimidate the supervisee especially on the topic of spirituality whereby supervisor and supervisee may not agree on how to attend to client's spiritual needs. For instance, culturally and ethically touching clients is not allowed in therapy however the grey area comes in when clients initiate touch but like many other micro interactions between client and therapist, it requires a case-by-case analysis with both the client's needs taking precedence.

The three most significant problem areas cited during supervision are transgressions of ethical conduct between supervisor and supervisee through the poaching of supervisee's intellectual material (West, 2003). Secondly the secrecy and lack of openness from supervisors. Thirdly the contentious view that supervision at times veers on policing of both supervisee and their clients (West, 2003). These three problem areas identified by West reverberate the discussions on supervision in the master's drama therapy program as laid out in detail in the secondary experiences of dramatherapy section (*indaba zaba kaphi bemfundo nabangani*). Furthermore, it motivates for a reorientation of the function and role of supervision specifically for South African practitioners considering that the country is a former colony of the United Kingdom where the roots of Drama Therapy are found.

Effective supervision comes from individuals who are well versed in multicultural issues. It is incumbent upon supervising school psychologists to take advantage of opportunities that foster their professional growth and skill development in this area. (Ecklund, Aros-O'Malley and Murrieta, 2014:197).

While cultural deficits can be mitigated through progressive training programs of supervisors, the responsibility was found to unfairly rely on the ethnic students due to the supervisor's cultural insensitivity and unwillingness to learn (Ecklund, Aros-O'Malley and Murrieta, 2014:197). Students then personally, at their own discretion, sought mentoring outside the purview of the institution's prescribed supervisors in order to find supervisors who are culturally cognisant and value students' insights. This proves that diversity training can be

limited in its reach and that Black drama therapists' experiences of the training will be more valuable in understanding the underlying experiential knowledge and attitudes towards supervision that contribute to retention. West implores for further research to be conducted in this area:

I think it would be valuable to carry out further research that explicitly explores supervision from a cultural perspective, for example by describing those supervisory sub-cultures that appear to be constructive and supportive, and those that are destructive and undermining; examining the role of the culture of supervision in relation to the wider professional culture of counselling and psychotherapy as a whole; and tracking the historical development of cultural norms within supervision (West, 2003:126).

2.4 Ulwazi lwabantu, unyembeza nokulaphisa abantu

Using Bowlby's object relations theory, McLeod (2013) posits that a therapeutic alliance is formed through a closed system between client and therapist whereby the client treats the therapist as an internalised object thus projecting attitudes from childhood informed by the interactions with their parents or primary caregivers, they are the primary objects of relating. The therapeutic alliance can then be seen as a microcosm reflecting the ecological system of the individual (Ajjawi, 2017). Consequently, colonial and Apartheid history has affected the intrapsychic functioning of the Black population with other races and amongst themselves because of the "violence of the colonial encounter" (Hook, 2004).

This is further intensified in a therapy context between Black therapist and Black client:

One primary problem is that few whites know much about Afro-American culture, much less about the black psyche. Therefore, white supervisors are not too much help when blacks work with blacks (Calnek, 1975:40).

Admittedly advancements have been made in creating awareness of multicultural aspects that inform the therapeutic alliance since the 70s, however this awareness seems to have a dulling effect presently despite open access to more knowledge. It seems that at some level Black people are caught in a time capsule whilst advancements on a macro level are catalysed which creates and maintains a system of dehumanization and paralysis. Considering this, Nebe (2016) declares drama therapy as a route of achieving social transformation regarding the oppressive history that generations of Black people experienced not only in South Africa but Africa as well.

Adverse historical Black experience affect the process of therapy in that one's identity mirrors the influences that contribute to the formation of self and moreover affect the dynamic between self and other in kinship (Sheppard, 2006). The needs of kinship remain throughout one's life cycle and need to be reinforced by way of a healthy dynamic relationships with others. This is where the dramatherapist plays a vital role through modelling a relationship that gratifies clients' developing self-identity. The therapist and client will invariably create a connection and transference and countertransference will occur (McLeod, 2013). Transference is the phenomena that occurs when a client treats the therapist as an internal object i.e., an internalised representation of a pattern of childhood experience while countertransference according to Freud is the neurotic conflict within the therapist whereby both the therapist and client can be locked in a fantasy or illusion through a subconscious connection (McLeod, 2013). Countertransference can work in either positive or negative ways and depends largely on the therapist's skill and psychological acumen (McLeod, 2013). The position and racial identity of the therapist presents a complicated scenario where gender and culture compound the process of therapy. Eagle and Long (2011) study on bereaved Black women in South Africa demonstrates that the intrapsychic link between client and therapist can be difficult to create when there are differences in racial and cultural backgrounds. The study further points out that the positionality of the therapist can create distance from the client in way that relatability is not possible therefore the countertransference manifests differently as the psychologists and researchers were white (Eagle and Long, 2011). Creating a therapeutic intervention is prescribed by a cultural commonality, furthermore the history of white people intervening, though arguably carried with good intentions, has often resulted in Black people being slighted through receiving help that leans more towards a Western paradigm thus veering more and more away from one's culture. Wa Thiongo (2005) expands on this through the metaphor of a "cultural bomb":

The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. It makes them see their past as one of wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland (wa Thiongo, 2005:3)

Grief often causes people to act out and in the case of Africans, projections of misplaced grief are the reason many clients, especially women come into therapy (Eagle and Long, 2011). Black clients in addition are aware that they are racialised bodies thus creating a “cultural anxiety” or “impasse” for white therapists whereby they are struck by the awareness of their whiteness and are not sure as to how to intervene with Black clients and their cases that are culturally specific. On the other hand, Maynard (1970) argues that the countertransference between Black therapists and Black clients may work in favour of the therapeutic relationship as culturally and racially the experiences are the same, however, he cites psycho-political factors that may hinder this. For example, denial of identification, over identification, the projection of one’s self-image on the client and economic class differences (Maynard, 1970).

The role of supervision is to support and guide psychologists and therapists, however at times the nature of supervision in psychology does not aid the management of countertransference in that white supervisors commonly outnumber Black students, consequently the need to appease to the white gaze; that is to attain acceptance by white standards and build a reputation within academia and the clinical sphere; further complicate the countertransference that occurs between Black therapists and Black clients (Maynard, 1970). As such Black therapists will avoid the question of race supposing that the immediate clinical issue at hand takes precedence over racial politics contrarily this is a way of controlling or mitigating the countertransference and falls into the theme of denial of identification.

The study by Moore et al. (2020) illustrates the undeniable presence and manifestation of countertransference through historical traumas. Historical traumas are defined as: the cumulative emotional and cumulative wounding across generations, including life span, which emanates from group trauma (Moore et al., 2020:2). Black therapists much like white therapists need to be aware of these traumas because of the collective suffering of non-Whites across the world, the burden of Black therapists is therefore duly increased due to the circumstances of living in a racialised post-colonial world where colonial forces are still at work from the macrosystem down to the microsystem (Wa Thiongo, 2005). Reducing the emotional suffering of Black client’s therefore inherently informs the therapeutic goals. However, the process of reducing the emotional suffering can lead to vicarious trauma or being re-traumatised thus creating blockages in both the client and therapist (Berry, 2012). Historical trauma often leads

to historical unresolved grief and the awareness of systematic oppression needs to be brought to the surface as part of the therapeutic work (Moore et al., 2020). This perspective supposes that Black people are consistently in the cycle of unresolved grief especially with the recent Black Lives Matter movement and the unrest in South Africa placed within the COVID-19 pandemic wherein Black pain is consistently treated as inconsequential (Moore et al., 2020).

Butler (2009) posits that there exists an epistemological problem of framing with regards to understanding the lived experiences of Black lives because of the precarious nature of such lives which are inherently formed by historical events that intentionally beset Black lives on the periphery of power systems. Butler (2009) further states that the right to flourish by Black beings requires a “new bodily ontology” that implores the call for rethinking social belonging, injurability and bodily presence.

Drama therapy falls within the helping profession and its central aim is to see clients flourish in every way; however, this flourishing process does not occur in a vacuum. Oddly enough, the right to flourish contestably has yet to be fully attained by Black drama therapists themselves in contrast to other races as they form part of precariousness as defined by Butler (2009). I have gained understanding of what it means to be apprehended as living or rather non-living from the stories of Apartheid which were told in verbosity by grandmother in addition to the controversial silence of these experiences from my mother who was intentional about shielding me from her pain. In light of these two generations’ experiences, every decision made for me by my mother, grandmothers and aunts was so that I could be considered as a person worthy of life and flourishing which is a stance supported by Ratele (2017) who defines the emergence of critical African psychology as an orientation premised on Black individual’s material and political benefits through the cultural structures that they inhabit.

Hauntology according to Hoag (2014) is a reminder that the past and future are always accessible through invocation of the ghost [of injustice] because the reckoning of the past is never complete and securing the future is tentative. Butler (2009) implies that the possibility of a new bodily ontology is achievable, and Hoag (2014) supports this notion by remarking that because of injustice of unacknowledged loss, there exists an incomplete nature of ontology through a complex rhetorical relationship between memory, ghosts and injustice.

Hoag (2014) motivates for remembering the ghosts of the past, unpleasant as they may be, because they can lead one way to justice. He describes how movements for justice are quickly extinguished by authoritative power systems, additionally that the process of mourning whereby lives are lost, is intercepted by these powers and dictated across socio-economic lines. Public mourning for a cause or a person is prohibited because it is a reminder of the injustice that took place and powers responsible for it (Hoag, 2014).

The ushering in of a new democratic South Africa meant that some ghosts were given stage time and others not so much because of the powers that wanted to control the narrative; this collective decision adversely impacted the personal realms of the Black citizenry (Hoag, 2014). Stemming from the concept of hauntology it can be deduced that the social, the political, the personal and spiritual realms invariably intersect and can clash especially in cases wherein Black dramatherapy students are under obligation to undergo deep therapy whilst on the journey to becoming qualified drama therapists. The ghost needs to be attended to and pursued through invocation because one is never done with trauma and mourning (Hoag, 2014). This can manifest in many ways within the dramatherapy field for example complexes may develop, repressed elements of the shadow may come out, triggers can cause psychological shock and cause the dramatherapist to regress regarding their own healing. Qhobela (2016) reveals this through her research by looking at the performance of race and how that plays out with one's shadow. In one reflection she describes how she became super vigilant, over caring or overly heroic and perfectionistic in fears that they might be judged harshly by her peers and the need to compensate on behalf of her Black clients (Qhobela, 2016).

The literature has surveyed the developments of psychology in South Africa from Apartheid to democracy through Manganyi's narratives. The issues found in the psychological practice of supervision across the world were described to be one of systemic racism embedded in higher institutions of learning and the lack of multicultural foundations for the practice of supervision in psychology. The need for research that does not objectify human participants, rather, one that values the insider view is much needed as the literature showed in the study by West. Moreover, statistical data and content analysis methods were heavily relied on in some studies, but Gobodo-Madikizela's study proves that interviews with research participants provide multidimensional data that tells the story behind the statistics. The literature provides a trail

that can lead to understanding the retention of Black drama therapists. With South Africa about to reach 30 years of democracy since the first democratic elections, the mental health services are still in a dire need of Black mental health service providers because of the piecemeal progress in the socio-economic position of Black individuals. Voices on the ground from Black practitioners are underrepresented as such narratives from Black drama therapists about their training experiences are needed to give a full picture of retention. Whilst the tenets of diversity are rigidly enforced through national policies, these need to be furthered into relational transformation along with economic emancipation for Black dramatherapists. Additionally, Black dramatherapists' evidence-based practice accounts need to be accommodated into dramatherapy theory

ISAHLUKO 3: UKULIMA KWENDABA

A flexible yet stringent method that captured both the diversity and specificity of the responses was required for this research therefore a semi-structured interview method was selected. Rather than use a survey with for example a grading scale with questions in different-categories, I decided to use my position as a Black female dramatherapy student. My position worked as an advantage for the research process due to the relational level which made me an insider-researcher (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009; Fook and Gardner, 2007). As such the research process induced responses that went beyond clinical responses to in depth, nuanced dialogues that added criticality to the findings (Clandinin and Caine, 2008; Hickson, 2016). Therefore, this section defines the operation of narrative research, explicates on democratic data collection, how the method draws on emancipatory and transformative research objectives, researcher reflexivity, and the research process of coding the narratives through inductive and deductive means. Interviews were transcribed, and the themes were identified and codified using the Framework method five steps. This method has been used in sociology, research on policy and the health sciences to summarise, organise, categorise, and compare data collected through semi-structured interviews or notes from field observations (Gale et al., 2013).

(1) transcription and familiarisation with the interview

The audio recording is transcribed verbatim i.e., word for word.

This step also entails familiarisation with the interview by re-listening to the interviews, re-reading reflective notes, and the transcription. As well as making additional analytical notes, thoughts, and impressions (Gale et al., 2013:4).

The interviews were conducted using Zoom and Zencast and to transcribe the interviews.

(2) coding and identifying a thematic framework

“The researcher carefully reads the transcript line by line, applying a paraphrase or label (a ‘code’) that describes what they have interpreted in the passage as important” (Gale et al., 2013). This step aims to classify data in order to systematically compare data sets. Gale et al. (2013) further encourages that this step starts with open coding (coding anything that might be relevant from as many different perspectives as possible, gestures, confusion by participants etc) before moving to deductive coding so that important data does not fall in the gaps. Developing a working analytical framework step involves the consolidation of coding under refined categories or themes. (Gale et al., 2013:4).

Once the interviews with all the participants were complete, they were printed out and analysed by hand. I wrote notes on each page and highlighted phrases and sections that are considered would make up the themes. Once I had done this exercise, I did it again except I would compare differences and similarities on certain themes.

(3) indexing and applying the analytical framework

Storing and organising data in the codes to ready it for analysis. (Gale et al., 2013).

I then went on to do step two again but this time on the computer and then extracted the quotes and compiled in a document with each participant having a different document. These extracts were to be used both for the thematic analysis chapter and narrative analysis chapter.

(4) charting data into the framework matrix

“Charting involves summarizing the data by category from each transcript. Good charting requires an ability to strike a balance between reducing the data on the one hand and retaining the original meanings and ‘feel’ of the interviewees’ words on the other.” (Gale et al., 2013:5).

(5) interpreting the data

The characteristics of the data are described, connections are mapped out between themes and relationships between the meeting points are explored (Gale et al., 2013).

I decided to use the graphs to describe the patterns and interpret some of the themes, however the extracts in the narrative analysis in Chapter 4 are essentially presented without the researcher interrupting because the first-perspective narratives substantiate themselves; instead, aspects of the narrative analysis are discussed in more depth in the discussion chapter.

3.1 Uku bika kwendaba

Drama for Life sent through the department’s student enrolment statistics and for the purpose of this study, I aggregated the total number of Black female drama therapy students (excluding coloured, Asian or Indian and white race codes), then aggregated the total number of students and the total number of female drama therapy students for each year starting in 2014 to 2021 and this culminated in the graph in *figure 1*. The aim was not to show a relationship but to demonstrate the dimension and shape of the number of students across the years for comparison. The final figure looks like a spider web of concentric circles with the smallest circle being comprised of Black female drama therapy students. An explicit description of these statistics is found in the first chapter.

According to Lieblich et al. (1998), narrative researchers use various techniques to analyse a narrative account, including using a holistic or categorical approach. The interviews implored the interviewees to extrapolate on the experiences at different phases during their drama therapy training: their master’s year, internship year and the relationship with supervisors. Mouton (2022) states that in research hypothesis are formed from deductions that are made from a premise, as such the focus areas that were deduced from the background in chapter 1 and the literature review in chapter 2 whereby the narrative encounters and literature review corroborated that three focal areas; master’s experience, internship experience and dramatherapy supervisory support; were locations of invisibilising Black drama therapy students in the context of training to become a therapist therefore it can be deduced that positive or negative experience in one of these areas will invariably affect the respondents desire to be visible or invisible in the professional dramatherapy field. The interviewing schedule (appendix 1) was partially informed by Mkhize (2005), and Fabiano (2010) study of the career development of Black female psychologists. The interview concentrated on these three areas and from the responses the theme of whether the interviewees identified as drama therapists and the viability of the drama therapy came out from an inductive analysis process, culminating in *Table 1* and *figure 2*.

	Positive Masters Experience	Positive Internship Experience	Positive Dramatherapy Supervisory support	Identifies as a Dramatherapist	Viability of Dramatherapy Career
Equilibrist	1	1	1	1	1
Writer	0	0	0	0	1
Dancer	1	1	1	1	1
Thespian	1	1	1	1	1
Preceptor	1	0	1	1	1
Total	4	3	4	4	5

Table 1: coding of the training experiences

Multiple truths come out and critical narrativism fills in the gap whereby there are inconsistencies and differentiations that are produced from multiple perspectives and voices (Hickson, 2016). Moreover, Hickson (2016) argues that the narrative enquiry method redefines binary and dichotomous thinking e.g., the us versus them and this can be fitting within this research context. Therefore, in the extraction of data that precipitated from the three focal areas, inductive reasoning (Mouton, 2022) was used to chart the final prevailing themes, prevailing in the sense that they linked with other respondents’ stories in some way. Each theme was

carefully selected through conducting another mini-literature review and the definition behind each theme are described in the box below.

Themes	Definition/Reason behind code
Motherhood	Participants who are/were mothers
Community Between Black Dramatherapists	Participants that conveyed a sense of community amongst Black dramatherapists during school and as professionals
Angry Black Woman	Stereotypes that include the myth of the angry Black woman that characterizes these women as aggressive, ill tempered, illogical, overbearing, hostile, and ignorant without provocation. (Ashley, 2014)
Strong Black Woman	In spite of varying terminologies, the SBW has been consistently described as a "schema" that prescribes an exclusive set of cognitive and behavioral expectations for African American women, notably standing up for oneself, exhibiting selfreliance, and taking care of others (Watson and Hunter 2016)
Department Culture	the expectations concerning office hours, the procedures concerning student grading and plagiarism, and the implicit, yet axiomatic, practices guiding dozens of daily interactions may be quite different, if not alienating. It is important to emphasize that these practices are only seldom codified, they are rarely static (Tierney and Lanford, 2018)
Black Masquerade	assumptions of black women graduate students as affirmative action recipients incapable of graduate level work (Walkington, 2017)
Andizi	Black women in the academy that resist 'transformation' at the university that in-turn invisibilizes their presence and intellectual products, refusing to be constantly labelled in gender and race and overperforming to be considered normal presence in the academy (Ngema et al., 2022)
Academic Assimilation	Understanding the rule or "code of power, failure at academic assimilation is usually seen in the lack of academic preparation, inability to participate in academic discourse, cultural incongruence, isolation within the university, inability to understand cultural tomes of academic speak and feeling of discomfort towards the pressure to act "white" when socializing or within academic circles (White and Ali-Khan, 2013)
Department support	encouragement, support, endorsement of independence and creativity, cognitive development through cultivating critical thinking, encouragement of student contributions (Lessing and Schulze, 2002)
Academic Racial politics	structures and behaviours that are intentional on excluding, invisibilizing, and silencing Black intellectual voices and the mobility of Black progress particularly in the university(Majee and Ress, 2020)
Gatekeeping	the system of maintaining inequality and ensuring dominance through the use of master narratives, discriminatory pedagogical content selection, language, and maintaining relationships that ensure inequality (Swartz, 2009)
Parenting	Refers to the roles of either one or both parents in the participant's life
Class Identity	A tentative measure of financial standing according to occupation and household income, access to resources; middle-class are comprised of high-ranking professionals (Visagie and Poswel, 2013); The label middle class seems also to denote self-sufficiency, responsibility and social mobility (Phadi and Ceruti, 2011)
Resourcefulness	regulation, introjected regulation, and identified regulation and high self-esteem (Peterson, Louw and Dumont, 2009)
Public Systems failure	failure of governance structures to prevent mental, neurological and substance abuse through proper management of state facilities such as public schools, public clinics and hospitals, social department services and the police service, rehab centres (Patel et al., 2016)

Table 2: *themes and definitions*

A spreadsheet was created, and the extracts were scored into themes, once the final themes were consolidated, the extracts were scored with either one or zero. For example, if a respondents' extracts resonated with the theme of *angry Black woman*, then it was scored with the number one and the themes that did not resonate were scored with zero- refer to the *Table 3*. for this. Charting these themes produced a bar graph that exhibits the resonating themes for each respondent and how they compare with each other as seen in *figure 3*. Another graphic to show the overlapping of themes was produced using the aggregated scores from *Table 3*

resulting in the *figure 4*; this figure demonstrates how the themes gravitate into the clusters and this is discussed further in Chapter 4.

