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Exploring the daily lived experiences of African
international students at a Gauteng Based University
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ABSTRACT

Internationalisation of higher education and the movement of international students has over the years become a rising trend. Latest statistics by UNESCO show that by 2016 there were 4.8 million international students across 200 countries. As a result of this migration, there has been growing research on international students and the internationalisation of higher education especially in the Western World. This study explores the daily lived experiences of international students at a Gauteng University in South Africa, with an interest in Black African students who come from other African countries. There is a dearth of research on experiences of Black African internationals in South Africa and this research takes on a holistic approach to build on the existing work as well as identify further areas of research.

A review of literature was situated in international student experiences, internationalisation of higher education and critical race theory which amplifies different realities. Following a qualitative research design, semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine participants. The findings revealed that African international students have positive experiences linked to a cosmopolitan campus environment, high quality academic qualifications, access to university resources and qualified supportive academic staff. Negative experiences were centred around race, ethnicity, support structures, stringent visa and institutional entry processes. The study provides recommendations for universities to reinforce support structures available for international students. Implications for further research conclude this research report.

KEY WORDS: Internationalisation, Diversity, Race, Identity, Micro-aggressions, Critical race theory