	Motherhood	Community Between Black Dramatherapists	Angry Black Woman	Strong Black Woman	Department Culture	Black Masquerade	Andizi	Academic Assimilation	Department support	Academic Racial politics	Gatekeeping	Parenting	Class Identity	Resourcefulness	Public Systems failure
Equilibrist	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Writer	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Dancer	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
Thespian	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
Preceptor	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Total	3	4	2	3	2	3	2	5	4	3	3	5	5	5	2

Table 3: scoring and coding of themes

Finally, the naming of the participants even though they all requested to be anonymous, the terms “respondents”, “participants” and “interviewee” were not fully representative of the personalities that I had interviewed and so I named each interviewee either by how they identified outside of the profession or through reading their stories and listening to the interviews repeatedly thus gauging their personalities. The five interviewees are thus named The Equilibrist, The Writer, The Thespian, The Preceptor and The Dancer. Similarly, the naming of these chapters alludes and point to embodied knowledge that elevates my indigenous language of isiZulu which align with the post-Apartheid effort of developing the intellectualisation of indigenous South African languages by producing research which takes on a decolonial turn by favouring indigenous linguistic proximity and lexical differentiation (Finlayson and Madiba, 2002).

3.2 Ukubona ngeso elinye

This section briefly describes the role of reflexivity in this method, the heading means “to see with another eye” in isiZulu.

Drawing back to remomeory (Rhee, 2020), narrative enquiry is the closest form of method that can capture the emotive nature of re-telling stories with a critical distance (Hickson, 2016).

A Deweyan perspective supports the notion that researcher’s narratives and the research participants’ narratives reflect the same journey within a specific context:

John Dewey's theory of experience is most often cited as the philosophical underpinning of narrative inquiry. Dewey's two criteria of experience, interaction and continuity enacted in situations, provide the grounding for attending to experience through the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space with dimensions of temporality, place, and sociality. Jerome Bruner's

ideas about paradigmatic and narrative knowing in psychology, David Carr's ideas about the narrative structure and coherence of lives in philosophy, Mary Catherine Bateson's ideas about continuity and improvisation as a response to the uncertainties in life contexts in anthropology, and Robert Coles's ideas about narrative in life and teaching practice in medicine also provide a philosophical base for narrative inquiry. As narrative inquirers seek to inquire into experience, they must begin their inquiries with narrative self-studies into their own experiences. Narrative inquiries, thus, have both autobiographical narrative groundings as well as more theoretical groundings. The autobiographical narrative inquiries are the starting points for initially shaping and deepening the research puzzle (Clandinin and Caine, 2008:543)

Additionally, witnesses and narrators in history have predominantly been men in a prevailing attempt to diffuse the credibility of women's stories and as such emergent feminist epistemologies that inform the gap for critical research epistemologies effuses the need to explicitly embrace the ways of knowing through Black women including the spiritual and sacred wisdom passed on intergenerationally (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Thus, this research presents a decolonial scholarship turn in the university in that it counters a white masculinist bias in the conduct of the research (Tamale, 2020).

Moreover, the research moves away from being a "recipe" to fix a social phenomenon rather it serves a responsibility and obligation to the communities that were engaged (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Dramatherapy has mostly women practitioners and white women outnumber Black women (Mayson, 2020) therefore narrative enquiry orientates their experiential knowledge of the field by bringing their voices to the centre: Proximity, not objectivity, becomes an epistemological point of departure and return (Conquergood, 2002:149).

As the researcher I became the listener and reader to the participants who were the tellers of the story. The method albeit a relational one, called on me as the researcher to engage with the participants narratives constantly critically as they informed the reading and interpretation. According to Mkhize and Frizelle (2005) and Dwyer and Buckle (2009) boundaries needed to be drawn when cultural commonalities and membership status are shared in the research process, that is the boundaries in the form of researcher-participant however my interviewees while embracing the formality requested the interviews to be relaxed and not clerical; this is evident in one participant's resistance against using certain technologies and software as well as allowing all the interviewees to probe my story before they answered my interview

questions. I believe this conveys the comfortability that they had with me and the freedom they felt to give authentic responses which speaks to the advantage of the insider-researcher who shares commonalities of race and profession. According to Chilisa (2017) the core of the research process intertwines with relatedness which permeates through all research activities such as talk circles. Talk circles create the ground for a multiplicity of onto-epistemologies that inform knowledge construction, and they serve as a democratic model of gathering data on related experiences (Chilisa, 2017). Moreover, communal expression gives the community strength and affirms the views of the experiences and wisdom attained through sharing and hearing out each other's experiences (Romm, 2015). The issue of belonging, of believing that one's voice is heard, is a tenuous subject matter when conducting research, especially considering that Black voices were marginalised for the longest time (Chilisa, Major and Khudu-Peterson; Tamale:2020), therefore the process of collecting the research data through this method aimed to humanise the interviewees

3.3 Uku phata indaba ngozwelo nenhlonipho

This section describes how I maintained my reflexivity throughout the research process. The subheading means “to handle stories with compassion and respect” in isiZulu.

White (2013) posits that research that is emancipatory and transformational in its nature comes with a political commitment which helps shape and direct all aspects of the research activities in that both theory and practices of research should lead to social justice. However, while political commitments are legitimate, they pose a danger through the commitment to political goals in that the drive to achieve them could override the commitment to ethical knowledge production (White, 2013). The enmeshment of my own historical traumas as outlined in the first chapter influenced the tendency to project my experiences on other Black people let alone drama therapists. I was aware of the political ideals that I hold as a Black cis-gendered female and queer person and that these may not be shared with the research cohort. That said I pre-empted that the participants' narratives may weave together and interrelate to some points because of their individual and collective shared experience as it pertains to studying at the same institution. Therefore, the question of ethics outside of the institutional protocols arose; I need an ethics that demonstrated an ethics of handling intimate nature of invoking stories:

For those of us wanting to learn to engage in narrative inquiry, we need to imagine ethics as being about negotiation, respect, mutuality and openness to multiple voices. We need to learn

how to make these stories of what it means to engage in narrative inquiry dependable and steady. We must do more than fill out required forms for institutional research ethics boards (Clandanin, 2006:52).

I shared multiple nodes of common membership with the research population, however I still negotiated entry ways and as such I complied in the case of dates being changed, a decision of the software used to conduct the interview and negotiating entry into a new story over course of the interview process. The semi-structured interview mode allowed for numerous exits and entries as the interviews retold the stories of their experiences- mine was not to judge but allow the flow and leadership of the storyteller. While the research aims to find commonalities, it is also the divergent responses that shaped the findings and balance in the research (Dwyer and Buckle, 2005).

Popoyenuic (2013) substantiates the practice of reflective journaling during the research process as both the research process and researcher's position are in constant flux of self-critique and self-appraisal. I kept a critical reflection journal throughout the research process to evaluate my own assumptions about knowledge, power, and reflexivity (Hickson, 2016). After each interview I reflected on the technical difficulties, observed resistance to certain questions asked like for instance how the participants articulated "vulnerable communities" and how they articulated their selfhood within the lens of Black womanhood. I wrote down if I felt frustration at this which initially I did because I strongly identify with my race but through going through the interview transcripts and the findings, I realised that the resistance of being identified and codified as such was due to the structural difficulties faced during their years at university and even when respondents did not express difficulty due to their race, the resistance of this identification was due to avoiding historical negative connotations that come with being identified as such. Conversely the class identity which seemed like a non-factor for the interviewees seemed to also contribute to the self-definition of identifying as Black women wherein the identity with being called a woman was not an argued point but being Black was, again this is because of the historical negative connotations with the compound identity that is Black and woman- I discuss this more in the chapter 4 and 5.

Indeed, writing down my reflections after conducting each interview assisted me in reviewing the transcripts with clear conscience and provided objectivity when it came to the process of extracting certain quotes:

As qualitative researchers, we are not separate from the study, with limited contact with our participants. Instead, we are firmly in all aspects of the research process and essential to it. The stories of participants are immediate and real to us; individual voices are not lost in a pool of numbers (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009:61)

The insider-researcher position therefore implored me to be ethically careful by practicing a reflexive approach throughout the research process in order to evaluate the findings with the clarity that is afforded by critical distance. The narrative inquiry offers critical distance and its roots in storytelling wherein the construction of the narrative i.e., how the teller tells their story is a way of making meaning of the narrative and its contents:

Telling stories is an astonishing thing. We are a species whose main purpose is to tell each other about the expected and the surprises that upset the expected, and we do that through the stories we tell (Clandanin, 2006:44-45).

It is the twists and turns of the narrative that offer critical reflection points and space for meaning making. Clandanin (2006) describes the narrative inquiry as both phenomenon and method with intellectual roots stemming from the 20th century and which has demonstrated cross disciplinary effectiveness through its ability to intertwine objective observations with the study of lived experiences. The narratives are not solely for the sake of storytelling or an archival method, but they serve as lesson points that inform transformation for others and the settings of the collected lived experience:

However, regardless of the kinds of field texts, it is important to be attentive to situating field texts within the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space, that is, positioning field texts with attention to the temporal, the personal and social, and place (Clandanin, 2006:48).

Ultimately the credibility and validity of a narrative enquiry is found in the consensus of what is understood as legitimate evidence. Polkinghorne (2007) states that the beliefs and

assumptions of the community of voices, those that are being researched, are the template of judgement for legitimacy:

Thus, there are degrees of validity rather than a claim being determined to be either valid or not valid. A degree of validity or confidence is given to a claim that is proportionate to the strength and power of the argument used by a researcher to solicit readers' commitments to it. Thus, a statement or knowledge claim is not intrinsically valid; rather, its validity is a function of intersubjective judgment (Polkinghorne, 2007:474).

Therefore, the onus is on the researcher to organize the findings and present them as arguments that have enough weight to validate a claim. Additionally, the researcher must exercise the skill of interpretation such that the narratives when assembled present the gradations of a claim:

The report needs to organize and present the evidence and its interpretation to persuade its readers. Thus, the report is not simply a description or recapitulation of the research performance. The general idea of validity allows for gradations in the confidence readers can have on proposed knowledge claims. Validity judgments do not yield simple acceptance or nonacceptance responses. Instead, they are about the likelihood or probability that the claim is so (Polkinghorne, 2007:477).

The research postulates that the number of five research participants which represents the average number of Black female dramatherapy students enrolled annually at Drama for Life, their shared common identity through gender, race and profession adds weight to the claims that were uncovered. The process of a thematic analysis further validates the nuances of the claims and arguments. In conclusion this chapter has carefully outlined the research process, the methodology, reflexivity, and the values underpinning the research process.

ISAHLUKO 4: UBUBANZI ZENXOXO ZABALAPHI

What can we learn from the composite narratives of the participants' training experiences? This section excavates the narrative details that informed the themes of *motherhood, community between black dramatherapists, angry black woman, strong black woman, department culture, black masquerade, andizi, academic assimilation, department support, academic racial politics, gatekeeping, parenting, class identity, resourcefulness and public systems failure*. There were numerous themes that were named as they arose from the transcripts as they were articulated differently by the respondents however the characteristics of the themes identified were similar in some instance thus necessary motifs derived the naming and condensation of the final themes. Moreover, Afro-feminists readings (Gqola,2001; Kiguwa, 2019; Ngema et al., 2022; Motimele, 2019; Tamale, 2020; Tamale and Oloka-Onyango, 1997; Xaba, 2019) assisted in the development and condensation of the final themes of *strong Black woman, angry Black woman, Andizi, Black masquerade, gatekeeping, academic racial politics and community between Black dramatherapists*. As such evidence of these studied phenomena across South African universities, point to the invisibilising of Black drama therapist and in response explains the manner of resistance and resilience towards the invisibilising forces at play by the dramatherapists interviewed.

Firstly, this narrative analysis chapter describes how the themes resonate collectively, how the themes act as forces that shape the experience of drama therapy training for Black female students. The initial focus being the locus of the three different learning areas, master's year, supervisory relationship and the internship. Secondly, the narrative analysis fleshes out the narratives and appropriates the stories in different categories which link back to the major themes that relate to the forces, enforcers and actors of invisibilising Black drama therapists. Thirdly and lastly the narratives proffer perspectives on the future of Drama Therapy and how the therapists decide to articulate their identity with the profession.

4.1 Imbewu eyomxoxo

Three correlates were found to directly influence the dramatherapists in pursuing the dramatherapy career further: a positive masters experience, a positive internship experience and positive dramatherapy supervisory support. Four out of the five participants responded to having a positive masters experience and three reported having a positive internship experience which correlates with the completion time of the qualification because at the time of the

research, four participants had completed the requirements to be registered and practice as dramatherapists. While all participants stated that the career does not for certain offer economic stability it is a viable career. Only one participant stated that they do not identify as a dramatherapist, and this is the same participant who did not report a positive masters experience, neither positive internship experience nor neither positive supervisory support. Additionally, the participant was in the midst of completing their internship hours at the time of research interview. These findings also demonstrate how being registered with the HPSCSA and having a practice number informs the identification with profession despite having the education and experience of being a dramatherapist.

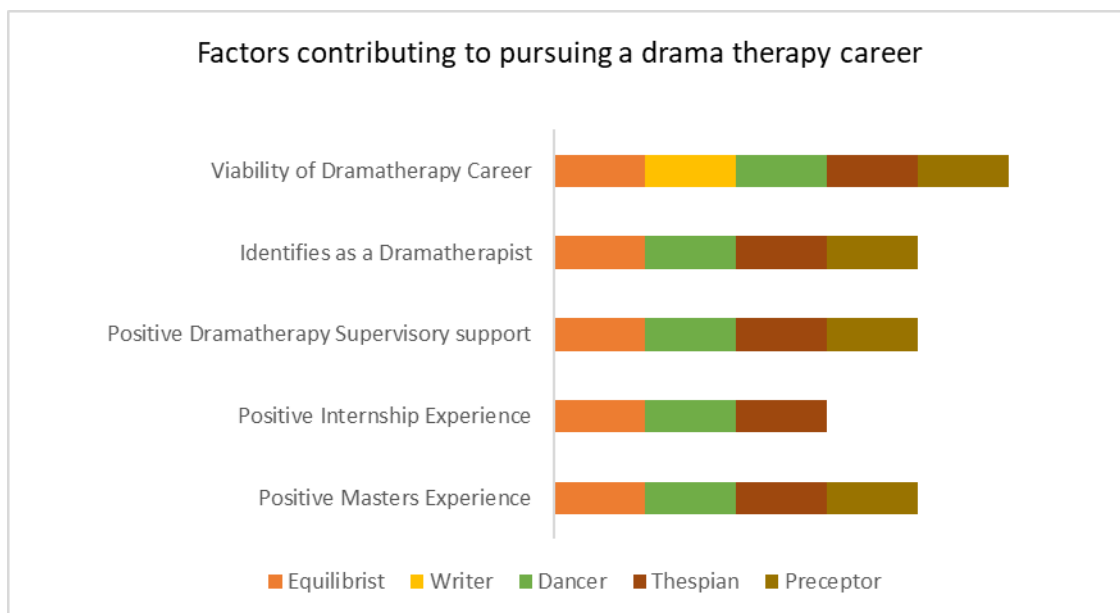


Figure 2: Factors contributing to pursuing a drama therapy career

These factors all have one link: relationship building either laterally with dramatherapy classmates, hierarchically with supervisors and externally with internship sites.

However, with reference to *figure 3*, it is possible to see factors that act as obstacles to building each of the relationships are if the master's experience is reported as negative this directly affects the internship year and consequently deciding to go fully into the career.

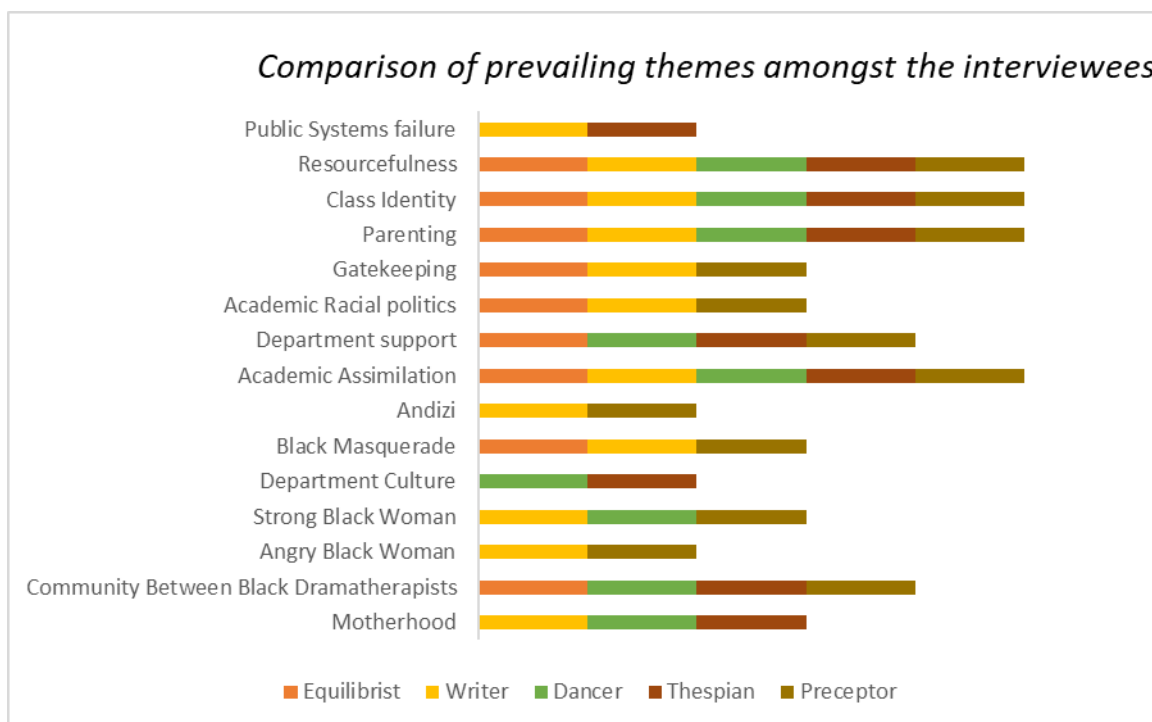


Figure 3: Comparison of prevailing themes amongst the interviewees

academic assimilation.

All the participants described the masters dramatherapy program, which is combination of coursework and research report, as quite overwhelming in that the course content is extensive and the research component stressful therefore whilst fulfilling the academic duties students are also required to attain the skills that will be transposed to the conduct of the practice during site visits. Additionally, students are thrust into assimilating to the unique department culture which requires community participation from all students in the department's project and weekly Townhall meetings. Additionally, the pressure student registration with official regulating bodies such as the Health Professionals Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and the South African National Arts Therapy Association (SANATA) which represents the four modalities: dramatherapy, music therapy, dance movement therapy and art therapy. Academic assimilation is further exacerbated by the consistent need to acquire professional points which are attained through attending HPCSA endorsed seminars or workshops by experts in the health professional field.

public systems failure.

Two participants sited the failure of the South African system as contributing to the sense of overwhelm, particularly in terms of governance in social departments, police departments, education system as well as the management and operation of non-profit agencies.

resourcefulness

Whilst all participants claimed that resources in the form of art materials including but not limited to paints, paint brushes, drums and recommended textbooks which are expensive because they are internationally priced as obstacles, they cited that they used their inner resourcefulness to combat such challenges and tapped into their theatre and drama performance background in sessions during the masters placement site visits as well as in the internship years. Moreover, they learned other techniques from their peers and placement partners. The role of class identity as well as either being parents or being parented were cited as positive influences that determined a better experience from the beginning to the end of master's program.

motherhood

Motherhood was particularly integral for building inner resilience for three of the participants and all participants described positive parenting during their childhoods that built up their inner reserves of resilience. The participants ranged from middle-class to upper middle class and had either one or both parents with higher education which orientated the need for them to persevere academically.

department Support

Four out of the five participants conveyed that the Drama for Life department was supportive during their studies be it with funding or other personal grievances, while one out of the five participants stated that there was absolutely no support and that they never felt heard or held. In the same vein the same four that cited that they had the department's support spoke positively of their fellow Black dramatherapists and maintained that they still had long lasting relationships with them.

strong Black woman, angry Black woman and Black masquerade

The Writer's story was the only one that did not relay the same sentiment of experiencing a supportive department and this further examined in the narrative analysis. It is this one therapist that resonated with all three themes, making her one of the two therapists that resonated with the theme of *angry Black woman*. *Black masquerade* are and *strong Black woman* recorded by the exact same three participants leading to a correlation between these particular themes

Academic racial politics, gatekeeping, andizi and department culture

While the themes of *andizi* and *department culture* are seemingly unrelated they actually are and the participants responses were coded in this way because they responded to the same question of department culture either positively or negatively, those who responded with negatively are coded as *andizi* in that they acknowledge the department culture and are very aware of the systems and protocols but choose not to participate because the system and protocols are embedded with *academic racial politics*. In contrast The Equilibrist’s narrative analysis demonstrated that they maintained neutrality because of the numerous professional positions they hold within the community of drama therapy. Furthermore, they acknowledged the presence of *academic racial politics*, *gatekeeping* behaviours and an alienating *department culture* by stating that a predominately white department, automatically, through their interaction with non-white people, will invariably trigger and invoke certain responses from them because whiteness within a system of power functions on alienation, this according to The Equilibrist.

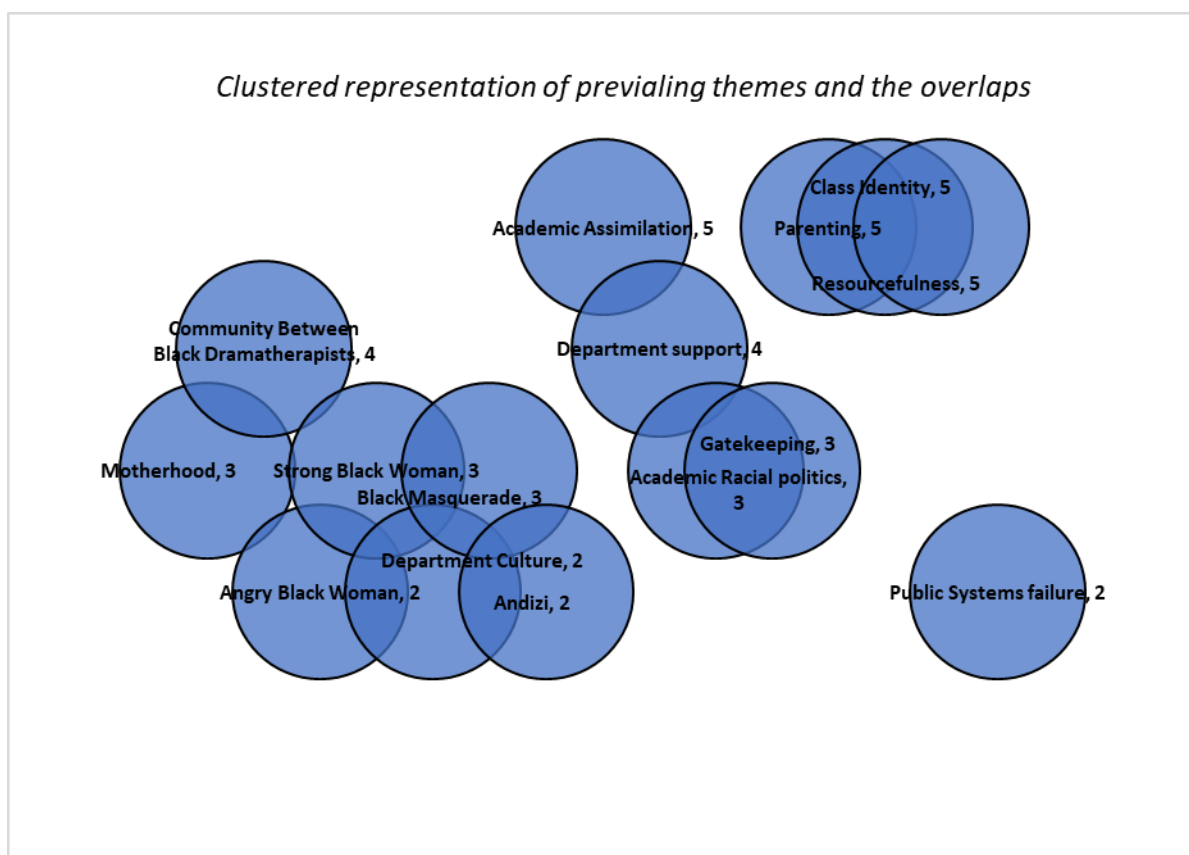


Figure 4: clustered representation of prevailing themes and the overlaps

The clusters in *figure 4* demonstrate the scoring of the themes in totality. Four themes scored highest across all the participants: *class identity*, *parenting*, *resourcefulness* and *sense of overwhelm*, however the overlaps are only between the first three whereas *sense of overwhelm* overlaps with *department support*. This is an important observation because *department support* would affect the students response to *academic assimilation* during their studies and this brings into fore the thematic cluster of *parenting*, *class identity* and *resourcefulness* which was reported to be the source of the participants in reserve and resolve to continue with the course when the sense of overwhelm was crushing and stifling.

Gatekeeping and *racial politics* which were cited by three participants, have the largest overlap between two themes, these two themes then coincidentally overlap with the theme of *department support*. It seems then that department support is the nucleus to bridging and mitigating the experiences of being overwhelmed as well as confronting the issues of racial politics and gatekeeping within the department as well within the relationships that the department holds with external partners and stakeholders.

The largest cluster consists of seven themes and at the center of the cluster that holds the other clusters is the theme of *strong Black woman* and while these theme strongly resonated with all the participants they all had their own ways of responding as strong Black women without it being monolithic, instead each participant has their own articulation of this theme: two participants seemingly practice this principle through their softness and agreeableness, whilst three of the participants seemingly practice this principle by being very forward, defiant and loud or rather vocal about their grievances and achievements, moreover what is worth noting is that two of the three are participants that resonated with *strong Black women* theme in the aforementioned overt manner fell between the 45-60 years-old age-range.

The three largest overlaps with the theme of *strong Black woman* are *angry Black woman*, *department culture* and *Black masquerade* which scored higher. There is no overlap between the theme of *andizi* instead this theme is attached to the theme of *Black masquerade* and *department culture*, what this means is that participants perceived the department's culture of promulgating the Black. Furthermore, that installing of Black dramatherapy students in the

course, and the representation of Black dramatherapy students and therapists in regulatory and representative bodies such as HPCSA and SANATA were viewed as a Black masquerade because the voices of non-white members were perceived to be subsidiary to white members. *Department culture* is at the center between the theme of angry Black woman and *andizi*, these parallels illustrate the frustration of the strong Black women because they are forced to perform as angry Black women even when it is not warranted. The participants relayed that they were uncomfortable at certain times with this performance and made efforts to enter the role as little as possible.

The themes of community between *community between Black dramatherapists* and *motherhood* have the smallest overlap with the theme of *strong Black woman* yet the two share a sizeable commonality; it is also should be noted that *community between Black dramatherapists* scored the highest out of this cluster which parallels with the *department support* in terms of score; these two components make up the core of resilience for Black dramatherapists.

An outlying theme that does not overlap with the any of the other themes is *public systems failure*, this could be that while the participants understood the governance of systems such as schools, police, the non-profit space and the department of social work wherein they play a role of healing and caretaking, are broken therefore this did not deter their resilience. Rather this theme is absorbed in the theme of sense of *academic assimilation* which influences their call to respond to the external systems failure that grossly affects their clients.

The thematic analysis has provided clear pin points of the experiences of the participants however the nuances are not captured or rather are not apparent in the condensed thematic representation of their narratives therefore the narratives of their experiences are akin to the spine or cortex of this research and as such form the grey matter where the details of the stories add complexity, describe their inner workings in contrast to the external system which in turn deepen the value of their insights and even provide valuable insights:

Women engage with social and political forces in such a variety of ways that even using a deft combination of two or more of the spectrum of standard feminist and postcolonial literary criticism- acceptance, refusal, complicity, revolt, among others- cannot cover the complexity

of the ways individual women respond to the different situations around them (Daymond et al., 2003:1).

Consequently, the narratives complement the graphic representation of the findings and perhaps even answer questions where doubt of the truth or validity of the themes arise. These narratives give the full picture where the edges are not clean and clear cut and provide explanation for the overlaps whether great or small. These narratives also point to the significance of voice and the construction of narratives and meaning-making by the speakers wherein they are not controlled by chronological order or linear timing which are colonial impositions that impede autonomy and the freedom to direct one's narrative and ownership of their stories (Daymond, 2003; Tamale, 2020). These composite narratives are cartographies that define the dramatherapy landscape as experienced by these five Black dramatherapists, moreover, they describe the shifting terrain that is the discipline and how much greater their efforts of internal shifts led not only to persevering but prospering in the field.

4.2 Izinyathelo ezo hambo lwabo

The dramatherapists were enrolled in the formative years, however, to maintain their anonymity the specific years will not be mentioned. Only one out of the five took more than the stipulated one-year to complete their master's degree and enter the internship year; at the time of the interview, they were still completing their clinical hours. While the other four participants had completed their master's degree and clinical internship hours, three of those four were actively practicing as drama therapists. Two of the participants fell between the age range of 45-60 years-old and three were found to fall between the age range of 29-34 years-old. Professionally, all participants held different positions in addition to being dramatherapists, of interest is that three participants simultaneously held lecturing positions and were registered in their respective PhD programs, two of which have a research focus related to drama therapy. Three of the five practicing drama therapists graduated with a bachelor's four-year degree in theatre and performance, whilst the other participant had an educational background in social work and education before enrolling in the drama therapy course. These are the stories of their arrival to the course.

I didn't want to be a starving artist. So I thought that maybe if I could be a therapist like an actual clinical psychologist that I would probably be better off and then somehow the drama therapy program started during the time when I was actually struggling to get into clinical psychology and I was really doing drama so I was registered with WSOA at the Wits School of Arts and the thing is that you have to take a subject and b subject, I chose the subject of psychology because I really really enjoyed it. I did it for 3 years and when it was time to go into the fourth year it becomes intensely competitive because they don't just take anybody, and I don't think I'm just anybody. But it's just I didn't think it would be that deep so by the time I was approaching my fourth year couldn't get into the technical psychology program obviously but also because like my major was in drama, but I could have actually done like a triple major which I did actually but not in psychology, but it was still in the arts. So, when I did my fourth year that's when drama therapy moved from being just a six-month course or a short course to a full course with a research stream that you could go into, it was an actual fully-fledged degree. So, I was like oh okay, maybe there's something. Yeah, because yeah, I think the idea of being just an actor or a performer scared me because I'm very shy and so I didn't know how to market myself and I could see that my peers were marketing themselves very well you know like they just, they had that hustle, that drive which I was just not having. I was like I don't know if I can do this you know I didn't have the kind of connections that they seemed to have and yeah as much as I still want to be in that space [performance] I actually still want to be in this space [drama therapy]. I was like I don't want to be a struggling artist, so I hopped on the bus with Drama for Life.

The Writer

I have a diploma in social work. Yes, and I have my undergrad in psychology. I stayed at home for like ten or fifteen years and I just decided I wanted to go back to school because that had always been my passion to go back to school. My youngest was like maybe eight or nine years old. I waited for the sister; she was like 10 so I said I'm free to go back to school so I looked through my options. Sadly, I didn't know what drama therapy was, I was told to look through my options and I actually wanted to do education as I didn't really work... I can't clearly remember my story... so I think I'd always been heading towards the arts. Yeah, so because I write, I am a writer. I believe that's what I'm even actually called to do first and for me I am a storyteller and then I read this thing [Drama Therapy] when I was applying to Wits, I said oh this combines my undergrad and combines what I want to do, what I do. Actually, I felt it spoke to me and I said okay let me apply. I just said let me do something because I said I only need to further my studies, so it wasn't like oh I thought I had seen it, or I read something about it. I had a very big idea of what it entailed so I applied for drama therapy.

The Dancer

So, it started in my high school day. I think even back to my childhood. My parents gave me the freedom to study music, to do music to do drama, to do ballet so I was exposed to the arts at a very young age so much so that in high school my chosen subjects were music history and drama along with math, the compulsory ones and stuff like that. So, drama has been a huge part of my life. It has been something that I have just done from grade two as far as I can remember actually grade one, so I've been doing drama that early. Then later I remember I was in the drama classroom with my drama teacher and we were filling out I think it was application form so it was the time it was we were in high school, and you know I think grade 12 and we were talking, actually could have been grade eleven, anyway we were talking about our careers and what we're going to study and I just remember saying to my drama teacher. *Well, I want to study drama and psychology.*

And I just don't know what I want to become but I want to study drama and psychology and then she said to me Well, Wits has this drama therapy coming up and I said what's that? She goes well, it's not there yet, but they're going to start drama therapy, so I was rather interested and said *okay I'm gonna do that.* So, I went, and I applied at the university and again just thinking I want to do drama and psychology I didn't know what a drama therapist was, so I was going to do drama psychology and then whatever happens happens. I applied. I did the

interview with the Wits School of Arts. I got accepted. I remember I was with my brother at the time I got accepted and then I found myself doing first year drama and then second year drama and then second year I started now inquiring at Drama for Life. How does a kid get into drama therapy? They said no, for now you can do theatre for human rights and that was how I found my link into DFL because I knew they existed in the building up there in the clouds but very separated from the Wits School of Arts, so I got in through Theatre and Human Rights module. I really enjoyed it I think I got introduced to it in my third year and I was introduced to Applied Drama and Theatre with [REDACTED] and it was lovely because I just fell in love with process drama I was like yes, this is what I want to do. Then afterwards I entered drama therapy and that is when I just never looked back, I've been doing it since so that is where it started.

The Thespian

I'm an actor, right and I've been an actor. I went to drama school. I did all of it. So, I went out into the industry and worked and twenty years later, I had the well you know, the thing I've done everything and what's next? But believe me, it wasn't like I've done everything, and I'm satisfied I had done everything, still dissatisfied and there was that yearning to know what else I can do within my industry I knew it wasn't just this. You are not just entertained, and I needed desperately needed an avenue within the arts. And I knew that was something but something that I didn't know at that time and so I started researching and but before even the research you know the feeling that you get when you go on stage that even when you have your own problems you are able to forget, that ability to go on stage. You are one with your character. You are one with your audience. You are one with the journey that you are going to be taking on that stage. And just that that space between me and my character that space when I am on stage that space when I'm interacting with my audience, and they are giving me energy and not taking from me. And I am somebody else that is in the play in the set; that what I was looking for, it was exactly what I was looking for, but I just didn't have a need for it [stage performance] anymore and as I looked into what else I can do with this [need that's when I met drama therapy.

It was new in South Africa, and I was going to be one of the people to test drama therapy that was prestigious; so that also helped to hold how they delivered the packaging to us because we were the first and we were not sure what we would do or what we were going to do here after.

The Preceptor

I started off in terms of performance studies. That's it I was going to be a theatre performer and I was just interested in that live theatre performance and then in my third year discovered that there was applied theatre and I became quite interested with this notion of theatre being used for educational purposes and I think I just have a natural inclination for education for children and so that's where my journey started but, in my undergrad, I had already taken up psychology because in your undergrad what happens is that you take up the professional subjects and then you have 1 general b a subject that you take up and the general BA subject that I took up was psychology. I was just interested in psych[ology] period, and I did wonder about the possibilities if should I fall away from drama then I could possibly fall on to psychology that was basically the idea, then in my third year I took up applied theatre and drama. Being introduced to applied drama, I really fell in love with the applied because suddenly I was appreciative of the idea which is that I don't have to just perform for the sake of performing but it's performance with some change and interest and so forth and I really fell in love with that and their approaches. The pedagogy of equal power sharing seeing the person and so forth I really got drawn into that.

It was in my fourth years that I was then doing my research. I decided that my research would be in drama therapy at the time they used to offer Like topics and so forth and then you would choose so I had topic from Drama for Life and it was in drama therapy then I got interested I said *yes, please*. I would love to find out a little bit more so I had to be part of "introduction to drama" and at the time [REDACTED] was teaching "introduction to dramatherapy theory", and I suppose that is how I then got introduced to drama therapy and then from there the following year when I was done with my honours, I wanted to go into master's already but drama therapy wasn't offered in the South African context. So, I was caught up with two minds. Yeah, and then what happened is that I say oh well I

don't want to study overseas and there was a lot of don't go there because you're going to have to try and put your papers together blah blah blah blah all that stuff so then I thought ah it's okay, let me take up applied [drama] but I didn't finish the plan- I stopped it halfway because I was just not interested. I left my master's and applied, left everything and I went to Themba Interactive. Oh, my they were the best years of my life because then I took the applied and I could see it playing out in the schools.

4.3 Imibono yefundiso

These narrative extracts speak to the themes of *academic assimilation* as well as *department culture, department support and resourcefulness*.

The Equilibrist

It was very overwhelming I just remember working with adolescents and I don't like working with adolescents. I don't like working with kids. Let's just say that right now and I think it's something interesting because also I'm very aware now. I'm very okay with just saying *look guys I'm a coconut*.

I think there's something interesting about [redacted] School in that it was predominantly black and some of them I think were coloured students or brown. I was working with a group of boys at the time. I just remember that I'd see them in the afternoon once a week and they were just irritating man they were just annoying. I can't really of remember what we were working on. I just know that they had some kind of conduct disorder. I just remember that space being very not nice I didn't like it; for real though it is just a harsh environment. I was working with boys, adolescent boys who are also special needs but not the kind of special needs that you could physically see with your eyes, you know, so it was a lot of like behavioural kind of stuff and it was annoying but also there were moments where I got away with beautiful moments. So, I'd have to say for that experience stands out for and now I think maybe it's because my research is kind of looking at space and how space is embodied and things like that so that space is memorable.

The Writer

I employ some of the techniques and the ideas that I have learned from drama therapy to assist people. But I feel that some of the things I learned in drama therapy, applying in the way that I think that drama therapy is very spiritual, although during my training I don't know about others, I found that it accepted some kind of spiritually more than other kinds of spirituality. I found it to be generally a spiritual thing. I even felt that there were times I would look at some of the things that we were doing like I would ask myself: do they [lecturers] really get the depth of things that we're exploring here and everything. There was a day I had an episode in the and class and I was nicely called after the class and advised that we [the department] do not accept this kind of trance in the space. So, I'm guessing that there is a kind of trance that is accepted while my kind of trance was not acceptable in class, I don't know how that works so I feel that it is a very spiritual place, and that people should be allowed to express whatever kind of spirituality. I had so many moments when I wanted to give up, so many moments and I just wanted to say I'm out, I'm not sure if I'm suited for that but was telling my kids to study, telling my kids don't give up and now I am doing exactly the same and I did not want to give them that example.

The Dancer

Oh, I have such great memories I remember the stories I remember playing I remember just being a child again and that was where for me I questioned oh is this drama therapy? Is this it? The playing, all these stories and I just I always wanted somebody to tell me this is drama therapy. I didn't realize that what I was doing was processing using my body; all that we were being exposed to

during observations and honours year opened me up to a world where we were working in hospital, actually we were doing observations in hospitals and in schools. So, by the time I got to do my master's I found myself sitting with clients and I went *oh my goodness this is real*. I'm sitting with a client, I'm listening, I'm present, I'm sharing story and I'm holding; I'm doing all the things I've been reading about and all the things that were being taught at master's level. It was fear mixed with excitement mixed with the *am I ready to do this?*

There was so much work and I just at some point was ready to give up I was ready to quit and say you know what? I'm not ready to do my research and my coursework together. And then I stopped myself and I said but what am I doing I've gotten this far, and it wasn't the second semester I've gotten this far. I remember a colleague just sharing her sense of overwhelm and she was also overwhelmed, and I think that overwhelm came from the sense of going to step into another year of internship and thinking *when does the cycle stop?* So, research which is the core circuit was coming to an end, but the other research was beginning and then... this journey was a constant *I'm starting, I'm starting and starting*. I decided I'm going to push through. I want to bite my teeth through it. I'm going to cry if I have to, I'm going to laugh if I have to. I found myself needing to be mature, needing to be present so that I didn't affect my fellow colleagues in the space I learned so much from them being elderly being older being more experienced and that is what made me realize it's not about age. It's about you are centring yourself; knowing what ground you are standing on because home was also so far away. It [master's year] became a space of grounding I had to remember my mother's teachings of you commit yourself and you commit yourself wholeheartedly. I had to remember my father who was present but so firm and I had to just remember there was a time and place for everything. There was a time to pray and then attempt to wipe those tears and do what you needed to do. There was a time to laugh and there was a time to be serious. There was such a community in my master's year that we pushed each other. It's hard because you're dealing with your own stuff. I knew there was work I needed to do on my side so being introduced to therapy was something that I appreciated.

I submitted my work, and I was ready for the internship. Now. It's a whole new journey. It's a new beginning all over again and I'm going where am I going to go into who I am not knowing who or I was going to work with, but I was eager, so I relocated myself I was living in Johannesburg north. Eish then I had to now relocate myself to the east um, and that for me was a new beginning I found a space that was willing to have a dramatherapist come in, but it was funny because they wanted me to be a teacher, so they were bringing me in to teach and that's not why I was there. So, the internship I had to do twice I found a psychoeducational space I then had to find a clinical space and I was like wait. *What am I going to do?*

So, my internship it wasn't as exactly as I thought it was going to be and that's because I had not planned everything in its package. I think of it as a process. Everything just seemed to fall into place but at the same time there was a lot of work that I had to do in just checking *am I in the right place am I here to do what is needed of me?*

The Thespian

I had this client that until today I still want to go back to that boy and just check in and check how they're doing I remember I even wrote my case study using that case and it's still very close to my heart to this day, so it was a young boy who had autism and was nonverbal. Through our interactions I realized that the boy was not speaking because his environment was not safe for him to even speak. The teachers and everyone else would always tease him about not speaking and the more they teased the less he wanted to speak. It was a gloomy journey, but it was also an exciting journey because that boy kept giving information loads of information loads through play. I was able to see that that boy is not talking because of the trauma that's been in his life. He told me stories nonverbally using clay, stories from when he was still in in-vitro when his mom was pregnant and even when he got birthed with his umbilical cord wrapped around his neck. The stories kept evolving and he even used his body, and he told the tragic story of his father's death. He left clues everywhere and it was for me to find out what they meant, and I interacted with teachers for the investigation and that's when it all made sense. He did not need to say one word. He did not tell me one word. That was my best work ever.

It was remarkable what they saw because while he still chose not to speak to them, he started uttering words with emotion. The treatment that I gave him made him look at the world differently and that's when he started to accept the classroom world more because of the world that we created in our sessions.

4.4 Ubudlelwane nabafundisi

The internship experience, role of supervision and the supervisor-student relationship are articulated in the narrative extracts below. Herein the themes of *strong Black woman* and *angry Black woman* are resonant.

The Equilibrist

We had one supervisor, all 10 of us had one supervisor. A drama therapy supervisor and then there was the onsite supervision which was very like ah a little wonky because obviously there were few dramatherapists especially at the time because we were the first class. There was one of the first dramatherapists, but you know I mean we were the first to be trained in the country. My onsite supervisor was an occupational therapist. No, a speech therapist she was a speech therapist, and she was there like every other Wednesday. I felt like I was pretty much on my own on the site. I had to check in a lot for myself. In terms of like the drama therapy supervision that was gold for me that even till this day that's kind of like the kind of drama therapist I want to be. She [supervisor] did clinical psychology and she did dramatherapy so her languaging for me was just so nice because she could marry the two so beautifully and I felt really held in those spaces...it was good I think that that was an anchor on the journey to be honest.

The Writer

During her supervision the writer was put into a placement site at a hospital that she was not comfortable with, and she conducted seven out of the 10 weekly sessions alone which, by protocol, are supposed to be done with a partner. Though in the end she described it was a wholly transformative experience, it did encumber her journey of completing the required supervision hours within the prescribed timeframe.

I did my hours, but I've not finished my hours actually because I just stopped. I felt that I wasn't I wasn't happy doing what I was doing so I stopped. This was what I felt even doing my master's I felt I wasn't being supported I wasn't being heard and I wasn't being seen as an individual this was my experience. I don't know how else to explain it. I thought that, I mean, I know that we were supposed to be studying but I saw all the people being supported and I wasn't. I knew I was not being supported by nobody, but it was just me and my own that's it. You take the individual into account; not just take the collective. You know I didn't want to seem like an angry black woman who always complained so I tried to limit my complaints. But even when I did present it, it wasn't like anybody listened, you understand? It's not easy like I said I constantly have to hold the people; I constantly have to. That is what a woman is taught to do in my culture, you deal with whatever comes through. So, no I had a horrible experience.

The Dancer

It was a specific client and I thought I couldn't figure the client out he would come to drama therapy and be very responsive but constantly wanted to sleep. Even in their stories the character would sleep or something. I was trying to understand what this idea of sleeping is. What is going on? And at that time, I didn't have the whole context I didn't have the whole story but in connection and communication with my supervisor I then realized there was a story here for the client in relation to sleeping and how he lost his parents. Then in our closing session, we created something together, a sculpture or something that he could now take with him. I remember he left, said goodbye and then when I packed up and I was ready to go and then I checked my stuff and here's the thing that

we created together, left behind. I was so touched and then I thought maybe it was too big for him to carry but later in reflection I realized it's not easy to say goodbye and sometimes having those sentimental things reminds you of a space that you cannot go back to.

I can even think back to working in a hospital and how I was so stunned by the fact that my lecturer has placed me in a hospital where the people can't use their bodies. Why am I here I was so frustrated with my lecturer, and I said *I've just been set up to fail* and then I realized it's not about that it was me needing to realize that I will have clients who cannot use their bodies completely and there was so much learning that I did in that space going in privileged with the full functioning of my body. How do I sit with somebody who isn't the same like me? So, in that learning I had to ask myself: Okay, can they use their face, can they use some of their arms? So that stands out for me, and I remember having to do a case presentation and in the middle of the case presentation I just cried I cried because I was so grateful for the experience of being in that space. But again, it was so hard to let go, to move on knowing if the journey continues. So, I have those moments when I think back to those clients. Those are the connection moments that for me was like yeah, this work works.

The Thespian

I went for my internship at a rehab center. I made the best connection because I heard them on the radio one day saying they are launching a new rehab center. I got there on that day and made connections and said this is who I am, and I would love to do this and this drama therapy which I am studying and I'm completing and I'm looking for a place to intern. I told DFL I have a place that I would want to go, and I interned with them the whole year and then worked for them the next year.

I had [REDACTED] who was a social worker, a psychologist and a psychiatrist who came at the as advent the rehab centre whom I would take runs with and then and I would do separate supervision at her office in Baragwanath. So, with [REDACTED] it was day to day on site supervision and with the psychiatrist it was case by case. They didn't understand what I was doing but they understood to bring me in the briefing of actual cases; the psychiatrist came in hand; she taught me a lot of things about mental health you know because she will make me sit in on her briefings with the doctors. She made me sit in and listen you know it was so amazing to be in that party.

The Preceptor

I've always been drawn to the classroom space. The school environment and the community but children particularly so a lot of the work that we had done at [REDACTED] really hit home I remember this visual image and I don't know if they still have it, but we had just done work in the schools with the theatre company for honours and master students. Everybody was going to the sports club to hand out food. And I recall I was on the staircase by the corner, and I stood there and looked at the rows and rows and rows of children coming to fetch the food. The energy was exciting. I was flat tired because after a series of I don't know how many days. That beautiful moment united me even more as I got to give out food. We had one more day and I just wondered about them. We came back again. So that that for me is one thing that stood out. But leaving the whole community was a difficult time so in my masters' internship year I travelled back for myself for the six months of my internship with no money, nothing but the joy of serving; it was just brilliant. I moved from village to village to village to go and see my clients in the mining community.

I worked quite closely with my supervisor who was a well-known elderly social worker and I recall going I can't go to my clients' houses; they'll think I am social worker but I had to learn to adapt. We connected with those people who were serving that community and then it's became a normal. But it's just it was just phenomenal working with those people. For me personally, I recall I kept making contact with people who would tell me she was brilliant for me. She was a brilliant teacher towards me. I just kept saying thank you to her. Thank you for giving me this tool because now I'm shaping it. Mom *Cathy's amount of work and experience in the field was brilliant.

I felt it expanded my relationships beyond just the work relationship part because I could go to her about concerns that I had, I didn't necessarily take my therapeutic work to her but she was wise enough to know how to assist me and support me by virtue of their expertise in the field and my way of working as well is very community based so she was able to plug in quite a lot and shape quite a lot. She had worked overseas but she's also worked here locally, and she had that wisdom of what the possibilities of overseas are and she formulated a lot of working systems in that environment. She was a groundworker like she's a ground worker and a pioneer.

However even with immense number of hours she put into the internship in that village, the Preceptor's internship hours and case findings were not acknowledged by the department, and she had to redo the internship all over again. It seems the issue was that a drama therapist was not supervising her.

I think it was maybe the supervisor thing, that there wasn't here. Drama therapist supervisor but I had forms yeah had forms, had everything, but it wasn't a big deal for me because eventually being here [with the department] gave me my work and I wanted to carry on with my therapy work.

4.5 Imibono yo kuba ngochwepheshe

Herein the therapists narrate how, if at all, they identify with the profession. The three sub strata contains the influencing factors that affects their identification with being dramatherapists which link to the themes of *academic assimilation*, *academic racial politics*, *department culture* and *public systems failure*.

The Equilibrist

Even now sometimes I wonder if I am the kind of drama therapist that Drama for Life trained. I don't think I am anymore because there've been times where I'm like ah I don't want to be registered with the HPCSA you know... there's something about the HPCSA which makes me feel like if I don't tick certain boxes regarding ethics and this code of what what and whatever of practice. I mean it just becomes a bit too much of a thing. So, I think currently I am sort of like feeling as though I have moved from the innocent trying to pedal my way upstream from being a student to being an intern trying to find my niche and failing dismally. You know, taking a break a pause studying and a little bit more and then finding my thing again. I definitely know I'm a drama therapist but what kind... I don't know. I think that's because I've also just witnessed more specifically black dramatherapists to be specific, I'm saying [redacted] and like [redacted] and you know the people who are sort of like not necessarily confined. It's, good to have representation sometimes when you enter other spaces [spaces that are not strictly for drama therapists].

The Writer

I'm not sure if I identify with it as such [drama therapist], I'm not sure if I identify with it. I keep asking myself. What do you do? I'm not sure if I would actually say that that's who I am I use the tools of drama therapy, but I wouldn't necessarily say I would probably say I'm in the helping profession.

The shift that I see that has happened to me personally is that I have seen that from what I went through [master's year] I'm better able to work with people I've always been a compassionate person.

The Dancer

I think I found grounding in knowing that this is me and me being I use my body to understand the work. My colleague uses her words to understand the work. My other colleague uses paint drawings to understand the work.

It is in the progress between client and dramatherapist of building a relationship, us being able to sit in a space together and play, us being able to be in a space where at first it was like oh my goodness who is this person and by the very end it's like oh my goodness please don't leave. Something that validates the practice that validates that what I'm doing works that I'm not going crazy that this person is needing this space. So for me, it just that change it speaks back to validation but also speaks back to this idea of being seen with the all parts of the good, the bad, the broken, the hurt, the happy, the sad and for me that that was what I got back, was that the clients have seen me but also I have seen them and that for me is where the change comes about. It just brought back this idea of validation, that feels important for people to be in a space where they can be all of themselves even though sometimes, I don't know what's going on.

The Thespian

I'm not sure how I have shifted but I am sure that I definitely shifted from the years of my study to where I am today. My biggest change really is how I perceive the practice and my biggest change went into my acting more than into my drama therapy practice because I interact with so many actors. It is a journey that I saw happen to share this identity of being an actor I have gathered new energy and also in my practice I've got so much that everything that is happening right now I realize it [drama therapy] is my ministry.

The Preceptor

I naturally held that fear of *do I know enough and is it sufficient now?* All of that is gone because the sooner I chose to live, and I think I did it in my internship year, I realized that the knowledge I hold and the natural gift that I have are the things to trust that and to combine that and to continuously continue reading whatever and everything you can find. There was a greater trust in the work that I do like now today a moment is I can say I'm a drama therapist without fear before I used to fear saying it, I used to go no don't say that I'm a drama therapist. Even when I was already practicing as a drama therapist and I knew the work and still felt, I am in need of an intellectual master, so I've had to be careful with my work with regards of who I am plugging into.

So yes, the major shift of fear I've let go of and fear that was not necessarily imposed by me because the fear of the lack of resources was real then and now. We can't do it alone. We do need to collaborate. Mine is to be very quiet, to be active on the ground and remain doing the work.

4.5.1 abelungu nobulungu

The Equilibrist

I only really started to understand this whole issue of black and white politics in our masters. Yeah, imagine and I think we were also the youngest of the group while there were three of us in our masters year that were the like the babies of the class and I think maybe it has something to do with that. Maybe not but we started to notice. I don't know if it was us noticing it or if it was learned and this is a personal reflection now. It's not so much a conversation I was having with her but personally, I'm always sort of like reflecting back every time I react as though something is racial, I wonder if it's something that I've learned to identify as a racial issue or is it actually just personality people interacting together like different personalities just clashing or whether it's different classes clashing or is it always race?

But anyway, so it was sort of like the first time we were coming to see that hey man, we're black and somehow it seems like our white peers maybe they are smart but maybe it's because they're white that they get the kind of treatment that they get, and they get more airtime.

But anyway, there is something about you know our Black spaces in South Africa obviously they they're like first of all they over like they just burdened with a lot. You know everyone is tired today. Everyone is overwhelmed. I think yes, there is that moment although various moments the one moment of just realizing yes, my own comfort levels as a becoming therapist and also noticing differences between black and white students and then. Cut to now where it's like it's more about the system and what part of it I'm willing to play. Unfortunately, what I noticed is now systemic. I'm letting you into my private life and to my professional life. There is something interesting about like working with white people and there's a kind of information hogging that they know how to do without seeming like they are hogging information and then whatever responsibilities I have get overlooked and then at the end of that story I seem incompetent because I actually lacked information, but it would seem to everyone else that I didn't know what I was doing but that's not the case. It's information hogging. So, what that does to me is that it makes me look like I was the broken part of the telephone when actually, literally, I took her words word for word and so anyway, it's just annoying because it happens every single time.

The Preceptor

A few people struggle for a long time in their lives until they eventually find what it is that they want. When I got to 30, I knew I had lived my performance years, I had applied myself and I loved it. You know and this drama therapy. I'm very passionate about it even in the fire. The thing that drives me to do it is because I deeply love Africa. I love south Africa. I love its people and I think my driving force is I believe in the work. I've seen it I've seen it helping people and I think even in my exhaustion, that's what keeps me going. That's why I get frustrated with the field in itself and the politics that are present within the field itself because a lot of the times SANATA and the others just want us to sit and learn who the head is and get CPD point and what keeps me going is the passion not the points. It's the passion so I also make sure that I'm safe myself by not plugging into certain communities that don't aid me. Our very arts therapy space is not wholesome. It's not held.

The Dancer

I was that girl living in an egg and I call it the egg because I liked my life, and I was very protected. My parents were very clear about keeping us safe and protected. I saw drugs for the first time, marijuana in Johannesburg. I'd never seen in my life people were drinking I was like what is happening. What is this? I realized I became more aware of black and white a lot more in my university stage.

4.5.2 umthetho nesimiso

The Thespian

I Remember when we were there, Drama therapy was preached as so exclusive like even I was afraid to reach out and be in contact with drama therapy because it was exclusive. That that was their subliminal message. I was still going towards the qualification but could not really get closer to let alone everything the HPCSA, the SANATA things and everything of the practice stuff I was studying. I even felt that I will never get there, and I realized that, yes, I will never get there if I follow the book so the distancing was needed.

Previous classmates struggled to register with HPCSA because they had studied overseas. I don't know where it all fell apart and that's why they are doing what they are doing now.

4.5.3 ezomoya

The Preceptor

I think my spirituality as well plays a huge role in who I choose to be every time and that matters for me for well-being purposes and so forth.

N: That's your self-care?

Yeah, and the moment I am not myself.

N: Ah is it also the way that you understand the world and people globally?

Yes, I understand that every single being is to be understood that every single individual, so children carry some light in them, and people need to be seen for what they are so I understand that a lot.

The Dancer

I believe that there are those who are constantly speaking on my behalf; be it in my family. Some people who speak of them as ancestors I see them as my support, and they are here with me, and I thank my support for the places they have taken me to because it was in those spaces where I was stretched. I was grounded but also grew quite a lot.

The Thespian

I needed to be practicing in drama therapy today. It touched my life, and I don't take it for granted fact. So, every life that I touch I have brought actively in the morning when I start, I go there [her office] an hour before I start, an hour before my first client. It's dedication. I bring them [clients] into my prayers, into my prayer ritual, bringing them before God and saying I don't do this by my mind. God let me hear You, work with me, work through me, and make me the best one. Help me connect, help me be what they need from me. Help them be in the space to find themselves. Then help us get the care. It is not out of my doing.

4.6 Imibono yendlela abafundiswa ngayo

These extracts point to the ramifications of Apartheid, colonial curriculum content and Apartheid spatial planning. Here the narrators explicate on access to internship sites, the freedom of expression and the role of the body as the container of one's energy and protecting against the pollution of one's body when interacting with other energies. Themes that are resonant are *andizi*, *department culture*, *academic assimilation*, *class identity*, *motherhood*, *parenting* and *department support*.

The Equilibrist

We went through like a sesame training and there's a lot of like story and myth and all that and I mean Jung also he's influenced by that. so, it's not like these things are new. They just keep feeding us back to us like it's theirs but actually it's ours but anyway, but I think it would serve us more if we were as like teachers maybe more brave or willing. I want to say brave because it is a scary terrain to try and carve when you don't really have a lot to work with prior to you trying to do what you trying to do which is to source from the continent. I think it would be so interesting to learn from different cultures and their stories and their symbols and what they mean for different people I think that's what's missing in our training.

The Writer

I think Drama Therapy is shaped in a way where it is not culturally relevant right now. I don't think it is. It is to a certain but the essential aspects are too little. It has to be shaped into a place where it's culturally relevant that's why it's up to us as Africans to shape it in that form, in that way. We are not a people who just do things on the surface. I feel that we scratch the

surface because they don't believe in some of what we believe. We have to look at our culture even the stories we. My mother can't relate to Cinderella. My daughters can't relate to the hair. So why am I using it?

For example, to a white person, the devil is an evil person. What? what? But in my culture. The devil is not naturally, not necessarily evil. The devil is a god yeah, so when you say stories like that when you say things like that... be careful of the person's culture you can't just think that this is what everybody thinks about this particular thing because this is what you think; you can't do that. That's where I find the problem, and this is not just this is not one angry black woman advocating a Black life matter or something.

Even psychology or psychiatry will say if you talk to yourself, there's something wrong, but for an African if you hear voices, you are [considered to be] elevated.

The Thespian

They [DFL] did the best that they could to in their power with everything, like they brought in guest lectures that taught us international paradigms. And they really made us aware that everywhere else it is perceived in high standards and we have a long way in terms of making it known in South Africa. That is the space that I connected with it helped with connecting with my client on a different level, helping in that direction of recovery, the helping in the sense of finding balance because healing is one thing and managing is another.

4.6.1 imikhuba yabaphati

The Equilibrist

I wish there was more consistency.

When I say consistency or like some kind of like stability back in the day it was like you know you'd go to Wits and go to whatever department and that old professor is still there you know because they go to what they do and all as well. Now, it's like you can't have the same person for more than two years almost. It's like they're gone gone. They move on to something else and maybe it's because yes, the economic situation is dire or people just constantly wanting to develop themselves and grow so they go find elsewhere to be, you know, appreciated where they're needed and things like that. So that also starts to play out within that training space as well there isn't a solid team of trainers.

The Preceptor

I refuse to go to some of the things but because I feel like if I'm to survive now I'm good in the field and to continue being as passionate and I would need to make sure that those that I'm streaming along and walking with are people that I know are not induced by power dynamics, that are not interested in reminding me who started drama therapy in South Africa; that for me is problematic. The commitment is on the work ethic. It's not in the politics and I'm not interested in debating and so I prefer the groundwork.

I've chosen my role within the senior management because I was no longer behaving like myself. I had to write again, a strong text message of calling them out so that I'm not continuously being the angry black woman so then I have to pick an afternoon when my spirit is not being disturbed. The battle is the bigger picture.

4.6.2 ukufundiswa imfundiso yokulapha emayelani nesiko nobuntu lwabantu

The Writer

Maybe what should be happening is more African writers should come. They should be African writers when it comes to drama therapy books because we only have books with European experience. More Black writers so that we can relate to what is happening, so we can relate. Don't just tell me how David Reed Johnson sees it or how that other Englishman sees it. That shouldn't be the only thing I should hear someone like me being I should hear someone like me saying what the person has experienced because David Johnson is so totally different from me, his experiences are so totally different from mine. What am I only hearing about the story of a white person. And I'm not in any way, an activist I'm telling you I am the for this activism here, I'm not an activist in any way I'm just a woman who doesn't feel heard in this profession who doesn't feel seen because of what I've come through.

The Thespian

I was once called in to help with the assessment of the students and I found them to be too quick to judge in terms of drama therapy. They were critical of what drama therapy is and how it is presented and how it is justified, but we have to be patient to know first, to know what is presented to you, to understand it for you to have knowledge of how to criticize it constructively. You know, have the patience to go through the gruelling teaching your first year and then you think you know, and you can have the patience to know everything and then stand there and look at it from a distance and say it is not or it is not that. You know with backup knowledge of saying this method. For example, there was a class of students whereby they had this idea that what they were being taught was so Europeanised that it could not be African which is a valid point but then they didn't even know what African was in their perspective was. Students need patience to go through the years of study to learn, to gather knowledge so that it can influence perception and your critical view. Take the time out to grow as a critical thinker. Do the homework on yourself and what is African. Yeah, but learning loss is good. This course, it's like an apprenticeship It takes you into its fold, it drinks from you, and it is so exhausting. I was dead exhausted after my training. It was draining because I invested so much into it as a learner and as a practitioner and the mysticism of it being this new thing and I did not know what I was going to do with it once I was done but it came back. Those rapids were over. There's something in this; there's something worthwhile.

4.6.3 inkululeko yoku hamba ngokuthula

The Writer

I have the benefits of insight. I have the benefits of experience. Some students complained about others that they have a car, they drive. They have a car I have to take three taxis from subway [train station. You can't expect me to come into the class with the same frame of mind as somebody who just gets into the car and drives, and you know I did not see myself in that way but when the person said that I started thinking about that. You know you've taken three taxis to get into the class you can never compare that frame of mind to this person who comes out of the private car and drives. Yes, there's traffic but you are driving. It's different and it's different from that person that at the end of the home you're thinking you at the end of the day has to catch three taxis that person is different. Not one day did I have the excuse of my children are sick. Yeah, because I thought that if I couldn't be and I tell them that my children been sick I was going to get in trouble so to see so even if my child wasn't feeling fine, I would tell my helper please deal with that till I get back home nobody was taking that into consideration. Nobody. How can we be in the helping profession when we are not even taking care of the people that we are teaching?

4.6.4 inkululeko yoku femba amazwi nemizwa

The Dancer

I write poetry which is bad poetry but it's a way of me expressing what I need to express [after death of father]. I couldn't speak, I couldn't dance I couldn't

sing so I had to refer to just sharing however I was feeling through words and I did it and now I can't write I don't feel like having to write because now I've been able to. I've been able to move through some of that stuff. It's so tricky in a South African context because I don't know if it is about sitting and talking to somebody because I'm gonna talk and then what? I've told you my life story but there's something in me that just hasn't processed. It hasn't channelled. With drama therapy it can be nice because there that going away is akin to going home, to rest to get the nourishment that you need in a safe space.

My mother was very particular about the words. She is very metaphorical. She came with the rules and strictness in the house but that created structure for us. It became the space of safety. It created a space where we had to think before we just said anything you couldn't just say, but also it created a space where you couldn't express what do you do with these feelings, so I took my feelings into my dance. You need to express how you feel you need to tell somebody that you don't appreciate this, or I don't like the way you do something. My mother always says don't let the devil see you having a bad time, even when you're hurting be present. Don't let people see that you are suffering suffer where you need to suffer but show up.

The Thespian

There's a certain autonomy that you have when there's no family no spouse or obligations, I went into this as an old student, and I had my own challenges because now I had family or whatever happens in the personal when you're younger. My two children were still in school, I had hit a plateau in acting and I needed something upward trajectory So that motivated me to go in to go and review myself somehow, right? It was showing me flames in that regard. You know because I hadn't been studying for a long time, I had family I had children. My responsibilities were different from when I did my initial course but through resilience, I knew what I needed. I knew I needed to change the fate of my family, my faith because I needed to prove myself. The experiences that I had as an actor paved the journey to who I am today to the drama therapy that I was seeking you know so those years were not for naught. If you're going to go in it go in it seeking something and be sure to get that thing.

I found my healing and it is in that space that Drama Therapy operates when it's that process that you engage in the process that heals. The drama therapist in me will push me into something into a different space into another space and so that becoming does not end: each phase of your life is different, but you don't see yourself, it's just you are becoming something that you need to become so the becoming until then I think does not end.

4.6.5 *umzimba nentsila zabantu ezininda umlaphi*

The Dancer

I like bodies connecting you know, let's move together. It can definitely be too much energy. There's definitely a lot of energy in the space. I feel that that's my body's gauging, so I have ways of stepping in and stepping out which for me I think is why maybe my colleague and I actually did the long-distance work because she's also a person who works with the body. Yeah, for the walk was us walking away from it and coming into it.

The Preceptor

My studies in psychology background had an impact. But also, I think my performance background had much more influential influence. I had joined the Playback Theatre while I was studying, and we had gone to communities just a little bit briefly and I could already see the impact it had on my body holding other people's stories and I could see how it was processed. I was part of that cast which was invited to hold as activist storytellers to an audience who shared their stories with the actors then held those stories in our bodies and so forth and just that process, the way it was held, the way people's material was carefully processed had a huge influence in the way of truly respecting the children's stories.

4.7 Imibono yoku sebenza njengomlaphi

The narrative extracts below reveal that the therapists articulate the practice and fashion it to be more accommodating their worldviews and they are vociferous about more Black students joining the career and so that the curriculum can be expanded. The themes of *resourcefulness* and building a community amongst fellow Black dramatherapists and relationship building with possible job sites are reiterated.

4.7.1 isqiniseko somsebenzi

The Equilibrist

I don't know about full-time. I don't think I can just survive on drama therapy I could possibly make it my bread and butter, I always joke, but it's not really a joke I'm being serious but if I could marry a rich man. Yeah, I can see just doing drama therapy.

I don't think I can just do drama therapy full time I think I quite also enjoy being able to do other things as Well. I enjoy that I get to do a little bit of research and I get to do. Ah, some workshops here and there and stuff.

I think also it's about knowing where one wants to practice like if my niche develops, which is what I want to build and I'm trying to build for myself anyway within the performing space and that's a space that maybe that's where people know me, you know but I'm not going to be necessarily known by people outside of that community. I think visibility is relative like anything else I guess but my philosophy is I go where I'm needed and of course there's a lot of need everywhere. But I also don't think I'm needed everywhere.

The Preceptor

I feel like I was one of the lucky people as I knew I'd found my niche, so I wasn't still trying to find my stream. There's a reason certain people want to finish you get it. I love this but I also wanted to finish. I think I had time to take that moment of a break and going to work so some barriers that I faced weren't a shocker when I did dramatherapy. I had already got a plug into the field, so it is not solely an African thing to want to finish because even overseas there's an urgency to finish.

I think from being housed in schools and being a drama therapist there and having had the opportunity to see cycles and cycles of fracture. That cycle constantly being repeated that is born and then there are a lot of possibilities of what their child could become but because of the trauma filled environment they it breeds another vicious cycle. Never mind how difficult their suppose answers are but if you build certain things values and things inside of them if you listen to what it is that they are needing sometimes the children don't ask you to solve their problems sometimes they ask you to witness them to see them to acknowledge them. That's it. They'll do the rest. That's the inborn resiliency that's present in our children. So why is it important for me because they are the becoming. They are the ones that are going to hold each other.

By virtue of being the first we wore that mantle. You almost have to wear the mantle of who you are teach and educate the people. I feel like I've always won that mantle, I am going to explain to you what drama therapy is, I am going to show you.

I didn't work only as a therapist I worked as a therapist and a teacher because then I took my own approach. I use this approach in a psychoeducational world and go to the teacher and say I want you to sit in my space I want you to see what I am doing, so I go and fetch my children so there's no stigma and it also demystifies the practice.

I'm always holding on to how do I make sure I remain African also I think the privilege of being given the opportunity of travelling overseas and seeing how they work and then coming back home to it all, it constantly reminds me that I have a responsibility.

The Writer

I'd like to encourage more black women to go into drama therapy because I feel that we could do so much more. That's our thing like it is a black persons thing you grew up with song, you grew up with poems. Yeah. So, the tools of drama therapy are so relevant to the black child.

Don't say oh you're going to face challenges because it takes a lot for things to change but be that change you want to seek it so that the people coming after you will see it and they can say oh okay, yeah, that' the black dramatherapist, I can be that person as well.

The Dancer

I love this because it is something I asked the students. Why did you enrol in drama therapy, and they say *I want to heal this, I want to heal that*. Remember what is it with physical healing are we sick, are we not well? When you ask? I say healing is a process. Yeah, an ongoing process for me that goes past myself I say this because there are things in my life that I need to overcome. I Need to let go of so that the generations to come after me are not fighting the same battles. They're not fighting those struggles of feeling inadequate, those struggles of doubt those struggles of *do I Belong* those struggles of needing to shout or needing for me those are things that I also feel that I have had to work through, and those things have come from my parents and their life so healing for me the word that comes to mind is process. It is a process constant; constant process and I mean from a South African point of view people can take medication. You can go see somebody. You can do all sorts of things to heal but what I found for me healing is the dance.

It was something that they hadn't done, and it was suffering that brought so much joy to the kids and their families to witness the kids' learning lives and saying their parts and being Mary and being Joseph that in that what it creates a sense of community. It wasn't about the therapy. It wasn't about the it was that we're creating community moments here.

The Thespian

You need to be organized and know your role with the schools and maybe, they didn't know so much of that role or they knew it, but they didn't value it and also because I developed having a voice in this situation of earning money. Some things I initiated. Actually, a lot of things I initiated because we had nothing to learn from so you had to do what you needed to do you know, we had nothing to refer to. Nothing to bounce from. I went in there and you learned to make it work.

4.7.2 ukuzi akhela owakho umsamo

The Thespian

Since going into Drama Therapy my perspective has changed and now, I am certain you know experience has taught me being an actor that you will find yourself chasing money. You will be chasing fame and validation. What is needed is what brings you to equity. You have to have it, before you are cooked into it [Drama Therapy]. It's training that takes you to the cream of the crop. The heartiness of it all is that you chase something because that's who you are innately.

I just went through training so that I know how to frame it and how to own the space and how to facilitate that space between me and the other people. It has you changed the me I was before I became me. I think I make this thing mine. That's what I accepted essentially when I started where I said *I'm going to throw the book away* and literally get to throw the book away because it's binding because restricting, because it's dictating, and I don't want to be dictated to.

I'm not coming up with anything new. I'm just owning what I was taught maybe in the near future I'll come up with something that's mine. Yeah, and actually give it to them. That's what I'm garnering to towards. It'll take me some time but it's all on paper now.

It's isolating to be in private practice. You lose touch with what all else that is happening, and I need to revisit some of the things that I've learned and studied. To tap into what others are bringing in I need to be in touch with people I mean Black people. I need to create a space where we can all come together on the same level about drama therapy practice as practitioners to come up with ideas of how to do things to be independent in all practicality.

That's why I throw them away because I don't identify on that level and I need it is in our interest to come up with. To come up with our own methods and come to think of a drum therapy and that essentially a drum circle, even theatre is African. I'm very jealous to keep referring to theories and scholars and not one is African.

I can't bank on being employed. I don't know it was never that it was never being attached to anybody and waiting for their hours to be attached to mine in my terms of being an independent practitioner. Being in private practice is not more secure because I'm working with client, and they can cancel. You can hold them responsible. You can say if you cancel before 24 hours and won't get charged. On the day of the cancellation, I will check you up on the client. Sometimes they come for two sessions and never come back again. Whereas with an institution, you have a contract right and you are there maybe twelve months six months so the security is there.

4.7.3 ukufundisa amatwasa

The Preceptor

You remember supervision you can only give after 5 years, actually five years after completing the requirements of the qualification so I think that subconsciously I also held myself back just thinking about those years and I was also still in love with applied theatre. I walk in the master's class [to teach] now and there's zero fear and I just told myself unburden yourself from this fear. I knew a part of me would change, it was difficult because the way I grew up I was always taught just be you and then coming back to this venture which involves the emotional, spiritual, ritual, psychology, you can't help but be yourself. I feel like my presence has to be authentic because a false presence is a struggle, like I said before I am not interested in the going ons with SANATA. I am interested in building community but not going there and shouting "Amandla!". That's not how I fight, mine is a quiet fight on the ground.

4.8 Imibono ekhombisa isidingo lapho abalaphi beshoda khona

A multitude of perspectives in response to where the dramatherapists see the gaps in both practice and theory. Here the themes of *Black masquerade*, *andizi*, *department support*, and building *community* are resonant.

4.8.1 indima yabalaphi ekuxazuleleni kwekwinga zomphakathi

The Preceptor

I've also acknowledged that my interest particularly in my use of this tool of dramatherapy stems into the social worker field and a lot into the educational field. So, for me, they're not rigid; the virtue of a drama therapy is its ability to be interdisciplinary. I deliberately take that gift of

interdisciplinary and use it to my advantage. I drive it back to the community, back to the institution, back to the individual. I believe that they [children] can lead themselves to their own healing meaning there's a lot happening in the child's pain, but their environment does not give accessibility to emerge.

I work with the by virtue of being housed in. So, I have learned the school environment a lot and not just that but the referral system in South Africa is not so good. I have conversation with a client, and I got referred to just like that and you know that's good. It should be like that all the time, but it is not like that.

4.8.2 *indima yabalaphi eskolweni*

The Preceptor

If I have to speak of callings, I think definitely my calling is there with children. I think that's why in applied I was drawn to that. The fact that I get to teach and educate children around particular social issues. My mission started light, and I could see how the children enjoyed this frame. They understood this frame that they too have equal power especially when I started entering the life orientation classes. They can jump in and jump out of the context I then thought to myself, well, that's good because then now they can arrive with the agency with which they can choose participating or not. I really appreciated that and then coming into the therapeutic frame I thought it is even better if a child can be in the context and name the type of healing that should unfold.

I really believe that children should be given an equal chance in terms of education and growing up and be nurtured and be allowed growth now but also to emerge and eventually make choices that are benefiting towards them or whatever choice that they make but an equal chance should be given to each and every single child.

So, my mission became that when I entered into the drama therapy space and I did my own research especially when I saw the needs of the children. My deep desire was for these schools I wondered about how come I went to these schools all of these schools that did not have a therapist, a psychologist, a social worker somebody that they speak to why is it that the process was that they must reported to the department's department to make one a soldier that's responsible for that that whole process. I was very emotionally drawn to are you *Okay?* how are you *doing?* I spoke to a lot of the children trying to contain and hold them and so forth even when I was not yet there.

I knew also that a lot of the children their home life which is interesting which has brought me now full circle into my PhD. Where I've entered the home life where I say now let's work with your parents to see how you can make sure that this home is wholesome and so forth.

4.8.3 *indima yabalaphi ekuvikeleni ulaka nokugcindezelelwa ebukhene naba fazi*

The Writer

One of the things I found out with the women's home was that okay these women come in from places where they have been boxed where they were told what to do by men and when they come to the safehouse those same rules which the abuser enforced are re-established in the home/safe house. I'm thinking that maybe there should be some flexibility here as well because this is what the women were running away from that. One of the things I enjoyed were seeing the women change through storytelling. She [one of the women in the safe house] was married to a very strict Muslim man who didn't allow her to eat he who didn't allow how to read a novel can you imagine that? Stories like that stand out because in the end she said, *so now I'm given the freedom to read*. My aim was to be able build resilience. We did things around overcoming, being able to stand up for your thoughts, you understand not necessarily in that abusive relationship for just generally being able to stand for yourself in life. So, I believe that the intervention stems from that, that they get to follow their story. Yeah, because you can play out like when we do some of those games for check-in. It's just

waking up one's consciousness which is why I said dramatherapy is very spiritual. You're saving conscious that makes the client think *I can overcome this thing. I can overcome.*

4.8.4 indima yabalaphi lapho uhulumeni ehluleka khona

The Preceptor

I'm sitting with the case of domestic violence. The child has brought evidence. I filled out forms everything and where the obstacle is, it's that I can't have access to social worker to ensure that the forms are delivered to the department. So social services has disappeared. They responded to two cases every after two years. So, for myself as a drama therapist working in South Africa I've asked "How do protect the child and make sure that they are still safe in the context of whatever therapy work that we do? Secondly, how do we allow for the work to move forward? And so sometimes I have to literally take the documents myself and physically take into the space and physically wait for that police protection service person to call me forward to submit the papers and also follow up with the case because unfortunately our system here too is still fractured.

The Thespian

I also remember the white lady... I Think who was collating information on behalf of the school that we went was just so detached from the process. She was just pushing paper so much that she was just not interested in the progress that the children were making so much that afterwards they asked us for the report but never personally showed interest in pushing our sessions forward or you know extending our journey with the children or making arrangements with other people to carry on the work that we had started.

Which was the case with this boy in terms of some before me not from other institutions. And so, he had this lethargy about people coming in and out of his life in the name of *treatment*. So, in the beginning he had just clanked up. He didn't want to do anything. He didn't want to partake. It took a lot of work opening him up. When I found out that people came in and out, I could make sense for a why he didn't want to open up with me because he was also afraid to make a relationship with me to help that attachment with me because I could go. And I did go and I did go.

4.8.5 indima yolimi

The Thespian

I spoke English because the medium of the school is English yeah and I spoke English yeah, but based on what his name was I assumed he was Shona. But with many others even now we switch. How do you reach a person in a room if you can't reach them you know? I'm not fluent with all languages, actually I am the worst with languages. But I try to kind of acknowledge who they are in their culture because *motho ke motho ka bhathu* through language and we use that as a bonding thing. You know so a language does help to relax the person in the space. *Language is the red carpet that foregrounds the grounding of the client.* It brings the human value into it. Also, where we sit because the room that I used to share with the psychologist. So, I found there a couch and another side the long couch for two people. The interaction is different from when we sit on the floor. I connect and we connect from there. The distance kind of gives a coldness that lies between us in the same room but that that gap in between can be bridged when we physically close the and sit on the floor. You will relate in an amicable and civil way that is critical to therapy, that is so necessary that relationship between you and client.

4.8.6 indima yabalaphi ekwandiseni kwehlananipho namalunga woku philisa nedayo zokusebenza

The Thespian

It's always like the question of space and the question of the children's availability and which teacher you find to cooperate with you. And after that you know when you have a child and before you even go seek the child you make sure they are allocated a room but this time it was just me with him and using the same space. Sometimes the caretaker had locked the room and it was not available and you know such little glitches. Sometimes they were let out early and he knew our times so it would open and go away and we always found it open.

I opened a new practice and moved a little distance away. I was never in that vicinity again and it's been a while you know so I think also distance counts but maybe that's just an excuse for not going back.

I haven't created space but I'm looking at the ladies' correctional services. I recently engaged with the institution because one on one meetings are better for making room. I go directly to the places where I want to work and make my room.

The Preceptor

I realized there's a huge gap when it comes to this whole therapeutic frame and understanding this particularly in the school environment and so forth some of these theatre performances that we were taking there seemed to be not working appropriately. I recall there was one performance piece that we took to a primary school. That performance piece we knew very well and had planned for the teenage kids, and we could, as the facilitators, see the kids cringing in response to the performance. So, following my three years' experience at Themba Interactive, I then decided to go and complete my master's so from that point of view I was particularly aiming to work from the actor-educator position.

It was a performance that was applied but I saw something there that was different because I had done introduction to drama therapy, I could see that performance reach was inappropriate. It closed off the children, we had most likely re-traumatized them if any of them had experienced the sexual frustration like sexual abuse and stuff like that and more and more I started seeing the need for drama therapy because the play contained a rape scene. We had really not balanced it properly and in applied theatre it worked well in creation and rehearsals, but we never really critically thought about how we perform the embodiment there without any help for the children to process the play afterwards; I really got frustrated with this. I could also see what it was also doing to the actors but more the children I was very concerned because children have always been my passion so that was my driving force as well that how do we make sure that *aslimaza abantwana* [that we don't harm children].

So be honest with yourself and then figure out what are my gifts that I'm able to do it. I'm an educator I have the aspect of social work I have the drama therapy stuff. I'm going if you've learned the approaches and whatever be adaptable. You are going to shift and change things too such as well have you done that in your own practice.

4.8.7 indimi yobibili nokuzwana lapho kunemibono ehlukile

The Dancer

We were all female who are Black one Indian and the rest were white females so we were diverse in colour but not in gender. They were no males in my master's year, though in my honours year there was one male.

My sister and I was speaking earlier on this morning, and we were speaking about this absent father story just trying to remember the context in which we were him, him but my father was so present in our lives. He didn't speak a lot that's funny thing fact, my sister does she says she never held a conversation with him like along, but he was there. In his presence. He was the guy who was dropping us off. He was the guy you that you couldn't step out of line. Yeah, but he was there. He was his presence was felt and so for me I knew what it was like growing up with a father so much so that when I lost him. Was like oh my goodness my world is lost. So, I've always grown up with male figures in my life. And for me I feel that is what has made me. So, for me. I feel for a healthy balance. There needs to be the male and the female which is why we have the anima and the animus. So, these are parts of us and I feel that male figures sometimes help us

regulate or make sense of the maleness in us. So, in South Africa there is a huge, huge imbalance with these figures and I take to the fact that father figures aren't just there because we need fathers for modelling. I feel that male clients need to see themselves in other male drama therapists. Yes, our maleness comes out as female drama therapist. But for me there is something to go oh as a young man there is a male figure. There is someone that I can speak to, there is someone who can recognize and see me. With applied course in co-facilitation that's when I felt there was a lot of flow when we were both male and female there were more things more look at but also the guy that I worked with was also very in it was very different so that also helped it is individualistic.

I don't have the answer of why there aren't more Black males, they possibly drawn to a different profession. I couldn't tune into the answer, I don't know yeah, I don't have the answers to that one. And it is something even I was even saying a few weeks back in Sunday school I asked *where are the male Sunday school teachers?* Why is it only female teachers here? And I said there needs to be a male figure in the space so that the children can go and talk to the male about problems because when it comes to youth pastors suddenly it's males, so it's disjointed.

4.8.8 indima yabalaphi ekugcinene kwemfundiso nomlando

The Dancer

I am guilty I don't write about my work because I'm so busy reading the work I'm so busy teaching an article, but can I write, and it was only in I think with your group of your group that I wrote my first reflective piece based on COVID-19 based on the students' experiences. It was the first time I had taken time to actually write about my experience with the students and then I turned it into a bit of a piece and shared it, but it takes time to get that going. My biggest thing would be to I don't know how to say this is that I don't know if you are called to the work, or the work calls you I feel that we are called to this work and what we're needing to do is to listen to that core. Respond to that core because I believe that drama therapy is not for us, it's for our communities, it's for it's for our people it's for our children it's for our generations to come. A part of me was thinking this work is difficult emotionally, psychologically, and physically. It's difficult; you have to find the gap, a kind of space for people to find your work relevant. You have to make it relevant, but you need to be hungry enough to know you're going to do the work.

You'll find that you'll come back to Drama Therapy two or five years down the line but there is something. There's a reason you've been called. It's a long journey and I tell you. My biggest thing about Black people and I say myself included is that drama therapy works. Yes, but my feeling is also that we need to be able to speak to people using our mother tongue to explain to them I don't know how else. It's in a way that is people are going to the community, they're doing work with us not knowing where we are coming from or understanding our cultural background and for me someone who comes from a community who and to understand the soil and a child of that soil can speak from a place of knowing but also from a space of power and showing those children that you too can be you too.

There's something about being able to connect normal using what God has given There's a reason you're speaking another tongue. We have 11 different tongues, almost 12 but it's just about being able to reconnect with people and sometimes we have to do it through mouths speaking through our mother tongue. There's something about going back to the body going through our rituals.

It's been a journey. It's been tough because if you're trying to map out something that isn't yet necessarily mapped on the floor, you're in the messiness, you're in the work.

4.8.9 indima yokubambisana

The Preceptor

By being far away from each other as individuals who would like to see a black drama therapist thriving and taking to each other, but they [other Black dramatherapist colleagues] were protecting themselves now where are they with

protecting themselves? I see my purpose I see why I'm doing this. I am not interested in being called in because of my Blackness for the sake of visibility. I am interested in being acknowledged for my work as a drama therapist and for collaborating with the NGO space. I'm interested in that visibility because of a transition that I know is taking place but in a lot of these things that what they do is that they put up Black faces and I'm not interested in that, it puts me off.

This notion of visibility becomes a poignant question of visibility when you are studying because you would like to see these people engage. You want to see it. You want to probably make sense and that's why I probably shouted it is true [regarding the low number of Black dramatherapists]. I'm also acknowledging that drama therapy as a field still has its teething stages.

The Dancer

I was given so much agency. I was at a level where I couldn't go cry about everything. I couldn't go and make it about *I don't have this I don't have that*, but my colleagues have. I needed to show up and be in my placement site. No matter where I found the transport money I needed to be there. I didn't have some things that my fellow colleagues had but I still didn't give up just because I didn't have a car, so I used public transport. We had to walk across the Mandela Bridge, go to number three and then the taxi would drop you under the bridge. We needed to go under the bridge and must move! Walk now! There was a factory for sweets that we had to walk past, and I must say we walked a good distance. You get to your site. You're sweaty and you have to be ready to work with the kids. We did it because we didn't know any better but also, we did it because we had an obligation to these students (kids). We walked and memories were made in that walk. We were able to plan to make sure that we've got our session ready for them and when we left, we were able to debrief on the walk; there was something ritualistic about how we arrived and left the site. We were learning the terminology as we go. We learned that we are beautiful. Whatever we found there, we're leaving it there and we are moving. That's when we learned each other we learned each other in those moments. Those little relationships were built in the traveling together and so that's how I guess how we are still holding relationships with each other with ease. When I look now students have sites that are close and there's Ubers.

4.8.10 indima yabalaphi yokuyandisa inoxo ezibalulekile zabantu

The Equilibrist

I've sort of just been doing more facilitator kind of work I wouldn't really call them clinical settings or whatever. It's just more like facilitating dialogues you know with like different people. The most consistent dialogue facilitation has been with a group of students for the past three years and then recently was like at a church with a very deep historical piece. I was co-facilitating action with another drama therapist but wasn't... I don't know if it would be called dramatherapy; it wasn't drama therapy but we're just using the skills of you know applied drama theatre to sort of like facilitate dialogue around identity and belonging and remembering.

4.8.11 ukulwa ubukonyovu nobuthakathi

The composite therapists' narratives have exposed how deeply interwoven the story of dramatherapy is from the perspectives of Black dramatherapists and warrants a brief summation before traveling to the discussion in chapter 5.

There's an isiZulu saying that witchcraft starts in the heart, what in essence this means is that the intention alone to cause harm or wish for the downfall of the other is enough to activate an embodied response in the intended recipient. Coloniality in effect is witchcraft as Tamale (2020) states that coloniality outlived colonialism and is an indirect force that is at work presently through the annihilation of indigenous realities (ontologies) and ways of knowing (epistemologies) by preserving the ongoing truncation and totalising of knowledge systems, the demonisation of tacit and embodied knowledge, the castration of indigenous languages and the incessant need to lord over non-whites' systems of governance on both a micro and macro level including the body and mind i.e. the cartesian-split, thus, invisibilising becomes normative:

Ultimately, the feminized, racialized bodies of African women are “disappeared” in the global economy and in the Economic lecture halls (Tamale, 2020:249).

Furthermore, coloniality is an active force in the alienating and isolating oppressed groups from one another, additionally it causes a psychological split within oneself thus alienating one from their own consciousness and being (Freire, 2017). Resourcefulness was the source of regulation for the dramatherapists interviewed however invisibilising forces were still in action and herein the background of performance can be viewed as the tool they used to resist invisibilisation in that each dramatherapists define the theatre of dramatherapy for themselves and play roles that ensure not only survival but also flourishing. It is in this playing field that I deduce *The Writer* was unable to tap into because of the lack of a performance background.

Naming is a powerful action that reveals the intention of the namers, that said naming cannot be done on behalf of others rather it occurs in dialogue within the atmosphere of equality, critical thinking and meditation underpinned by temporality (Freire, 2017). Dialogue is the encounter that awakens one to faulty thought paradigms and creates space for imaginative yet tangible possibilities and this was the first encounter that was decimated through the colonial encounter therefore the progress of abantu was stifled and still hangs in limbo. Language, rules and regulations of communities, knowledge systems and learning, counting, mapping and healing were all conducted through dialogue with the understanding that as abantu we are immersed in temporality, that is always in a state of meta, between life and death whilst also being with the dead and through divine premonition calling into existence the future through dance, ritual, intentional self-grooming and intentional periods of rest that is rest from thinking,

resting from working the animals, rest from ploughing the land, rest even from movement because life before the colonial encounter was built on the principle of spiritual growth, physical health, physical strength and maintaining peace and harmony within oneself and with others. The meta state extends to being between thought and action, between action and creation, between thinking and understanding, and between reckoning and naming.

I reckoned with the notion of invisibilising of Black women through the explicit naming of the dramatherapists in attempt not to humanise them but rather to affirm their humanity which point to the qualities and characteristics of how they practice their humanity. Additionally, I reckoned with invisibilising of Black intellectual dialogues, voices, activities, and products by explicitly ensuring that each of the dramatherapists' perspectives are represented through the naming of each category. I reckoned with the invisibilising of my embodied knowledge through deliberately naming the signposts of this research paper in a manner that made sense to me.

ISAHLUKO 5: UKUQONDISISA KWENDABA

The normative manner of conducting research is to pathologize the stories, to claim that the infection is with the research participants i.e., the storyteller, this is particularly true when a supposed disenfranchised population such as Black women are the focus. To make sense of these findings I have resorted to thinking about the ways that I was taught about treating stubborn sicknesses traditionally within Zulu customs. Linking back to the act of naming, there exists a caveat when it comes to naming a problem or illness. My grandmother taught me that there are certain ailments that should not be named because in naming them you invariably give power to the source of that sickness, for example when a tooth, specifically the molars, are troublesome or when the kidneys are infected or there's a suspicion of kidney disease. There are many other sicknesses, but I will not get into detail about that because that is not the point of this exercise, rather the point is that the reader needs to understand my diagnostic process in this discussion session as being framed using an integrative approach (Chilisa et al., 2017).

All the therapists demonstrated an awareness of the automatic nature and operation of invisibilising non-white bodies including their intellectual activities and products even when bodily present. Case in point with The Equilibrist who was forced to play broken telephone:

THE EQUILIBRIST

There is something interesting about like working with white people and there's a kind of information hogging that they know how to do without seeming like they are hogging information and then whatever responsibilities I have get overlooked and then at the end of that story I seem incompetent because I actually lacked information, but it would seem to everyone else that I didn't know what I was doing but that's not the case. It's information hogging. So, what that does to me is that it makes me look like I was the broken part of the telephone when actually, literally, I took her words word for word and so anyway, it's just annoying because it happens every single time.

Thus, minimising her ability to maintain a professional demeanour and thus paralysing her efforts to contribute any further to the organisation that is supposed to be representative of the community all dramatherapists. Working in isolation comes across as brave yet dangerous decision as cited by The Preceptor and The Thespian who while working away from the representative bodies using the resources at their disposal either through communal links or finances to open a private practice, feel the pressure to join formal representative bodies which are alienating yet serve only the function to police all the therapists and gatekeep intellectual innovation.

THE THESPIAN

I just went through training so that I know how to frame it and how to own the space and how to facilitate that space between me and the other people. It has changed the me I was before to the me I became. I think I make this thing mine. That's what I accepted essentially when I started where I said *I'm going to throw the book away* and literally get to throw the book away because it's binding because restricting, because it's dictating, and I don't want to be dictated to.

It's isolating to be in private practice. You lose touch with what all else that is happening, and I need to revisit some of the things that I've learned and studied. To tap into what others are bringing in I need to be in touch with people I mean Black people. I need to create a space where we can all come together on the same level about drama therapy practice as practitioners to come up with ideas of how to do things to be independent in all practicality.

The Writer's experience stands out as she is the only one who had a negative experience throughout her training years and as such has still not completed the expected number of internship hours; it bears weight then to conclusively state that punishment is unavoidable whether one participates in the process of academic assimilation, during the student years or whether one charts their own path. The punishment in this case is subtle, coercive and meets all the criteria of gatekeeping and academic racial politics. However, it is not simply Black and white, at least this what is found in the manner in which they narrate their stories by being careful and mediated in their responses whilst providing critique where they see the gaps. Thus, a diagnosis of racism is not sufficient because racism is the condition that was and is pre-existing in formerly white only spaces such as the university and invariably on a macro-level the whole country of South Africa; in short, the effects of racism on the Black body is inescapable whether in the freedom of physical movement, freedom of expression and being an active actor of political redress. Linking to political redress, the therapists refrain from identifying as the oppressed even though in some instances like in the case of the malevolent broken telephone exercise that The Equilibrist was coerced into. Despite this identification of an intention to minimise one's presence and intellectual contributions, the oppressed in this case does not identify as such instead they understand that the oppressor is oppressing as per what an oppressor does to maintain ties with dominant race players and power mongers (Freire, 2017). As such Black dramatherapists in supposed representative organisations form part of the Black masquerade whereby such organisations are structured to create new avenues of racial and intellectual dominance through parasitic means.

THE PRECEPTOR

I see my purpose I see why I'm doing this. I am not interested in being called

in because of my Blackness for the sake of visibility. I am interested in being acknowledged for my work as a drama therapist and for collaborating with the NGO space. I'm interested in that visibility because of a transition that I know is taking place but in a lot of these things that what they do is that they put up Black faces and I'm not interested in that, it puts me off.

In support of The Preceptor's view, the pedagogy of the oppressed articulates that the oppressed's participation and visibility is subject to sadistic control because of the oppressors' core beliefs that the oppressed are inherently lazy, incompetent, petulant and ungrateful:

The pleasure in complete domination over another person (or other animate creature) is the very essence of sadistic drive. Another way of formulating the same thought is to say that the aim of sadism is to transform a man into a thing, something animate into something inanimate, since by complete and absolute control the living loses one essential quality of life- freedom. (Freire, 2017:33)

As such these narratives lead me to think of the metaphor of a parasite or a tick "imbugulu". A parasite latches subtly on its selected host, then it causes an infection in the host and unless identified as the source of the infection, may cause the host to die a painful and slow death wherein alternative medicines and remedies are used but, the parasite since it is incognito, grows fatter and greedier. The host, when all its nutrients have been sucked out and its internal system of organs are slowly but collecting failing, experiences a fever unlike any other calling for a close examination of every inch of the body outside and inside to reveal the location of the parasite. Yet even when found the parasite must be removed carefully so that none of its toxic compartments such as the head or the eggs, are left behind in the host to attack the host once again when they recover and think foolishly that all is well. The medication is patience and precision for you cannot shoot the parasite without killing the host, you cannot carelessly cut out the parasite lest the host bleed to death but you can imbibe potions that are carefully brewed to slowly kill the parasite, you can move the body and massage it gently until the parasite loosens its grip and most importantly you can concentrate on imagining a new state of being after the parasite has been evacuated.

The parasite presented in the case of these narratives is not a person or persons rather it is a psychic wound that the oppressor knows too well how to instigate- it is their only arsenal against dismantling gatekeeping and having equitable relations with others who are non-white especially those at the end of the spectrum i.e., Black women. Buffers to this psychic wound as evidenced in the narratives are resourcefulness and coming from or forming a class identity that is middle-class and above, however these buffers have proven not be impenetrable in racial

parasitic conditions. Rather having a mission i.e., andizi nokufukuza (these tenets are discussed more in Chapter 5) are the means to survive the infection where such an infection is identified.

While The Dancer confessed that the act of archiving Black dramatherapists intellectual activities was lacking, they had at the time of interview written an article particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

THE DANCER

I am guilty I don't write about my work because I'm so busy reading the work I'm so busy teaching an article, but can I write, and it was only in I think with your group of your group that I wrote my first reflective piece based on COVID-19 based on the students' experiences. It was the first time I had taken time to actually write about my experience with the students and then I turned it into a bit of a piece and shared it, but it takes time to get that going. My biggest thing would be to I don't know how to say this is that I don't know if you are called to the work, or the work calls you I feel that we are called to this work and what we're needing to do is to listen to that core. Respond to that core because I believe that drama therapy is not for us, it's for our communities, it's for it's for our people it's for our children it's for our generations to come.

All the dramatherapists vouched for a more Pan-Africanist approach to the discipline of dramatherapy curricula that referenced the diverse sources rather than the white interlocutors of the practice:

THE WRITER

Maybe what should be happening is more African writers should come. They should be African writers when it comes to drama therapy books because we only have books with European experience. More Black writers so that we can relate to what is happening, so we can relate. Don't just tell me how David Reed Johnson sees it or how that other Englishman sees it. That shouldn't be the only thing I should hear someone like me being I should hear someone like me saying what the person has experienced because David Johnson is so totally different from me, his experiences are so totally different from mine. What am I only hearing about the story of a white person. And I'm not in any way, an activist I'm telling you I am the for this activism here, I'm not an activist in any way I'm just a woman who doesn't feel heard in this profession who doesn't feel seen because of what I've come through.

It is fair to say that in some cases an infection does not even need to occur for a remedy because wisdom is a foreteller of past boundary crossings, this is the case with The Preceptor who has exhibited foresight of an impending infection and thus decides to operate in an environment where it is highly likely that the infection will not take place, contrarily The Equilibrist thrives in the hostile condition where quite possibly parasites of varying toxicity have historically attacked her. That said The Equilibrist seems impervious to the attacks and has built an immunity which is akin to The Dancer's.

In the midst of navigating the dramatherapy field in the efforts to evade parasitism and enter into mutual symbiosis, all the dramatherapists conveyed a desire for mutualism amongst themselves and in fact practiced it which in effect is the praxis of liberatory pedagogy which its maxim is the exercise of adopting the ontological vocation of humanization (Freire, 2017). This is not to say that all Black people from a certain profession get along, rather the interview cohort intentionally relayed the message that they branch out to each other where possible. The manifestations of transforming their relational dynamic whilst healthily achieving their individual goals and what this means for the drama therapy field is discussed further.

5.1 Umkhuhlane

At the center of *figure 1* lies a small, disfigured shape and it represents the number of Black female dramatherapists that have enrolled since the inception of the course and from that representation alone it can be deduced that this rate of producing qualified Black female dramatherapists is piecemeal especially when contrasted with the totality of students enrolled every year. Therefore, the enrolment rate is disproportionate on a department scale and is not representative of the national population wherein Black women are the majority. Tamale and Oloka-Onyango (1997) stipulate that for academics who are African women, multiple factors are at play, and these include class and coloniality, additionally, what is often observed as a local politics is shaped by global forces because of the hegemonic rule of information particularly within university institutions that are reliant on external donors. It could also be that African women are encouraged to enrol in courses that absolve them of the, amongst many other roles, the caretaker role that dramatherapy seemingly espouses, this action is underpinned by the need to be liberated from societal gendered expectations (Tamale and Oloka-Onyango, 1997). This is true for four of the participants as they all had bachelor's degrees which center their performances on stage, mostly if not all the time, for the sole purpose of entertainment therefore using this background to give back to their respective communities is quite a reorientation. Furthermore, through understanding the pedagogy of the oppressed we can deduce the background in acting and performance imbues the dramatherapists with the flexibility of deciding to be actors of change in their own lives rather than spectators of the system (Boal, 2013; Freire, 2017)

Looking at the narratives of upbringing and background the research participants are clearly within the middle class and from holistic homes that supported their ventures. For instance, the Equilibrist self-proclaimed that they are in fact a *coconut* which is a term that is used to classify Black people that are financially well-off and far-removed from the realities of impoverished Black people. Additionally, the Dancer like the Preceptor went to multiracial schools. Furthermore, all the research participants appear to conform, in varying degrees, to the gendered roles of women in society, even those without children, however their narratives display strength and understanding of the power of remaining feminine which was modelled to them by their own mothers who imbued independence and self-reliance. Xaba (2019) cites Makgano Mamabolo's call to return to femininity and further states that the fear of being called "silly" or "frivolous" dissipated when she remembered the gentleness, strength and independence her mother modelled but the call was answered when she saw other ways of women being women in their different ways.

The Dancer reflects this narrative:

I found myself needing to be mature, needing to be present so that I didn't affect my fellow colleagues in the space I learned so much from them being elderly being older being more experienced and that is what made me realize it's not about age. It's about you centring yourself; knowing what ground you are standing on because home was also so far away. It [master's year] became a space of grounding I had to remember my mother's teachings of you commit yourself and you commit yourself wholeheartedly.

Moreover, all participants prize the attainment of the highest levels of education and playing vital roles in the academic spheres as lecturers and social spheres as teachers and facilitators of knowledge dissemination. The problem of low enrolment of Black females in the drama therapy course is clear, however, the source cannot be clearly ascertained despite attracting highly educated Black women.

5.2 Imigomo nemandela

The conditions of the dramatherapy qualifying process vary from participant to participant but the majority expressed an overall positive master's placement year and internship year except for one participant who generally had an overall negative experience. The prevailing themes of *racial politics*, *black masquerade*, *strong black woman* and *angry black woman* demonstrate that the participants were affected by structural racism and stereotyping. The narratives suggest that the participants are aware of these dynamics, subsequently the navigation of these

landmines is different for each participant because each participant viewed them in a different light and viewed themselves as not necessarily being oppressed by these dynamics. Xaba (2019) states that the South African democratic dispensation encouraged women to exercise their freedom of expression and through the participants stories it can be seen that it is particularly this right that has enabled the participants to navigate the departments for their own thriving, to be seen, to be heard and to be defiant, to take rest and to return. These navigations are articulated by Muti (2022) as feminist:

In other words, feminism can be understood in women's energy towards mitigating divisive tendencies that characterize their collective towards global development as women (Muti, 2022:78)

Academic freedom and academic democracy intertwine with the freedom of expression, the freedom of choice and the freedom of association (Tamale and Olaka-Onyango, 1997). Contrarily, experiences that consistently, in both overt and covert ways, infringe on these rights are termed as structural and systematic violences which are the offspring of the colonial injury (Avlos, 2022). These violences are cited in two participants narratives and were consequently codified as *andizi*, an act of refusal against being involved in power plays that benefit the colonial gaze, reinforce stereotypes aimed at Black women and support coloniality in universities (Ngema et al.; Zembylas, 2021). Moreover, the act is a movement by educationists in higher education institutions that proactively promotes the disinvestment in parasitic relations with the aims of decolonizing whilst indigenizing higher learning institutions (Zembylas, 2021). What lies at the core of *andizi* ideology is the keen awareness and resistance, specifically in the case of Black women in universities, of unburdening oneself from labours that have no apparent benefits whether materially or relationally when weighted against the cost of one's exploitation of their humanity (Ngema et al., 2022). For the Black dramatherapists interviewed, the act of *andizi* is tricky and the smaller fraction reported participating in this act during their studies and in the professional realm; the cost was a delay in completing the requirements of the qualification and yet both women are dramatherapists today.

5.3 Ubudlelwane

Relationship building is central to a positive qualifying process in terms of Black dramatherapy students building a community amongst themselves and solidifying those ties as they entered

the professional field. However, many factors influence this initiative which are amongst others an inherited colonial mindset of intrinsically distrusting Black peers and this is further compounded by the intersections of race, gender, age and class (Tamale, 2020). Additionally, according to Avalos (2022), interpersonal violence amongst same races and even deeper between ethnicities, is a behaviour inherited by formerly colonized people that was constructed to render former colonized communities dysfunctional. Conversely the majority of the research participants intentionally bonded despite these factors. Relationship building is also paramount to forming strong connections with agencies that can be future worksites. Nancy (1990) argues that a single public life does not exist, rather the public life is politically determined and furthermore that the public life is better navigated by individuals from dominant class and race groups who own the public sphere. This argument is visible in South Africa where the white population still enjoys the benefits of Apartheid due to Apartheid spatial planning, Bantu education, land rights, and exclusionary job policies (Ramnund-Mansingh and Seedat-Khan, 2022). This is echoed in the narratives of the Equilibrist, the Writer, the Preceptor, the Dancer and the Thespian therefore it stems that a relational transformation is required:

There is a project before us: to reflect and to act in ways that reveal and observe suffering and that seek to transmute the suffering seen into insight, healing and wisdom (Devalve, 2022: npn).

The project call is emancipatory in its nature with the aim of achieving justice by creating a community that loves wisdom and the re-justification of the other through reflecting on the existent interactions in interrelationships (Devalve, 2022). The Equilibrist practices this in their practice through facilitating dialogues with students and this transposition of dramatherapy skills is fitting because according to Sajnani (2017), operates within an intersectional framework and helps individuals and communities practice being in relationship in the midst of vast differences of position, location, opinion, position, perspectives etc.

5.4 Ukuxumanisa kwenkinga

The graph illustration provided by *figure 4* gives credence to the intersectionality of the multiplicities of forces that were found to be at play during the participants academic journeys. Most importantly it points to an interesting convergence whereby the highest concentration of themes were found, notably *Black masquerade*, *strong Black woman*, *angry Black woman* and

motherhood. Not all these themes can be read as positive nor negative but as is because while three narratives were coded as *strong Black woman*, the participants had different articulations of what it means at various points of the interview. However, events that accounted for the themes of *Black masquerade* and *angry Black women* were described by the participants as negative and perilous. By virtue that the women identify as Black, as African and women the lens of feminist research is fitting as this grouping serves a political function (Daymond et al., 2003), therefore an interpretive paradigm made sense for all the nuances (Kiguwa, 2019)

The findings of this research are ontological, describing what was and what is happening in the dramatherapy field from the perspectives of Black dramatherapist i.e., highlighting the influence of invisible powers at play (Kiguwa, 2019). As such the statistic assumption that Black dramatherapists are stagnant and invisible is not true, rather Black dramatherapists have decided to be visible in other ways in order not play to the *Black masquerade* that most university department fall into (Tamale and Oloka-Onyango, 1997; Tamale, 2020). The active response to the realization of active marginalization of certain social groups by dominant groups such as regulatory and professional representative is articulated by Nancy (1990) as forming an alternative public in which to participate wherein power is balanced and necessary discourse is formulated.

It is precisely in the dialectic between these two functions that their emancipatory potential resides. This dialectic enables subaltern counter publics partially to offset, although not wholly to eradicate, the unjust participatory privileges enjoyed by members of dominant groups in stratified societies (Nancy, 1990:68).

Fundamentally, the subjectivity of each participant cautions us to refrain from treating all Black women as monolithic rather each narrative remains authentically representative, axiomatic and speaks to an alternative reality that exists off-centre.

5.5 Eyethu: imizwa nembono yocwephese

A pan-Africanist approach for the dramatherapy course that considers contributions from Africanist paradigms of healing and storytelling was echoed by all the dramatherapists in that such content must be included in the body of the curriculum not as subsidiary foot notes to the main content. The dramatherapists through positioning themselves in different sectors of communities including but not limited to the school setting, women's shelters, rehabilitation

centres, the theatre, and university, claimed the dramatherapy practice as their own. As lecturers and teachers, they imbue the principle of ownership and claiming the practice to students, in so doing distributing the pedagogies of refusal and the pedagogies of crossing (i.e., breaking the colonial injury through solidarity and creating a bridge so students can cross into future imaginings for social change) for the students own empowerment and transformation (Zembylas, 2021). According to Tamale (2020), while uBuntu is overly used if not abused for exploitative capitalist gains in South Africa and across the continent, the concept is intrinsically African and it is the original democratic principle which unifies action and reflection i.e., praxis. Cumulatively, the participants' consistent praxis is what has defined their career trajectories seen in the initiatives and efforts to take time to rest, to reflect, to exercise the power of participation or non-participation, to exercise the right of association, to exercise the decisions of their career paths whether it led to penalisations or not and to exercise the right of self-definition without being embroiled in unnecessary labours, yet focusing to labour where impact is needed even though it may not be seen or validated.

5.6 Umuthi nomlayezo

Colonization and the rise of Western capitalism disrupted the notion of time and set forth the precedent that all human activity should be commodified including knowledge production as such academic students are treated as economic units because the university invariably operates on capitalistic time frames (Motimele, 2019). For four years between 2016 to 2019 re-registrations occurred mostly amongst the Black dramatherapy students. Presently, time since the interruption of colonialism and Apartheid has been elusive for Black people: the time to find personal and communal stability, more importantly the time to grow critical thought and practice critical consciousness which comes from spending much time on learning and reflection (Motimele, 2019; Gqola, 2001). Therefore Motimele (2019) echoes the research participant's call for a transformed curriculum and critiques the rampant promotion of Black scholars simply for a Black charade, instead students and teaching staff, have collectively called for a curriculum that considers the content, environment and nature of teaching. A majority of the dramatherapists did not report complaints about the nature of teaching, rather they critiqued the lack of relevant and representative learning content- herein lies the core of visibility, that learning content that is written by Black dramatherapists and reorientates the

narratives of Black intellectual capital and their interaction with the discipline is included (Gqola, 2001).

Ngema et al. (2022) states that class identity does not protect Black women from gatekeeping and microaggressions thus for Black women academics institutions of higher learning turn into daily battlefields therefore a relational transformation is practiced amongst themselves and student whilst labouring i.e., *ukufukuza*. Countering the myth and metaphor of the rainbow nation and the exploitation of Black bodies, Gqola (2001) describes it as “fantasy” and that rainbows do not require labour instead they appear mysteriously in so doing she critiques the dehumanizing effects of a parasitic and false racial harmony at the expense of Black bodies. Crucial to the process of becoming is neither longing for an idealized past pre-colonial time but acting with integrity in the present to fulfil the yearnings of the present (Radina, 2022). Therefore, it can be said that it is the very act of *ukufuza* that enabled the research participants with the flexibility of multiple roles and an indescribable resilience. Additionally, while the national script in the form of the Bill of Rights (The Constitution, 1996) is at the disposal of the participants, it is the parents that modelled to them how to operate in the modes of empowerment, collaboration and justice, not rainbowism.

The subject of spirituality is a contentious one in drama therapy (Makanya, 2014). The participants, except for the Dancer, articulated their relationship with the subject in how they use self-defined spirituality to practice self-care and more importantly how it informs their practice. Avalos (2021) describes healing from the “soul wound” caused by the colonial injury as the healing arc which includes the retrieval of customary healing traditions and reinstalling certain cultural ceremonies in modern life. This approach is particularly true for the South African population whereby social ills stemming for the long throbbing colonial injury have caused various diseases that manifest in various ways including mental deterioration and community breakdowns. In contrast the dramatherapists’ narratives illustrate the utility of spirituality in that it emboldens them, supports the principle of servant leadership (Ngunjiri, 2016), stoicism and African ancestral philosophy understanding that we do not exist in a singular time frame but at all times interacting with those that have past and those that are coming. As such they are able to be fully present and attend to clients’ needs in a non-parasitic manner but one that edifies the healer and the one that needs healing.

5.7 Isifiso nes'xwayiso

The low number of Black drama therapy students enrolling annually is quite concerning. This section outlines the recommendations in order to increase the number of students enrolling, to maintain a high rate of graduations and to counter the invisibilising of Black dramatherapists.

To ensure successful academic assimilation and strong primary relationship building, workshops on constructing a tangible code of good practice, creating an ethos of transparency and accountability with incoming students, alumni and the department staff must be designed. An in-depth evaluation of the economic viability of the dramatherapy career in South Africa that takes into consideration the class divides is required so that potential students can have an equitable entry into the course. Furthermore, the evaluation would benefit from student-centred research on the influencing factors such as race, self-actualisation, and class identity as predispositions for success in the dramatherapy profession so that potential dramatherapy students' aptitude for the profession is better understood as well as to shape the form of department support required to help students academically assimilate, especially post the COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequently, the unique nature of the course requires a lot of reflection in the form of writing journals for each course and active reflection in class as such the department should consider including quarterly writing excursions that are outside of the city for 2-5 days at time, in so doing cultivating community amongst the dramatherapy students, focusing on growing reflective writing, growing a practice of self-regulation and distressing, and creating a culture of rest for the body and mind.

In lieu of transforming the curriculum, The Drama for Life department should consider a compulsory African spiritual year course that expounds on all the aspects of African spirituality and various African experts i.e., abantu should be recruited to teach the course to destigmatize dramatherapy student's spiritual practices that aren't oriented to Western Anglo-Christian view or Eastern philosophy such as Buddhism in so doing equipping South Africans dramatherapists to handle encounters with a South African clientele especially in a country where the majority of the population is Black. Moreover, African healing practices and African philosophy university standard texts must be embedded within every facet of the curricula, again the primary sources must be abantu. Additionally, archival support is required for Black

dramatherapists in the form of space, time and consultation with each other and other African experts that are linked to the discipline. Therefore, funding grants for this sole purpose should be considered and presented to existing donors at Wits university, Drama for Life as well as to the Department of Higher Education, National Arts Council, Department of Sports, Arts and Culture as well as other state organs and non-governmental organisations. In so doing, cultivating intellectual property that is affirming of the Black experience and Black intellectual voices which is integral to the transformative and healing frameworks that are usually the first encounters with clients that have endured life-long debilitating public systems failures. Mental health services in South Africa are disproportionate to the size of the population and as expounded through the narratives the role of dramatherapists in various communities are integral to the health and progress of communities through organs such including but not limited to the school, hospital, rehabilitation centres, women shelters, correctional services, social services, and the police. It is then fitting that the Black dramatherapists should not be alienated from reaching the communities, as such education and awareness about dramatherapy and dramatherapists should be included in the matric life orientation course and the course must be representative of the archival efforts of Black dramatherapists' practice and theory-building over the years. Additionally, the tentative nature of the internship phase excludes financially impoverished students as such government legislation should revise the income bracket for dramatherapy internships such that it is attractive and worthwhile for students and overall solidifies the viability and security of the career.

The limitations of the study are in its definition of Black which does not include The Constitution (1996) definition of Black which includes coloured, Asian and Indian individuals therefore the findings may not be applicable and generalised in this regard. Also, Black male dramatherapist were not included in the study. The design of the study was set to include a discussion group with larger numbers of dramatherapists, across the sexes, that fit the political definition of Black as ascribed by The Constitution (1996); this step was planned to follow the collection of the individual interviews and transcribing phase, however due to the volume of data produced from the five dramatherapists, time constraints and the delimitations of the scope of the research, this step proved unnecessary. The recommendation is that further progressive research should be conducted within the stream of the findings presented by this study, particularly investigating the low enrolment number of Black dramatherapy students.

ISAHLUKO 6: INZUZO YENDABA

There is a harvest from the composite narratives with no rainbows and delusions just the fruit with many seeds that will disperse and implant from reader to reader of this research report. The background in chapter 1 spotlights spaces and events where necessary dialogues took place in places where the Black bodies felt safe to express oppositional thought, fear, humiliation and being invisibilised during their studies. My ability to probe whilst remaining a safe space is underpinned by my innate need not only to seek and speak the truth but ultimately my researcher skills are built on a foundation of an intergenerational wound that makes me sensitive to injustice on any scale. Born in 1990 I was termed a “freedom baby” or “Mandela’s children” however watching my maternal ancestry continue to work the demeaning jobs that they had during Apartheid in the “new” South Africa stung. Before encountering dialogue with preschool teachers, school teaches and lecturers, I encountered dialogue with my caregivers, they are the ones who taught me to think of the world critically and taught me how to enter a symbiosis with others, the earth, God and the ancestors. You see I was rather a melancholic child to the point where I was taken to different healers because my family thought I was possessed or bewitched. However, they soon realised that I was a natural prober, a questioner and read books rapidly to the point where I did not care for human interaction and this scared them gravely so we travelled from healer to healer because only “abelungu do not want to learn how to live with people or rather do not embrace humanity”, this is what I was told and this idea was relayed through the multiple narratives from different family members of how they navigated space (freedom of movement), exercised speech (freedom of expression), sought love and belonging (freedom of association), in the midst of encountering whites who rendered them non-beings. Moreover, stories of how they fought for education, to be educated like my grandmother who started school at the age of ten because she was female and also education was still new to her family so it was not an attractive quality but she fought to be educated and excelled, even so she had to work as a domestic worker because of many situational variables that obfuscated her intelligence. And now in this present age we must ask what is this education for if in the end the witchcraft of coloniality is still in effect, when will the invisibilising end? At the core of the colonial injury is displacement, displacement from the land and displacement of one’s language. While writing this research report I ran out of English bundles and painfully I had a limited access to my native tongue because English has been splicing my tongue since my birth. Coloniality is the trauma, a blunt force wound that has been bleeding since its impact.

Therefore, what this research has done is what it is doing; in the meta state there are no absolutes and linearity does not exist, temporality envelops until the reckoning precipitates making visible what was unseen. Just like the narratives of my maternal side informed my need to reckon with injustice, the primary and secondary accounts of invisibilisation of dramatherapy students informed the background and rationale of the research. As such it was imperative that the probing of injustice within the dramatherapy profession was conducted humanely, i.e., using dialogue.

I deduced that a wholly negative training experience would affect the decision to pursue a dramatherapy career and the findings showed a strong correlation in the master's year, internship year and the experience of clinical supervision during the internship years. When all three of these years are riddled with wholly consecutive negative experiences, pursuing the career any further beyond the master's year is unlikely. I then surmised that negative training experiences are due to the institutional inclination to invisibilise Black students because of the inherent invisibilising nature of the university academy as it is a colonial product that functions on the tenets of coloniality. Additionally, 15 themes: *motherhood, community between black dramatherapists, angry black woman, strong black woman, department culture, black masquerade, andizi, academic assimilation, department support, academic racial politics, gatekeeping, parenting, class identity, resourcefulness and public systems failure*. that point to the central points of a negative experience precipitated from the narratives. These specific themes: *angry Black woman, Black masquerade, department culture, department support, academic racial politics, gatekeeping, strong Black woman and academic assimilation* strongly suggest that invisibilising experiences are predicated on racial tropes and intersect with gender thus resulting in violent encounters emanating from coloniality. The pedagogy of the oppressed magnified and made apparent the operant function of invisibilising and analysis through this theory revealed that the dramatherapists as students and qualified dramatherapists were in a constant negotiation of being invisibilised like The Dancer, accepting being invisibilised like The Equilibrist or vehemently denying the intrusion of being invisibilised like The Preceptor and The Thespian or crying out against being invisibilised like The Writer. Furthermore, it was found that neither agreeing to participate nor non-compliance or defiance guaranteed safety from being invisibilised. Contrarily, the role of being parented in a validating atmosphere, being mothers during the studies and post the studies, building nodes across the Black

dramatherapy community, and coming from and maintaining a good economic class standing operated as shields of resilience, i.e., *ukuzazi ukubu ungubani* creates a buffer against invisibilising. Controversially, the practice of *andizi* could be misread as subterfuge, however this growing movement amongst Black female academics is in resistance to racial and gendered expectations in university departments found in the themes of strong Black woman, angry Black woman as well as the theme of Black masquerade, the latter being informed by good-intending political policies for the purpose of transformation, instead such policies are used to entice bitterness, resentment and degradation because Black female students are seen as “seat fillers” or “quota spots” and when they speak out they are treated as angry Black women thus reinforcing the invisibilising of their bodies, minds and voices. Particular to working in the university as lecturers along with being dramatherapists, the adoption of *andizi* took the form of self-care and self-regulation with The Preceptor explicitly deciding not to “plug” into certain dramatherapy communities that exhibit a façade of representativity. Ultimately, *andizi* operates in opposition to participating in department cultures that, covertly and overtly, reinforces the invisibilising of Black women and invoking of certain stereotypes like *strong Black woman*. Linking back to the metaphor of a parasitic infection, the function of *andizi* becomes the only truly tried and tested vaccine in where environment where coloniality is the parasite.

I then examined how the act of naming a gap, a person, a space, a place an object, an act, an actor, an action, a time, a state of being, an emotion, a creation, and a story arguably dismantles the invisibilising effect of coloniality i.e., *ukulwa ubukonyovu nobuthakathi*. Conversely, in light of temporality and the understanding that as abantu we don't function in linear time or single states of being, naming and not naming a problem or infection then becomes a skill of wisdom of discernment that has precipitated from experience; that is if the dimensions and criterion of the infection are known then the source is invariably known. Rather treating the infection is paramount even wiser is ensuring that the infection does not take place at all, and this is where power of naming is reinforced. My probing skills invoked the dramatherapists to describe the symptomatology of the body of dramatherapy and as such the intergenerational infection that was transmitted through coloniality, a form of witchcraft that has endured over the generations despite a supposed regime change and its spell is in effect over the oppressed i.e., Black people permeating even within Dramatherapy. The literature review exemplifies that this transmission is not confined to South Africa but is global where colonialism penetrated

and coloniality persevered culminating in an intrapsychic wound of invisibility for the oppressed. As such healers much like the dramatherapists interviewed are paramount in transforming healing paradigms.

I then expounded on the core component of reflective practice in drama therapy studies which holistically is a tenet of ubuntu, a praxis that was followed by the dramatherapist interviewed as they constantly reviewed how they were treated and how they treated others and through it all maintained their actions of being humane no matter the environment whilst building boundaries in various ways either speaking out about the violation like *The Preceptor* and *The Writer*, critically reviewing behaviours and not personalising them like *The Dancer* and *The Equilibrist* or creating distance like *The Thespian* as well as *The Preceptor*. Academic assimilation was an identified challenge especially with the Reflective Practice course, the form of community check-in through weekly townhall sessions whereby differing experiences and perspectives indicate the reality of how colonialism and coloniality are ever present forces that shape one's stories thus invoking the intrapsychic wound within students. That said reflective practice imbues dramatherapists with the skill of differentiating between what is invoked, what is the reality and the role one plays in creating a reality they want. Embodied knowledge and learning through the body are the tools of drama therapy, all the dramatherapists narratives emphasised this point. However, when these bodies are invisibilised by the time of arrival in the classroom, there exists enmity with one's own body and other bodies and the space. Serious considerations on how to address this paradox of living in a supposed democratic country where inequality and inequity are rife need to be addressed by the department.

Lastly, I examined the effects of reinvisibilisation within the university thus contributing to the invisibilising of Black dramatherapy students and thereafter the work of Black dramatherapists in the field. The invisibilisation of knowledge systems replaced by Eurocentric and any other academic content except *eyabantu* is apparent in the dramatherapy course content, thus polarising and re-invisibilising the embodied knowledge of dramatherapy students. Therefore, an archival project to capture the practice-based experiences of Black dramatherapists to inform a journal of teaching must be prioritised. It is evident that the dramatherapists interviewed have begun to prioritise archiving their work and this is important because they must own their project, own their voices, own their narratives, own their

perspectives and own their intellectual work; rather than being treated as interlocutors of the knowledge and treated as vessels to bypass. A probable reorientation of their affiliation to an audience and community needs further investigation as it was apparent that they do not feel safe in representative bodies such as SANATA.

The intention of colonialism and Apartheid was to invisibilise Black people whilst eking out sustenance from in the form of caretaking of the very people that invisibilises, examples permeate through South African history from mining and other physical labours that built the infrastructure and economy of the country as well as indigenous knowledge systems such as geography, fauna and flora of the country, knowledge systems about healing the body and mind, knowledge systems about governance and self-governance, agricultural knowledge. Additionally, knowledge systems on the structure of native languages, knowledge systems of teaching through metaphor and native idioms, knowledge systems on ritual and symbolism, and knowledge systems on spirituality and the metaphysical realm. The invisibilisation was enforced through violent oppressive means that saw the cessation of dialogue amongst abantu and the alienation among abantu and within umuntu thus stunting the intellectual development of native languages. Therefore, the research showed the dramatherapy discipline which is underpinned by the intention to transform communities in a post-colonial and post-Apartheid South Africa must contend with the enduring practice of invisibilising Black dramatherapy students through the low annual intake as this is the primary encounter. Secondly, the research demonstrated that invisibilising takes place within the master's year. Thirdly, the role of clinical supervision in the internship years demonstrated the practice of the further invisibilisation of Black dramatherapists. Fourth and last the research demonstrated that the practice of invisibilising Black dramatherapists extends into the professional field particularly within professional representative bodies as well as through department culture when in role of being lecturers.

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ISITHASISELO 1: DATA ANALYSIS GUIDELINES

Research Questions

First division question: *bafike kanjani? What is the background of the participants?*

Tell me the story of your arrival to drama therapy.

Second division question: *uhambo lwabo. Which factors stand out from the training experience?*

Which personal stories stand out for you from the experiences of your internship year or your placements?

Do you have any untold stories that you would like to share from your experience?

What role did supervision play during this time?

Would you say that you experienced an identity shift during this time as a result of the internship or placement? What is the story behind this shift?

Third division questions: *umvuso. How do the participants perceive the viability of the dramatherapy career?*

Do you have a story of the future for your journey in drama therapy?

How do you think your story of drama therapy will impact those with aspirations of joining the journey?

Research Process

1. Consult with the Wits HREC (non-medical) ethics committee in order to receive an ethics clearance for the research (August-September 2021).
2. Once ethics clearance is received, write a letter to the Head of Department (Hod) requesting permission to conduct the research and get access to former students' records for the baseline research (October 2021).
3. Receive the letter from HoD granting permission and then send participant information to the Postgraduate Affairs so that they can distribute it to postgraduate students (October 2021).
4. Share participant information letters to WhatsApp contacts who are known drama therapists (February 2022).
5. Formulate a sample from the confirmed participants interested in conducting individual interviews. Five to seven spots will be made available on a first come first served basis (February 2022).

6. Send out consent forms and biographical information to confirmed participants (February 2022)
7. The first stage will be conducted one-on-one in person or on a phone call or via Zoom. The interviews will be recorded, and participants will be made aware of that (March-April 2022).
8. Transcribe interviews to text (May-June 2022).
9. Analyse transcripts through the framework method of analysis (July 2022).
10. Compile the findings from the analysis (August 2022).
11. Interpret the findings (September 2022).
12. Write the discussion section, stipulate the limitations, offer recommendations and write the conclusion (October-November 2022).

Data Collection

- Qualitative research surveyed the annual statistics of drama therapists who studied at the University of Witwatersrand, Drama for Life department between 2014-2021
- Non-probability sampling was used to sample the research participants.
- Biographic and demographic information was collected along with the consent form.
- First stage interviews were one on one.
- Second stage interview aimed be a focus-group where research participant group was intended to comprise of the individual participant interview respondents and other participants that chose participate through a focus group (Second stage did not happen due time constraints- chapter 5.7).
- The research data was captured through audio recording voice and saved in a password secured cloud drive.

ISITHASISELO 2: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Ethics Protocol Number: WSOA20211005

Uhambo Lwabo. Stories of resilience from a Black drama therapists' stockvel: understanding retention through a critical narrative enquiry of Black South African drama therapists' training experiences.

Dear Participant,

My name is Nobantu Shabangu, a Master of Arts in Drama Therapy student at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. My research explores the training experiences of Black drama therapists during their masters' years and internship year. The aim of this research project is to find out how the first-person narratives of your training experiences deepen the understanding of retention rates for the population of Black drama therapists.

I would like to invite you to take part in a two-stage semi-structured interviews, the first being individual and the second being with a group of Black drama therapists. The individual interviews will be approximately 30 minutes to one hour. The group interviews will follow once all individual interviews have been conducted and will take approximately the same time. Keeping in line with COVID-19 regulations and social distancing, all interviews will be conducted on an audio recording online platform called Zencast; internet links will be sent through to participants once consent forms are signed.

If you are participating in the research in the capacity of your identifiable work role, then it is at your discretion whether this information should be disclosed in the final research writeup. The option to remain anonymous throughout the research process is naturally available; pseudonyms will be used in this case. The information that is revealed by other participants during the group interviews should be treated with the utmost confidentiality, sensitivity and care. It is the individual responsibility of each participant to follow this through. If you experience any distress or discomfort at any point in this process, we will stop the interview and resume another time. There is no cost for participating and you may withdraw entirely from the research at any time.

The final research report which will be available online on the university website. A summary of the final report will be made available before publication and can be sent individually at the participant's request. The data collected from this research project will be stored in a password protected online drive and will be kept for an indefinite number of years. If you have any concerns regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27 (0) 11 717 1408, email Hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za or my supervisor Dr. Sinethemba Makanya at Sinethemba.makanya2@wits.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Nobantu Shabangu

568485@students.wits.ac.za/ +27 0610637713

ISITHASISELO 3: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



1 Jan Smuts Avenue,
Braamfontein 2000,
Johannesburg,
South Africa
Wits School of Arts
Bertha Street
Tel: +27 (0)11 717 1000

Ethics Protocol Number: WSOA20211005

Research Topic: *Uhambo Lwabo*. Stories of resilience from a Black drama therapists’ stockvel: understanding retention through a critical narrative enquiry of Black South African drama therapists’ training experiences.

Researcher: Nobantu Shabangu

I, agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand that my participation will involve me being interviewed individually and in a group on multiple occasions. All my responses during the interviews will be used to inform the research through the retelling of my individual experiences during the course of my masters of drama therapy and internship.

(Please circle or highlight either “yes” or “no” below:)

I agree that my participation can be recorded using my real identity (full name) YES NO

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous YES NO

I agree that the researcher may use anonymous quotes in his research report YES NO

I agree that the interview will be audio recorded YES NO

.....(signature)

..... (name of participant)

..... (date)

Researcher Details: Nobantu Shabangu
568485@students.wits.ac.za
0610637713

ISITHASISELO 4: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM



Participant Information

Name:

Surname:

Preferred Pronouns:

Age range:23-28

29-34

35-40

41-45

46-50

51-60

61-65

Year of Graduation: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021

Registered with the HPCSA: Yes/No

Province:

Current occupation:

Drama Therapy Specialisation:

Can you share why you are interested in participating in this research:

ISITHASISELO 5: ETHICS CERTIFICATE



SCHOOL OF ARTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER: WSOA/2021/10/05

PROJECT

Uhambo Lwabo. Stories of resilience from a Black drama therapists' stockvel: understanding retention through a critical narrative enquiry of Black South African drama therapists' training experiences.

INVESTIGATOR

Nobantu Shabangu

SCHOOL/ DEPARTMENT

Wits School of Arts

DATE CONSIDERED

22.11.2021

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

Approved

RISK LEVEL

LOW RISK

EXPIRY DATE

Date of submission of the project

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 24.10.2022

CHAIRPERSON


(Prof. Tanja Sakota)

cc: Supervisor: Sinethemba Makanya

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/ Department Ethics Committee.

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


Signature

31/10/2022
Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES