RACE, CLASS, GENDER AND SEXUALITY:
A CASE OF A
SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

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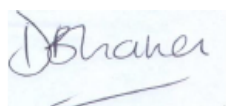**Specialization: Gender and Education**

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Supervisors Declaration

'As the candidate's supervisor I agree / do not agree to the submission of this thesis'.

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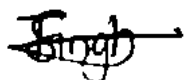
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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my amazing husband Praveen Singh, my daughter Vivasthi Singh and my son Pavan Singh. Words cannot express my immense love and gratitude for the life we have. Thank you for making this journey possible and for being that tower of strength. You have made all things possible and because of you, I AM.

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To the pillars of my strength, my husband and children. I cannot thank you enough for your support, encouragement and most of all your love and patience over the years in seeing me through this journey. Without you this would never have been possible and thank you for making my goal your goal too.

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To my mum and dad. Thank you for instilling in me the value of knowledge and the ability to persevere no matter how difficult.

To the rest of my family. Thank you for your unwavering support and encouragement throughout the years. I appreciate always…

To all my dear colleagues who have helped me accomplish this- THANK YOU. Without your support, care and encouragement – the journey would have been so much more difficult. To dearest Preshantha thank you for being there always, steadfast. To Daniel for seeing me through the end of this journey and constantly encouraging me. I cannot thank you enough. To Phillip for always caring and being there… thank you.

To all the participants of my study – thank you for your time and sharing some part of your life with me and me with you. THANK YOU.

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ABSTRACT

Within the South African higher education context, the meanings that students attach to race, class, gender and sexuality are not ahistorical or apolitical simultaneously tied to their particular socio-cultural and material circumstances.

This case study examines how students at a South African university campus give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality. The study is set in the context of the 2008 Soudien Report which for the first time provided a descriptive account of the social problems in South African higher education institutions. The report noted that demise of apartheid inequalities of race, class, gender and sexuality manifest with negative implications for higher education students. Whilst access to higher education in post-apartheid South Africa has increased dramatically for students of all races, asymmetrical relations of power continue to play out on campuses troubling the post-apartheid South African mandate of redress and transformation foregrounding identity discourses as core to the issues of transformation and social cohesion. Students entering the higher education system are inadvertently products of their social, historical, cultural and material upbringing.

In this thesis, I argue that students shape meanings of race, class, gender and sexuality and these have effects for understanding transformation and social cohesion in this particular university setting. This thesis is qualitative in nature situated within a feminist poststructuralist framework using an eclectic approach to the concepts used to understand how race, class, gender and sexuality coalesce to advance transformation. I document my

research journey in narrative style utilising observations, structured and unstructured interviews and document analysis as a means of data collection. The findings of this study illuminate the multi-dimensionality and fluidity of student realities and the socio-cultural and material processes through which their subjectivities are produced. Race, class, gender, and sexuality intersect to shape student lives and the meanings that they attach to these discursive constructions have implications for social cohesion and the transformation agenda in South African higher education.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

University of KwaZulu-Natal – UKZN

University of Free State – UFS

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender – LGBT

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex – LGBTI

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual – LGB

Publications arising from this thesis

Singh, T., & Bhana, D. (2015). Shifting race and class in student construction of identities at a South African university. *African Identities*, 13(3), 199-210. doi: 10.1080/14725843.2015.1074537

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CHAPTER ONE

THE TROUBLE WITH TRANSFORMATION IN THE
SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

2007: "In an academic study published in 2007, titled "The Habitus of the Dominant: Addressing Rape and Sexual Assault at Rhodes University", it's clear that there is a long history of the problem at the university, which is situated in Grahamstown. According to the study, in 1991, the SRC Women's Group produced a report on the growing extent of sexual harassment, claiming that more than half the student population thought the campus was unsafe at night, and 12% did not walk alone after dark … "(The Daily Vox, 2016).

2008: "A racism bombshell hit the University of the Free State (UFS) on Tuesday, when a video was distributed showing five black cleaners at a traditionally white men's residence on campus being "initiated". Amid loud laughter, they are shown taking part in races, downing beers and drinking a mixture in which a student had secretly urinated. Hundreds of furious black students gathered on the lawn next to the campus library on Tuesday afternoon, demanding an explanation and singing protest songs. Student leaders managed to persuade them to delay a protest march until Wednesday morning. Screaming students condemned the scenes on the video and waved placards with messages such as 'Enough is enough'". (Cloete & Sapa, 2008).

2014 and 2015: "In 2014 and 2015, four of the historically white universities, namely North West University (NWU), University of Pretoria (UP), University of the Free State (UFS), the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the Stellenbosch University made headlines due to incidents of racism and discrimination…" (DHET, 2015).

2015: "Recently, students at the Stellenbosch University released a documentary, *#Luister,* which contains interviews of mainly black students describing their encounters relating to incidents of racism and discrimination inside and outside lecture rooms at Stellenbosch University. These are clearly incidents reminiscent of the old apartheid South Africa. Most disturbingly, these incidents of racism and discrimination are seemingly taking place

unabated at one of the highly rated institutions of higher learning in our country. The issue is not only about Afrikaans as a language of instruction at the university, but this provides a basis for harbouring racist attitudes among some white students and academics at the university, clearly depicted in the interviews" (DHET, 2015).

2015: "Following the Reitz incident in March 2008 at UFS, which received wide media coverage in the country and internationally, the former Minister of Education, Ms Naledi Pandor, appointed a Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education, headed by Prof Crain Soudien, to "investigate discrimination in public higher education institutions, with a particular focus on racism and to make appropriate recommendations to combat discrimination and to promote social cohesion". The report noted serious disjuncture between policy and real-life experiences of both students and staff, particularly in learning, teaching, curriculum, languages, residence life and governance. The committee concluded that the experience of feeling discriminated against, in racial and gender terms in particular, is endemic within our institutions and that the state of transformation in higher education was painfully slow" (DHET, 2015).

2018: "Student safety is firmly back on the agenda, amidst calls for campus shutdowns after alleged rape incidents at Nelson Mandela University in Port Elizabeth and Rhodes University in Grahamstown. Rape and violence against women at tertiary institutions has been an ongoing problem in South Africa" (Shange, 2018).

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY:

I begin this introductory chapter with the above snippets from online news articles and media briefings that featured prominently in the South African media. They begin to problematise the issues faced by higher education institutions in the country disturbing efforts to transform and be socially cohesive. In particular, one incident, dubbed the "Reitz Affair", which unfolded at the University of Free State (UFS), signified a watershed moment for South African institutions and signalled to all that was wrong in post-apartheid South Africa and specifically within higher education. The Reitz incident catapulted the institution into disarray and chaos, causing an institutional and public outcry when four white students at UFS recorded a video

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showing five cleaners, who work at the institution, being denigrated (which included being given "food mixed with urine") in a caricature initiation ceremony at the historically white male student residence at the institution. This video was recorded as an attempt to vilify the university Managements attempts (after years of languidness) to introduce a few black African students into previously white student residences (Pattman, 2010; Soudien, 2010a; Suransky & van der Merwe, 2016). Following the incident, vital questions were raised "about why young people with no memories of living under apartheid could act in such blatantly racist ways" (Pattman, 2010, p. 953). In addition, more than a "racial" issue emerged, amid concerns about the assertion of "male power" in higher education (Pattman, 2010; Suransky & van der Merwe, 2016).

In October 2009, Professor Jonathan Jansen, during his inauguration as the newly appointed Rector of the UFS, pardoned the four students, arguing that the Reitz incident signalled to something that was far more complex than just four racially troubled students. Jansen argued that it was institutional complicity, which provided the fertile grounds for such an incident to flourish and questioned, "Who then should take responsibility for the event?" (Soudien, 2010b, p.1). Lewins (2010, p. 127) purports that "Reitz became a major signifier of all that was wrong in overcoming apartheid-era relations of differences at universities. It became a medium through which discrimination on other campuses could be spoken about".

In response to the Reitz incident, the country's Minister of Higher Education launched an investigation into racism at the different higher education institutions. The findings of the investigation, led by Professor Crain Soudien of the University of Cape Town in South Africa, were published in the Soudien Report. The findings illuminated the extent to which racism, sexism, homophobia and xenophobia were pervasive and endemic to the culture of the higher education landscape, and were manifest in and shaped student and staff relations negatively (Department of Education, 2008), despite higher education undergoing transformation over the past 25 years in the post-apartheid era. In particular, the Soudien Report highlighted how the complex matrix of gender, race and sexuality were being played out in the nexus of social transformation, reproducing social tensions (Department of Education, 2008).

Against this backdrop of the larger issues of transformation, this thesis examines how students give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality at a particular campus of a South African university. While I acknowledge other forms of categorisations such as age, ethnicity, disability, xenophobia, etc., this study pays particular attention to the issues of race, class, gender and sexuality pronounced in the findings of the Soudien Report (Department of Education, 2008) as troubling transformation and social cohesion in higher education. Suransky and van der Merwe (2016) argue that despite the post-apartheid vision foreseen for higher education in contemporary South Africa, the reality of a democratic, "non-racial" and "non-sexist" system is very remote from this, as institutions still struggle to address their inherent apartheid legacies.

Soudien (2010a) contends that part of the challenge of understanding these issues of transformation is an engagement with the ideological phenomenon of racism, which is fluid, changing and malleable. Badat (2016, p. 80) argues that the notion of transformation embedded within number counting obfuscates serious issues such as "the decolonization, de-racialization, de-gendering and de-masculinization of the academic and institutional structures and cultures of universities". However, according to Msibi (2013), issues around transformation in South African higher education have tended to circulate around race and gender, to the neglect and detriment of other forms of discrimination, while there remains limited research focusing on students who do not conform to heteronormative standards within the spaces of higher education institutions.

Making a case for undertaking my study at this specific institution is premised upon the fact that it was the first institution in the country to develop a "Transformation Charter", acknowledging, "processes will be devised in such a way as to break a 'code of silence' around instances of discrimination in any form" (Vice-Chancellor's Communique, 2010, p. 4). In addition, this institution was the first in the country to comply with the Minister of Higher Education's call to include African languages in the curriculum by introducing a compulsory isiZulu module in 2014 as part of the degree requirements for undergraduate students (Rudwick, 2015).

Whilst Hemson and Francis (2010) argue for research that investigates discrimination within the whole university system, this study attempts to provide a lens on the constructs of race, class, gender and sexuality, with the intention of precipitating much-needed insight into how students at this transformed institution, make meaning of their lived daily experiences within the campus environment and how this may trouble transformation and social cohesion. In order to understand the tensions, continuities, disruptions and possibilities for change towards transformation and social cohesion at higher education institutions, it is therefore critical to understand the ways in which higher education students give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality. As a result, this thesis attempts to contribute to the larger body of knowledge on higher education, transformation and social cohesion through context specific research.

1.2 THE FOCUS OF THIS STUDY

Using a feminist poststructuralist framework, this thesis adopts a case study approach using a single case within a bounded system. According to Yin (2014, p. 16) a "case study is an empirical enquiry" that:

> "investigates a contemporary phenomenon ("the case") in depth and within its real-world context…".

Stake (1994, p.236), suggests that a "case study is not a methodological choice, but a choice of object to be studied". I have therefore chosen to understand how higher education students within a specific campus (discussed under context of study) give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality in their lived daily experiences within the campus environment. In order to understand my study, I utilise the following research questions as a guide to the research:

Key Research Question:
- How do higher education students on a specific campus make meaning of race, class, gender and sexuality?

Sub-questions

- What are the discourses that students draw upon to give meaning to their identity?
- Why do students draw upon these specific discourses to give meaning to their identity?
- How is race understood and given meaning in the nexus of class and language?
- How are sexual identities given meaning in relation to heterosexual norms?
- How are gender identities given meaning in relation to hetero-patriarchal norms?

In order to understand the meaning that my participants ascribe to race, class, gender and sexuality, I employ an eclectic approach to the concepts adopted in this study. This study, while situated around the broader discussions of transformation and social cohesion within South African higher education, is context specific and locally grounded. Framed around this reality, I argue that the discourses shaping gender, race, class, and sexuality are inextricably linked and entangled within the socio-cultural, material and historical contexts of students lived experiences, embedded within the broader structures of power. Thus, in order to engage with the men and women in this study and the meanings and significance they attach to these constructs requires drawing upon an eclectic approach to the concepts that frame this study. This thesis rejects an essentialist understanding of identity as biological and advances poststructuralist theories that view power relations as fluid, changing and manifesting as an active, "net-like" relationship. Ultimately, I come to understand my participants in their lived worlds within intricate relations of power and discourse.

1.3 THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY:

Since this thesis uses a case study approach, I outline the reasons for choosing this particular campus. This study is situated on the Howard College campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. This institution has a deep political history, emanating from the historical legacies of this country. The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) was created on the 1 January, 2004, when two historically distinct institutions merged – a historically disadvantaged Indian university and a historically advantaged white university (Pattman, 2007). This university is a racially diverse institution and was reported to have 37,580 black African students, 877 coloured students, 10,032 Indian

students and 1,884 white students registered for the 2018 year (Institutional Intelligence, 2018). In 2018, UKZN had a registered student population of 48,220 across its five campuses – Howard College, Westville, the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, Edgewood and Pietermaritzburg (Institutional Intelligence, 2018).

The Howard College campus has the highest number of registered students, at 16,427 (Institutional Intelligence, 2018). The start of the merger between the historically white institution and the historically Indian institution was characterised by discord. There were allegations that "the resignation of a senior executive member in 2003, was prompted by him being used as a 'token black' on an Indian dominated executive board" (Makgoba, 2008, p. 4). The merger, however, was eagerly welcomed by the Zulus, who perceived it as an opportunity to reclaim themselves in the province at which this study is situated (Makgoba, 2008). The table below is a head count of student numbers and their demographic representation from 2014 to 2018.

UKZN STUDENT HEAD COUNTS BY RACE AND GENDER, 2014 TO 2018 (Institutional Intelligence, 2018)

Race	Gender	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Average
A	F	17522	17930	18723	20769	21136	19216
A	M	13081	13583	14604	16263	16394	14785
C	F	686	674	645	624	584	643
C	M	312	347	327	318	293	319
I	F	7003	6616	6181	5706	4990	6099
I	M	4435	4170	3999	3735	3323	3932
O	F	55	82	79	84	97	79
O	M	87	131	120	111	103	110
W	F	1330	1173	1031	834	699	1013
W	M	1142	985	859	765	601	870
TOTAL		**45653**	**45691**	**46568**	**49209**	**48220**	**47068**

Table 1. Student Headcounts per race and gender from 2014 to 2018 (Institutional Intelligence, 2018).

UKZN STUDENT HEAD COUNTS PER CAMPUS 2014 TO 2018 (Institutional Intelligence, 2018)

Cam	Campus	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Average
E	Edgewood	5286	5654	5971	6884	6780	6115

H	Howard College	14565	15104	15791	16711	16427	15720
M	Medical School	2474	2564	2563	2411	2397	2482
P	Pietermaritzburg	10160	9759	9602	9968	9760	9850
W	Westville	13168	12610	12641	13235	12856	12902
TOTAL		**45653**	**45691**	**46568**	**49209**	**48220**	**47068**

Table 2. Student Headcounts reflective of the five campuses of UKZN (Institutional Intelligence, 2018).

The University of KwaZulu-Natal aspires to be the "Premier University of African Scholarship". According to the scholars Makgoba and Mubangizi:

> "Being an African university, UKZN draws its inspiration from that identity and takes seriously the responsibility and demands of development of the African continent. Being an African university does not suggest detachment from the global interactions, global influence and global competition. UKZN also positions itself as a world-class university, with a clear understanding that to be a global player it must establish its identity as an African and a South African university – that is, a university that is first and foremost grounded in the African experience and is able to compete in and add value to the global knowledge industry" (Makgoba & Mubangizi, 2010, p. 75).

In 2007 at the Howard College campus there was an 'alleged' rape of an international student in one of UKZN's female residences. An audit of UKZN's safety and security was conducted by internal and external researchers and the findings concluded that "gender-based violence was 'rife' in the Halls of Residence and was supported by cultures of misogyny and homophobia" (Mackay & Magwaza, 2008, p. 21). Recent research conducted by Jagessar and Msibi (2015) at the university's student residence confirm the pervasiveness of homophobia within the living space. Research investigating race and social cohesion and race, class and social cohesion have been conducted by other scholars providing a springboard for further research into these issues at the institution under study (Pattman, 2007, 2010; Bhana, 2013a, 2014, 2016; Singh & Bhana, 2015). In addition, I am permanently employed at this institution since 2000. I therefore have in-depth knowledge as well as easy access to the participants and the fieldwork site.

According to the Soudien Report (Department of Education, 2008, p. 37), "there was no attempt by institutions to engage with the concept of social cohesion, either in terms of clarifying what they understood by the concept and/ or whether it was a useful concept in assessing transformation in the higher education system". The Soudien Report articulated two meanings of social cohesion: "The first is the sense of belonging and the second definition is social cohesion as a practice" (Department of Education, 2008, p. 38). The term social cohesion has been taken up by scholars and contested in its definitional assumptions. It has been argued that the multiplicity of definitions offered to social cohesion is one of the main reasons for the definitional confusions (Friedkin, 2004). Within the context of South Africa political tolerance was valued as key to a democratic society in fostering social cohesion (Gouws, 2003). Other scholars Moreno and Jennings (as cited in Friedkin, 2004, p. 411) view social cohesion as "the forces holding individuals within the groupings in which they are," and Festinger (as cited in Friedkin, 2004, p. 411) views social cohesion as "the total field of forces which act on members to remain in the group". Oloyede (2009, p.432) purports that social cohesion should be viewed akin to social morality in the sense "that enables shared practices and mutual intelligible interactions while communicating divergent opinions, beliefs and values".

Against this multiplicity of definitions by various scholars, in giving credence to the chosen context of my study, the University of KwaZulu-Natal was one amongst two institutions that engaged with the concept of social cohesion and identified the following factors for fostering social cohesion at the University.

- "Social cohesion will be valued and promoted through engagement and understanding, tolerance and respect for diversity in all its forms";
- "Every individual will be encouraged to promote social interaction among diverse social groupings, whether among or between staff and students";
- "Creation and utilisation of social spaces";
- "Diversity, i.e. bringing different programmes on diversity together and setting goals" (UKZN Transformation Charter, 2010, p. 2).

UKZN cautioned against a narrow understanding of social cohesion being equated to transformation and the elimination of discrimination and argued, "to ignore divisive incidents

and practices at any level of UKZN would be irresponsible" (UKZN as cited in the Soudien Report, 2008, p. 39). In terms of articulating my own sense and interpretation of social cohesion within the context this study, I employ social cohesion to feeling a sense of belonging and social inclusion on the campus.

Overall, my research takes the form of a case study enquiry which is qualitative in nature and draws upon ethnographic principles of observation semi structured and unstructured interviews, and document analysis. For this study, I conducted a total of 19 focus group discussions and 23 individual interviews that constituted the data gathered for this study (expanded upon in chapter four). At the beginning of this chapter, I argued that the identity categories that this thesis attempts to understand are framed around the broader political questions around transformation and social cohesion in the country. The next section in this chapter, discusses the issues that have disturbed and troubled the higher education landscape in its imperatives to transform since 2008.

1.4 THE ISSUES WITHIN SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTIONS: TRANSFORMATION TROUBLES

Since the release of the Soudien Report, other incidents of racism, sexism, homophobia, gender and sexual violence have emerged within the higher education landscape (Mackay & Magwaza, 2008; Hames, 2009; Clowes, Shefer, Fouten, Vergnani & Jacobs, 2009; Collins, Loots, Meyiwa & Mistrey, 2009; Msibi, 2009, 2013; Pattman, 2010; Bhana, 2013a, 2014;Collins & Gordon, 2013; Cornell, Ratele & Kessi, 2016; Shefer, Strebel, Ngabaza & Clowes, 2018). These multiple forms of inequalities, playing out in higher education, foregrounded identity discourses as central to the research process on issues of transformation and social cohesion and they remain a priority focus of institutional policy imperatives, as mandated by the Soudien Report (Department of Education, 2008).

Msibi (2013) contests that issues around transformation should also focus on experiences of students who do not conform to heteronormative identities such as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students. Few South African studies have detailed the experiences of LGBT students within the campus environment (Graziano, 2004; Ngcobo, 2007; Department of Education, 2008; Jagessar & Msibi, 2015; Cornell, Ratele & Kessi, 2016) or highlighted policy imperatives that have failed to protect the rights of LGBT students (Hames, 2007). Further

research that positions female students in higher education within discourses of vulnerability (Department of Education, 2008; Bennet, 2009; Hames, 2009; Clowes, Shefer, Fouten, Vergani & Jacobs, 2009; Collins, Loots, Meyiwa & Mistrey, 2009; Gordon & Collins, 2013) was not adequately addressed in the Soudien Report. Of equal importance, Lewins (2010, p. 128) asserts that discrimination based on class was overlooked by the Soudien Report, yet it forms the basis for "deepening forms of commodification, commercialisation and financialisation of universities".

The year 2015 can be considered a historical one in student politics across the country with institutions of higher education witnessing the #RhodesMustFall and the #FeesMustFall student movements (Naicker, 2016). The #RhodesMustFall movement began when a student at a university in Cape Town, threw human faeces on the statue of a colonial figure, Cecil John Rhodes, on campus, demanding that this colonial representation be removed, and all other colonial representations that underpinned the university (Naicker, 2016). This "movement was symbolic of the fall of white supremacy and privilege" at the university (Mudavanhu, 2017, p.22). The #RhodesMustFall movement was linked to the struggle for black liberation, stifled by colonialism, which included the holistic fight for all black students, academic and support staff as well as the campus workers (RMF Mission Statement as cited in Naicker, 2016). The protest, which gained momentum at other institutions around the country, with the call for the removal of all colonial statues and an interrogation of university curricula, ushered in the decolonisation of higher education debate (Marschall, 2017).

Elsewhere, at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, the #BlackStudentMovement was born in response to the #RhodesMustFall movement. The movement questioned both academic appointments at the institution and its curriculum, claiming that the latter was disconnected from the African continent. The slow pace of transformation was also lamented at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), when a document, entitled "Wits Transformation Memo 2014" was released by postgraduate students (Naicker, 2016). The memorandum demanded that the curriculum of the institution should also be decolonised, a need for an increase in black African academic staff and an emphasis on the African diaspora to be factored (Naicker, 2016). This initiated the movements' #TransformWITS and Open Stellenbosch, which elucidated the marginalisation of black African students due to the

unchanged institutional culture and language policies at certain institutions (Naicker, 2016; Gouws, 2018).

Another issue troubling the transformation agenda at South African institutions in 2015 was the #FeesMustFall student protest, which rendered the majority of South African institutions non-functional towards the latter part of the year. This student movement illuminated not only the fee debacle facing South African students, but also the unaddressed education challenges plaguing South Africa, which included the "inequalities between the rich and the poor and that it is a racialised and gendered issue" (Moloi, Makgoba & Miruka, 2017, p. 212). Both the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall student movements signalled to the critical and pertinent transformation issues within higher education and placed race, class and gender as intersecting at the heart of the transformation debate (Cornell, Ratele & Shessi, 2016; Gouws, 2018).

The #RU Reference list and #EndRapeCulture movement emerged in 2016 mobilizing female students in higher education in defiance of sexual violence rampant at higher education institutions bringing gender and sexuality into the spotlight (Bradbury & Clark, 2018). Gender and queer activists challenged the climate of heteronormativity and patriarchy displayed by leading figures in the student movements. There was strong vocal public opposition and condemnation of homophobia, misogyny and other forms of bigotry intersecting gender and sexuality, which were rampant within South African institutions. At Rhodes University in particular, students directly confronted the issues of rape culture and rapists, while condemning university management for perpetuating rape culture. Solidarity on these issues spread to other South African campuses in the country (Hodes, 2017). However, these incidents cannot be "dismissed, understood or discussed in isolation from the country's broader structural, socio-economic and socio-historical conditions" (Kiguwa & Langa, 2015, p.1). Against this backdrop, the next section of this chapter, focuses on the South African society and the basic education system under apartheid, and provides a historical and contextual perspective of the country and society shaped during apartheid.

1.5 A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY UNDER APARTHEID:

In order to understand post-apartheid South Africa, it is imperative to reflect upon the South African society during the apartheid era. According to Thompson (1985), apartheid is an Afrikaans derivative meaning "separateness" and the ideology of apartheid is premised on the notion of separate development, which called for the socio-spatial separation of the different racial groups in South Africa. Apartheid began when the political party, named the National Party (NP), took charge of the South African government in 1948 and began to implement a draconian separate development agenda that forced divisions along racial lines, fractured South African society and had a negative impact on education and the economy. The apartheid government institutionalised separate development with an intense political purpose than had never been witnessed before (Posel, 1991).

One of the first significant legislations to be passed and enacted by the apartheid government was the 1950 "Population Registration Act", used to classify all South Africans according to their racial and ethnic group designations (Neame as cited in Fleetwood, 2012). In this regard, apartheid created four racial categories – blacks, coloureds, Indians and whites (Posel, 2001; Ndimande, 2009). These racial classifications were used by the apartheid government to further segregate the country. The apartheid era, in addition to forced racial discrimination, was premised upon white supremacy and power (Vestergaard, 2001; Fiske & Ladd, 2004), positioning blacks at the bottom end of the hierarchy and coloureds and Indians in the middle (Ndimande, 2009). Other acts of legislation, such as the 1950 "Group Areas Act, the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act and the 1959 Promotion of Self-Government Act", effectively fragmented South Africa and weakened the resistance efforts of black Africans (Neame as cited in Fleetwood, 2012, p. 19). These Acts allowed for the best available land in the country to be allocated to the white population while other race groups were forcibly moved to designated "homelands" or "bantustans" (Neame as cited in Fleetwood, 2012).

The two acts namely, the 1951 "Bantu Authorities Act" and the 1959 "Promotion of Self-Government Act", gave effect to citizenship rights in the country and ensured the hegemony of white political power (Lipton, 1986). Thus, under apartheid, the white communities, who in 1993 only made up 12% of the population, monopolised the best land and resources in the country (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). Further, the apartheid government initiated strict measures,

which restricted job opportunities available to non-whites in order to sustain and ensure the economic dominance of whites (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). Black trade unions were also banned, thus ensuring that black wages were kept to a minimum (Marais, 2001). In addition, apartheid ensured that only one race group, white South Africans, were entitled to stake their vote as official citizens of the country (Lemon, 2005). However, the apartheid policies met with strong resistance, both from within the country and abroad. Towards the mid-1980s, there was mounting pressure on the state, due to economic circumstances and international pressure, to end apartheid, as change seemed inevitable (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). January 1994, witnessed the country's first democratic elections bringing an end to formal apartheid with the advent of a new democratic government (Fiske & Ladd, 2004).

1.6 BASIC EDUCATION UNDER APARTHEID:

Baxen and Soudien (as cited in Ndimande, 2009) assert that education under apartheid not only preserved the racial order, but also legitimised white hegemony. Education played a fundamental role in sustaining and reproducing the apartheid order (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). Therefore, aligned to the National Party's "separate development" agenda, schools were racially segregated and comprised of different curricula and funding structures that would ensure the economic, social and political dominance of white ideology (Molteno, 1984). According to Seeking's (2008, p. 2), the apartheid government, rooted within asymmetrical relations of power, legislated division by racial categorisation, "with separate schools and universities for each racial group". Thus, the basic schooling system under apartheid was either racially or ethnically separate and divided into 19 education departments (Christie, 1986; Nkomo, 1990). The segregated education was controlled by different government entities: "'White' education was controlled by the 'white' House of Assembly, so-called 'Indian' education by the 'Indian' House of Delegates, so-called 'coloured' education by the 'coloured' House of Representatives, mainly urban African education by the Department of Education and Training and African ethnically separate departments by 'homeland' educational systems" (Carrim, 1998,p.303). Carrim (1998, p.303) asserts "Each racially divided department was a separate educational bureaucracy, with its own regulations, laws, modes of operation, staff, contracts and history".

Thus, education was employed as a critical element for the preservation and power of the apartheid state. With this in mind, the apartheid government introduced and implemented a system of "Bantu Education" (Christie & Collins, 1982). This system of "Bantu Education" effectively prepared learners to adopt a "black way of life and black languages introduced into all black schools" (Christie & Collins, 1982, p. 59). The "Bantu Education Act" was passed in 1953 and was concluded with the intention to prepare black learners into subordinate roles in the South African society (Thobejane, 2013). Sehoole (2005, p. 13) argues that the Bantu Education Act sought to "train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life". These segregated schools followed different curricula that maintained the superiority of the white controlled apartheid state. However, Collins (as cited in Christie & Collins, 1982) argues that separate systems of schooling was established prior to 1948 and was in effect in the 1930's and 1940's during the predominance of the mission schools period.

The curricula for black, Indian and coloured learners ensured that they were trained only for low-skilled employment. White power was reproduced as these (blacks, Indian and coloured) groups occupied an inferior position within the South African economy and society (Fleetwood, 2012). Furthermore, the curricula served a dual purpose for the apartheid state, apart from denying black, Indian and coloured South Africans an opportunity to improve upon their quality of life and secure good employment, it also served to indoctrinate these learners into accepting white rule and their subservient role within apartheid society (Molteno, 1984).

As Molteno (1984, p. 94) argues:

> "Bantu, Coloured and Indian Education were designed to control the direction of thought, to delimit the boundaries of knowledge, to restrict lines of communication, and to curtail contact across language barriers. They aimed to dwarf the minds of black children by conditioning them to servitude".

Kallaway (as cited in Msila, 2007), confirms that the implementation of Bantu Education for black South African learners was a means of restricting the intellectual development of the learner, as knowledge was distorted to maintain the propagation of the state's agenda.

The next section of this chapter discusses the South African higher education system under the apartheid government.

1.7 THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM UNDER APARTHEID: A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Prior to 1994, the national landscape of higher education was profusely shaped by colonialism and apartheid, which engendered "socio-political and economic inequalities" related to "class, race, language and gender", which inadvertently led to the systemic exclusion and marginalisation of particular levels of society (Badat, 2009; Vincent, Idahosa & Msomi, 2017). In addition, during apartheid, the South African higher education system was closed to public scrutiny and international influences (Le Grange, 2009). With regards to higher education during apartheid the ruling government created a system that fostered the higher education of black Africans to a racially determined system of labour (Bunting, 1994). The higher education system, therefore, served the purpose of retaining this political configuration and hierarchy to maintain and reproduce racialised power. In 1984, the constitution within the Republic of South Africa declared "general" and "own affairs" cemented divisions within education in the country. This inadvertently meant that higher education institutions had to be separated for the exclusive use of "African, coloured, Indian and white" (Bunting, 1994, p. 36). Bunting (1994, p. 36) asserts " By the beginning of 1985, a total of 19 higher education institutions had been designated as being 'for the exclusive use of whites', two as being 'for the exclusive use of coloureds', two 'for the exclusive use of Indians', and six as being 'for the exclusive use of Africans'".

Furthermore, the apartheid government legally constrained and prevented racially designated higher education institutions from registering students of other race groups (Bunting, 1994). Only when a permit was obtained from the education department could a student of another race be enrolled at these institutions. Permits were only obtained if it could be proven that the applicants' "course was not available at the institution designated for the race group to which she/he belonged" (Bunting, 1994, p. 37). At the dawn of the 1980s, the ruling party also made a distinction between the different types of institutions in the country, differentiating them in terms of "universities" and "technikons", using the criteria of science for a university and technology for a technikon (Bunting, 1994). Boughey (2012) asserts that further to institutions being divided into universities and technikons, institutions

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were also fractured along language (English and Afrikaans) and location ("homelands" and "Bantusans") for black Africans.

Table 3. Numbers of public higher education institutions in South Africa: 1990–1994

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Responsible authority	Universities	Technikons	Total institutions
House of Assembly (for whites)	11	8	19
House of Representatives (for coloureds)	1	1	2
House of Delegates (for Indians)	1	1	2
Department of Education and Training (for Africans)	4	2	6
Republic of Transkei	1	1	2
Republic of Bophuthatswana	1	1	2
Republic of Venda	1	0	1
Republic of Ciskei	1	1	2
Totals	**21**	**15**	**36**

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Table 3. Table extracted from Bunting (1994, p. 39).

Under apartheid, university access for blacks was not a necessary policy option, as it featured for white students. In 1951, at the time of the Eiselen Commission on Native Education only one residential university for blacks existed – the South Africa Native College at Fort Hare – which had an enrolment figure of 343 students (Eiselen as cited in Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007). Although the legislation allowed access for black African students to enter into higher education, this access was based on race and ethnicity differentiation, underpinned by the economic considerations of the country (Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007).

1.8 THE ORIGINATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

In 1829, the "South African College in Cape Town" was established and the University Education Act was passed in 1916, allowing the college to be named as the University of Cape Town (UCT). Later, in 1918, "Victoria College" was renamed "Stellenbosch University" (Robus & Macleod, 2006, p.3). Both of these institutions were "specifically established for white students". The South African Native College was later renamed the "University of Fort Hare"

(Robus & Macleod, 2006, p.3). The only "higher education institution that existed in South Africa prior to 1918 was the University of the Cape of Good Hope". This institution eventually evolved to become the University of South Africa. During the apartheid era, the University of Natal was "perceived as being less liberal" (Robus & Macleod, 2006, p.3).

The University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Cape Town permitted black African students to attend lectures, however segregation was implemented at all other levels (Robus & Macleod, 2006). In the 1960s, in keeping with the agenda of segregation implemented by the ruling National Party an additional two "white universities were established - the University of Port Elizabeth and the Rand Afrikaans University" (Robus & Macleod, 2006). Cooper and Subotzky (as cited in Robus & Macleod, 2006) purport that an institution catering to the needs of coloured students only, was created and named the "University of Western Cape", while an institution that addressed the needs of Indian students only was created and named "the University of Durban Westville".

1.9 THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA: A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The year 1994 marked the country's transition to a new democratic state of governance. In this regard, significant efforts were made to transform the ills wrought by the apartheid government in all social, political and educational spheres. Education, believed to be the cornerstone of nation building, was given special impetus and priority in the new democratic state (Ndimande, 2009; Le Grange, 2009). However, Woodrooffe (2011) argues that because higher education was voluntary, more attention was given to primary and secondary education, as these were mandatory, and other large-scale issues such as macro-economic policy, health and public safety required immediacy. Since the early 1990s, legislation aimed at addressing apartheid inequalities within higher education has been passed (Robus & Mcleod, 2006). Jawitz (2012) argues that one of the main concerns of the post-apartheid higher education system in the country was the institutional imperatives to focus on past inequalities related to race and education. Two key policy documents were instrumental in engendering the transformation project within the higher education system. The first was the "*Education White Paper 3*" (Department of Education, 1997) and the second was the "*National Plan for Higher Education*" (Department of Education, 2001). Le Grange (2009, p.

1115) argues that the "new democratic dispensation of higher education in South Africa confronted two broad challenges". Le Grange (2009) argues that one of the immediate challenges was redressing the ills of the apartheid dispensation and the second was the manner in which it would respond to the demands of an economically competitive "global society".

The first government policy paper issued in 1997, entitled the "*Education White Paper 3*: *A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education"* provided the foundation for creating an impetus towards the goals of post-apartheid higher education.

> "South Africa's transition from apartheid and minority rule to democracy requires that all existing practices, institutions and values are viewed anew and rethought in terms of their fitness for a new era .... In South Africa today, the challenge is to redress past inequalities and to transform the higher education system to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs, and to respond to new realities and opportunities. [Higher Education] must lay the foundations for the development of a learning society which can stimulate, direct and mobilise the creative and intellectual energies of all people towards meeting the challenge of reconstruction and development"(Department of Education, 1997, p. 7).

It further emphasised that the transformation of the higher education system should "reflect the changes that are taking place in our society" and identified the issue of access as critical in addressing:

> "… gross discrepancies in participation from students from different population groups, indefensible imbalances in ratios of black and female staff compared to whites and males and equally untenable disparities between historically black and white institutions in terms of facilities and capacities" (Department of Education, 1997, p. 4).

Woodrooffe (2011, p. 174) asserts "that the main objective of the *Higher Education White Paper 3* was to restructure the higher education system into a single, national coordinated

system". In the year 2000, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) proposed a new policy paper, entitled *"Towards a New Higher Education Landscape: Meeting Equity, Quality and Social Development Imperatives of South Africa in the Twenty-first Century"* (Woodroofe, 2011). LeGrange (2009) argued that in the new policy paper the role of higher education should be seen to play a key role in meeting the realities of the global context.

Makgoba and Mubangizi (2010) assert that "2001 *National Plan on Higher Education"* (Department of Education, 2001) proposed the framework for the merger of 36 South African higher education universities and technikons to be restructured to 23 institutions. This restructure comprised eleven conventional universities, six comprehensive universities and five universities of technology (Makgoba & Mubangizi, 2010). The newly appointed Minister of Higher Education actively sought to put into effect the National Plan (Makgoba & Mubangizi, 2010). According to Morrow (2008), the merger proposals were met with contestation and controversy.

Soudien (2010a) asserts that the transformation agenda within higher education has revolved around three key areas since the democratic dispensation in 1994. Soudien (2010a) gives a summary of three key changes that have confronted higher education since 1994. Soudien (2010a, p. 881) argues that the first significant change took place in 1995, when the newly elected democratic government sought to establish a "policy for the sector with the appointment of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE)". Soudien (2010a, p. 881) purports that the second significant moment occurred in the year 2000, when a "Council on Higher Education task team was appointed to develop proposals for the restructuring of higher education". Lastly, the third significant moment within higher education was in the year 2008, when the "Ministerial Committee into Transformation and Social Cohesion in Higher Education (MCTHE)" was appointed to look into issues confronting higher education, the catalyst having been the infamous "Reitz" incident, which occurred at the University of Free State (Soudien 2010a, p. 881). Other scholars have also prioritised issues of institutional dynamics as central to the process of transformation in South Africa (Cloete, Muller, Makgoba & Ekong, 1997; Cloete & Bunting, 2000; Soudien, 2010a, Badat, 2016).

In this final section, I provide a general overview of the chapters that will inform the rest of the thesis.

1.10 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS:

In Chapter 1, I introduce the study by providing a rationale, background and motivation for the study. I sketch out the broad national issues within higher education that are occupying currency with respect to troubling transformation within the sector. In particular, I provide a broad historical overview of the South African society under apartheid, the basic and higher education system under apartheid and briefly discuss higher education in the post-apartheid context of South Africa. More importantly, I provide a contextual rationale for situating the study at the chosen site of enquiry.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the conceptual underpinning of this thesis. This study is rooted within a feminist poststructuralist framework. I employ the following theorists and concepts in order to give meaning to my participants. I draw upon the work of Christine Weedon (1987), Michel Foucault (1972) to advance our understanding of power and discourse, and that of Judith Butler (1990, 1993) and Connell (1987, 1995), in order to understand gender power relations and the relational and hierarchical nature of masculinity and femininity. In addition, I use Stevi Jackson's (2006) theories to advance compulsory heterosexuality.

In Chapter 3, I provide an overview of the literature that underpins the study, examining it from a local, national and international perspective, so as to understand the similarities and differences, and nuances and gaps that exist within my particular area of study.

In Chapter 4, I outline the methodological roadmap that this study deployed to achieve the relevant data informing the study. I capture the research journey amidst pangs and joys in an intricate and creative chapter. I also attend to issues of positionality, reflexivity and researcher bias.

Chapter 5 is the first analysis chapter of the thesis and examines how race is given meaning in the nexus of class and language in the daily lived experiences of the student participants. The chapter illuminates the nuanced mediums through which cross-racial mixing and friendship ties are forged in the university environment and draws upon various discourses invoked by students' conversations to give meaning to race.

Chapter 6 marks the second analysis chapter and focuses on the complex, contradictory and contested ways in which students give meaning to their sexual subjectivities, drawing on discourses of culture and religion to legitimise and regulate a heteronormative identity through the deployment of compulsory hegemonic heterosexuality (Butler, 1993).

Chapter 7 marks the final analysis chapter and discusses issues related to gender and sexuality. Drawing on a Foucauldian notion that links the inextricability of power and resistance, this chapter attempts to understand how gender is given meaning through commonly held notions of hegemonic gender power relations fixed and embedded within cultural norms, heterosexual relationships, dress and heterosexual desire. These four broad themes are expanded through data drawn from select accounts of local and international male and female students.

Chapter 8 is the final chapter and conclusion of the thesis. It summarises the thesis and adopts a critical approach for further investigative research. I sketch out the implications of the study and the areas of recommendation for further research.

1.11 CONCLUSION:

Despite tremendous support from the national government in support of change at universities, as recently outlined in the new White Paper (DHET, 2013, p. viii), this has not occurred. The new White Paper had called for higher education "to develop citizens who can function effectively, creatively and ethically as part of a democratic society; they should have an understanding of South African society and be able to participate fully in its political, social and cultural life" (DHET, 2013, p. viii). In 1994, when South Africa entered an era of democracy, students entering the higher education system were still products of a broken and fragmented society moulded and shaped by the ills of the apartheid system. The ramifications of the apartheid era is a catalyst for the issues of social transformation, as elucidated in the Soudien Report (Department of Education, 2008). And, more recently, the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall campaigns (Suransky & van der Merwe, 2016; Moloi, Makgoba & Miruka, 2017; Marschall, 2017; Mudavanhu, 2017) and other student movements such as Open Stellenbosch and #EndRapeCulture (Mpatlanyane, 2018; Gouws, 2018). Although the country has been a democracy for more than two decades, we are still

experiencing the manifestations of the unequal apartheid system, as explained above, despite a progressive constitution mandating respect and equality for all citizens. Scholars argue that within the South African higher education landscape, the prevalence of marginalised experiences, wrought by cultures of whiteness continue to fuel the anger and frustration of marginalised groups. (Vincent, Idahosa & Msomi, 2017; Badat, 2016).   In conclusion, this chapter seeks to highlight the 'complex and messy' project of transformation currently besieging higher education institutions in this country.

CHAPTER TWO:

THEORISING RACE, CLASS, GENDER AND SEXUALITY: A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

2.1 INTRODUCTION:

This thesis investigates the ways in which higher education students situated at a South African university campus give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality. This study emerges against the political backdrop, around the broader issues of transformation and social cohesion, shaping present day higher education as illuminated in the Soudien Report, discussed in detail in chapter one. The report elucidated how the complex matrix of race, gender and sexuality were being played out in the nexus of social transformation and plagued the issue of social cohesion experienced at different institutions in the country (Department of Education, 2008). Thus while opportunities exist for race, class, gender and sexuality to be shaped and be given meaning within the 'discourse of transformation' embedded within the notion of 'the rainbow nation'[1] and 'the born frees'[2], apartheid discourses continue to shape subjectivities in ways that trouble the transformation agenda of higher education (Department of Education, 2008).

The main intention of this chapter is to provide an overview of the conceptual framework underpinning this study. In trying to understand the ways in which my participants give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality in the context of their lived experiences on the campus, this section begins by sketching out the key concepts that shape the research process. This study, while situated around the broader discussions of transformation and social cohesion within South African higher education, is context specific and locally grounded. Framed around this reality, I argue that the discourses shaping gender, race, class, and sexuality are inextricably linked and entangled within the socio-cultural, material and historical contexts of students lived experiences, embedded within the broader structures of power. Thus, in order to engage with the men and women in this study and the meanings and

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[1] A term coined by Archbishop Desmond Tutu to refer to the 'new' South Africa after apartheid. The term can also be used to refer to a multicultural society.

[2] The born frees are those individuals born after 1994.

significance they attach to these constructs requires drawing upon an eclectic approach to the concepts that frame this study. I therefore provide a textured layering of the concepts. I argue that in a context such as South Africa the constructs of race, class, gender and sexuality were characterised by power differentials made real and sustained by apartheid discourses. However, in post-apartheid South Africa these constructs have become fluid and malleable, framed against the country's need for equality and redress. Against this backdrop, the first section of this chapter expands on poststructuralism and how it is conceived in this study.

2.2. POSTSTRUCTURALISM: SUBJECTIVITY POWER AND DISCOURSE: A FOUCAULDIAN APPROACH

Poststructuralism posits the view that race, class, gender and sexuality are discursively constructed and rendered fluid and changeable with history. Central to poststructuralism, are the ways in which subjects are positioned in their social and geographical worlds in relation to each other (Gannon & Davies, 2005) and positioned, as fragmented, fluid and without boundaries (Davies, 2000). Poststructuralism advances the notion of the plurality of meanings that subjects draw upon to construct their subjectivities, thus rejecting the notion of absolute truths and objectivity (Gavey, 1989). However, poststructuralism whilst recognising plurality also places significance on the "historical specificity of structures" placing credence on Foucault's work on the formation of the subject within the power/knowledge nexus and the "the discursive practices and technologies of the social through which subjectification occurred" (Blackman, Cromby, Hook, Papadopoulos & Walkerdine, 2008, p. 6).

This is relevant to my study since it is the subjective narrative that I seek in understanding the discursive constructions that students attach to gender, race, class, and sexuality and how this might trouble social cohesion and transformation on campus. Thus, one of the predominant reasons for situating my study within a poststructuralist framework is the notion that the meanings and significance that students attach to race, class, gender and sexuality within a post-apartheid context, such as South Africa, cannot be understood without a historical context. Poststructuralism is also concerned with language as central to the construction of the self and subjectivity (Baxter, 2016). Weedon (1987) argues that in deploying a poststructural framework, language is key to the analysis of social meanings,

relations and power (Weedon, 1987). Language though, within poststructuralism, goes far beyond linguistic interpretation (Paechter, 2001). Language used within poststructuralism seeks to understand the ways in which subjects are constructed through discursive and cultural practices and their regulation to normative discourses in term of "how they speak, act and behave, they may be stigmatised by others with labels such as 'weird', 'a misfit', 'a freak' or 'an outsider'" Baxter (2016, p. 37). Language is also employed by subjects to construct a more nuanced and complex social specific reality by drawing upon multiple ways in which they express themselves (Pavlenko, 2019). Foucault (1982, p. 217) asserts "communicating is always a certain way of acting upon another person or persons".

Although discourse is central to the work of poststructuralist theorists, it is a product of Michael Foucault (Phil & Whelehan, 2004). In particular, I employ a Foucauldian notion to uncover the concepts of subjectivity, discourse and power and how these concepts are effected in the lives of my participants. Within a Foucauldian approach, subjectivity is the emergence of the subject formed by discursive practices that are of socio-political and economic significance as sites of power struggle (Foucault, 1998). Employing this notion of subjectivity is underset by the understanding that power is "normalised" and "regulated" through a disciplinary regime (Foucault, 1982). Jackson and Mazzei (2012, p. 53) contend that within the Foucauldian notion subjectivity is defined as "an ongoing process of becoming", placing significance on the ways social institutions construct subjectivities within discursive fields, where "language, social institutions, subjectivity and power exist, intersect, and produce competing ways of giving meaning to and constructing subjectivity". This has credence for my study as I argue that students are a product of their socio-cultural, historical and material circumstances within the social location of the campus.

Foucault's (1972) conceptualisation of the self as fluid and changing, enabling the exercise of power in determining one's own specific existence, is of relevance to this study. Embracing this particular notion of Foucault's (1972) conceptualisation of the self, South Africa's political history is still deeply etched within society and institutions and thus, constructs of race, class, gender and sexuality are shaped by apartheid discourses which still manifest in present day higher education, as students relate to one another. Thus, student's subjectivities in post-

apartheid South Africa is complex, fluid and discontinuous in what Soudien (2001) hails as "discourses in transition".

Discourse within a Foucauldian approach is deployed to uncover the structures, rules and procedures that embody normative ideas which place restrictions on what can and cannot be said (McHoul & Grace, 1993; Burr, 2003). In other words, discourses place structure on the ways we conceptualise things and how reality is constructed around this assumed natural way of thinking, feeling or being. Discourse as described by Foucault (1972, p. 49) informs "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak…". While Willig (2001) views discourse as a resource that makes available ways of being and doing in the world. Discourses then establish the truth of subjective experiences at specific moments (Foucault, 1972). It is argued that through discourse, meaning and human subjects are constituted, and power relations established, challenged and subverted (Foucault, 1972). Thus, one is positioned by discourse and not by anything outside of this. Discourses govern our knowledge and notion of the world, which informs our social practice and the intimate relationships between discourse, knowledge and power (McHoul & Grace, 1993; Burr, 2003).

Weedon (1987, p. 108) drawing upon a Foucauldian framework to explain discourses asserts discourses are "ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations, which inhere in such knowledge and the relations between them. Discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the 'nature' of the body, unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of subjects which they seek to govern". Best and Kellner (1991, p. 26) purport that discourses are the "viewpoints and positions from which people speak and the power relations that these allow and presuppose". Hollway (1983, p. 231 as cited in Gavey, 1989) perceives discourse as a combination of statements which coalesce around shared understandings and values which are abstracted around and shaped by "social factors, of powers and practices" instead of one set of ideas. Baxter (2016, p. 37) in commenting on the Foucauldian notion of discourse argues that it is within discourse that individual identities "are recognised, constructed and regulated".

Burr (2003, p. 64) purports that "a discourse refers to a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events". Furthermore, discourses are intimately connected to power as power is produced and reproduced through discourse. However, discourses are also able to subvert power relations as explained by Foucault (1982, p.142).

> "There are no relations of power without resistances; the latter
> are all the more real and effective because they are formed
> right at the point where the relations of power are exercised"
> (Foucault, 1982, p. 142).

Thus, the manner in which these resistances manifest is through the practice of the self (Foucault, 1980). On drawing upon Foucauldian principles Weedon (1987) argues that power is made tangible through discourse deployed by individual subjects who are regulated and constituted through discourse. Discourses vary in authority and some discourses are more powerful than others partly explained through historical phenomenon. In other words, authority coheres in a discourse that appeals to the common sense in perpetuating and supporting existing relations of power as subjectivity is constructed and constituted (adapted from Gavey, 1989). So for example, within the context of my study, the discourse of materiality shapes racialised friendship patterns as students (mostly black African from the rural areas) who do not have access to material resources and are not competent in English, are marginalised from procuring friendships with 'other' students (white, Indian, coloured). In this way, I will be able to understand how my participants draw on dominant (discourse of materiality)/subordinate discourses to perpetuate unequal racialised friendship patterns on campus and the implications this has for challenging or enabling social cohesion on campus.

However, Gavey (1989) contends that subjects positioned within discourses are not passive and have the 'choice' to subvert their position in relation to various discourses. In my own study, this is given effect, and I will use the discourse of materiality mentioned above. Although the discourse of materiality sustained racialising friendship patterns with the majority of black African marginalised from racial mixing, the discourse of materiality is made fluid and malleable through the insertion of class in disturbing racialised friendships, as those

black African students who attended former Model C[3] schools had the advantage of inserting themselves in cross-racial friendships. Thus, discourses also enable individuals to exert power in ways that are beneficial to them (Weedon 1987). Gavey (1989, p.462) contends that knowledge is inextricably associated with power, but knowledge itself is unstable and transient as there are no universal truths. Gavey (1989, p.462) argues, "Those who have the power to regulate what counts as truth are able to maintain their access to material advantages and power."

More importantly, power does not lie with its possession, but rather with how it operates within specific discourses. In Foucault's conceptualisation of power, subjects can simultaneously be complicit in maintaining oppressive power while being resistant at the same time. Foucault's conceptualisation of power rejects a fixed, monolithic and static definition, which is fluid, permeable and sometimes rendered weak and fragile, thus implicating the intricate ways in which power functions. Foucault asserts:

> "What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply
>
> the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no,
>
> but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure,
>
> forms knowledge, produces discourse" (Foucault, 1980, p. 119).

The Foucauldian notion of power as described above, as productive, rather than oppressive and negative implicates that power can be productive and produce positive results. This notion of power also provides a theoretical perspective that shapes our understanding of how agency is deployed in this thesis. Power deployed within this Foucauldian perspective also permits subjects to think about themselves in particular ways (May, 2011) and how they are perceived. Thus power is fluid and malleable and given authority or subverted and in this lies the notion to produce knowledge and discourse. It is also argued that within a Foucauldian framework the relationship between discourse and power is intimately connected relationally as the notion of discourse is inadvertently required for acknowledging the role of power (McHoul & Grace, 1993). Central to Foucauldian thought is how people govern themselves on

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[3] A previously well-resourced white school during the apartheid era.

the basis of truths about their identities and further argues that "it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together" (Foucault, 1998, p.100).

> "Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads, they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its point of application" (Foucault, 1980, p. 98).

In the above Foucauldian notion of power, as subjects, our lives are continuously constituted within a web of shifting and competing discourses. It is this fluidity of power that allows individuals to be positioned discursively within competing discourses that allow multiple subject positions to emerge (Weedon, 1987). The multiple subject positions allow individuals to exercise and resist power rather than be subjected to power. Foucault (1972, p. 66) purports that this discursive positioning permits "a field of possible options". I therefore locate my study within this framework of thought, allowing for ruptures, resistances and continuities to emerge within normative discourses (Foucault, 1972) within the realm of my participants lived experiences on campus. Additionally the Foucauldian perspective on discourse bears heavily on context, which is appropriate for my research. In engaging this research in a very context specific lens of knowledge, I hope to understand how the meanings my participants attach to race, class, gender and sexuality have implications for social cohesion on the campus. Central to Foucauldian thought is that people govern themselves on the basis of truths about their identities, and that "it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together" (Foucault, 1998, p. 100).

Inherent within Foucault's (1972) notion of power is the intimate roles of researcher and the researched in the production of meaning, through the constitution of the subjects' own knowledge. However, this was not a simple process as my research journey progressed (expanded in chapter four). What emerged through the research process was participant negotiation of the complex and contradictory subject positions connected and fixed to discourse, with the provision of simultaneous possibilities for resistance and change. This in itself provided a space to "critically examine, review and transform dominant discourses" (Holford, 2012) that occupied the lives of my participants' emergence from their narratives.

Despite Foucault's influential contribution towards feminist arguments, his work has been met with nuanced reactions from feminist theorists (see Balbus, 1988; Di Leonardo, 1991; Hartsock, 1990; McNay, 1992; Sawicki, 1988). Foucault was criticised for his "… androcentric gender blindness, some do not regard it as a fatal flaw: others believe it contaminates the entire enterprise" (Sawicki, 1996, p. 161). Feminist writers critiqued Foucault's framework of power as a failure to provide a theory that would account for women's experiences (Hartsock, 1990). In particular, Hartsock (1990, 169) argued that Foucault's claim to work power relations as a "net-like organisation" as individuals "circulate between its threads" obfuscates the notion of power as a structure of dominance and advances the position of equality and agency of individuals. Hartsock (1990) argues that Foucault's notion of power conceptualised in this way makes the power differentials invisible from the position of the subjugated, arguing that Foucault's perspective was cast from the lens of a dominator "the self-proclaimed majority". Further Deveaux (1994) argues that Foucault's analysis fails to consider the systemic nature of violence and its subsequent control over women's bodies. Foucault's depiction of "docile bodies" passively inscribed with power and discourses has been criticised conceptually, as all power is met with resistance (Sawicki, 1996).

Feminist theorists also debated the usefulness of Foucault's employment of governmentality to feminist work (Macleod & Durrheim, 2002). However, despite these criticisms levelled against Foucault, his work has advanced the possibility of concrete "political struggle and resistance" arguing for individuals to take account of how they are implicated within relations of power "and the fact that we are never outside power" (Martin, 1982, p. 12). Feminist theorists McNay (1992) and Sawicki (1991) found parallels with Foucault's work and feminist poststructuralism broadly. In particular, both frameworks focused on sexuality as an area of political struggle, a critique of universalising principles and the advancement of the search for a "scientific truth" and an "analysis of the politics of personal relations and everyday life" (Macleod & Durrheim, 2002, p. 43). In the next section of the chapter, I discuss the concept of feminist poststructuralism and the relevance it holds for my study.

2.3. FEMINIST POSTSTRUCTURALISM

Feminist poststructuralist theorist Chris Weedon (1987, p. 20) contends that theory within a poststructuralist framework is meaningful if it is "able to address questions of how social

power is exercised and how social relations of gender, class and race might be transformed". Since this study attempts to understand how the meanings and significance students attach to race, class, gender and sexuality, and how these discursive constructions may have possible implications for social cohesion, it is appropriate to situate this study within a feminist poststructuralist framework. This thesis rejects the notion that race, class, gender and sexuality are essentialist and fixed, rooted within biological essences and, as such, are natural. Weedon (1987) contends that a relational understanding of the exercise of social power is historically embedded and central to Foucault's work. Of relevance to this study is the notion that feminist poststructuralism is "a mode of knowledge production which uses poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change" (Weedon, 1987, p. 40-41).

I argue that deploying a feminist poststructuralist framework will benefit this thesis twofold: firstly, it will help me understand the discourses that students draw upon to give meaning to these constructs, and secondly how this knowledge can be applied to shape the transformation agenda within my own institution. Weedon (1987, p. 32) also employs the use of subjectivity, defining it as "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world". I therefore choose to use the term subjectivity where appropriate, throughout my work, which, is "precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak", Weedon (1987, p. 33). The scholars Aslop, Fitzsimons and Lennon (2002) assert that the emergence of subjectivity necessitates a process of 'subjectification'. Aslop, Fitzsimons and Lennon (2002) further contend that this process allows one to become subject to the norms that regulate discourses in giving shape to our self-understandings. Within the context of my study, we see how the women from Zimbabwe scorn the wearing of a mini-skirt to campus, repudiating the South African women in the process. Their rejection of the mini-skirt is sustained by the dominant discourse of acceptable femininity appropriated through dress code, which they draw upon from their own historical, cultural and social context in Zimbabwe. Subjectivity has also been defined by Blackman, Cromby, Hook, Papadopoulos and Walkerdine (2008, p. 6) used below.

"Subjectivity… is the experiences of the lived multiplicity of positionings. It is historically contingent and is produced through the plays of power/knowledge and is sometimes held together by desire."

Weedon (1987) employs the term 'subjectivity' in the context of an individual simultaneously being the subject of, or subjected to the fluidity of power. Within poststructuralist thinking subjectivity is constructed through language and discourse (Weedon, 1987). Nortan and Toohey (2011) assert that Weedon (1987) employed the term subject/subjectivity to claim a dissension with western humanist philosophy, which constructed the individual in essentialist, fixed and coherent ways. Weedon (1987) conceptualised the subject as dynamic and contradictory, contingent on history and social space. Both Weedon (1987) and Foucault (1890) conceptualise subjectivity as discursively constructed, embedded socially and historically within a specific context. However, I would like to argue that whilst the distinction between subjectivity and identity is slippery and difficult to uphold at times in my writing, I employ both concepts as ontologically and epistemologically appropriate throughout my work, as scholars have argued that both concepts are worthy of sociological investigation (Lawler, 2005). Seidmann (2017) argues that the boundaries between "subjectivity and identity" continue to be blurred simultaneously manifesting in theoretical discussion. I concur with Seidmann (2017) as subjectivity is not something tangible that can be seen or felt, therefore I deploy the terms subjectivity and identity interchangeably, where appropriate. I therefore also employ identity as a generic concept and use subjectivity within poststructuralist discourse.

Feminist poststructuralism has also been useful in conceptualising agency. According to Jagger (2008, p.37), "Butler rejects cultural determinism to retain a view of gender practices as sites of change, or 'critical agency' ". Central to agency deployed within feminist poststructuralism is that agency becomes a contingent possibility that is the effect of "historically specific discursive conditions and power relations", Jagger (2008, p.39). Situating agency within feminist poststructuralist thinking, Davies (1990, p. 359) asserts that individual subjects cannot "be said in any absolute sense to have or not have agency". Jagger (2008, p.89) in applying a Foucauldian notion to agency purports "the very power that subjects us is also the source of our resistance". According to Butler (1997, p. 14/15) "the subject is itself a

site of this ambivalence in which the subject emerges both as the effect of a prior power and as the condition of possibility for a radically conditioned form of agency". In my study we see how some of the women are able to subvert power relations eschewing cultural discourses that attempt to position them within subordinate roles, simultaneously regulating their femininity into cultural compliance. Agency deployed in this manner in my study is an act of power displayed by some of the women. Against this backdrop, the next section of this chapter, moves to the discussion of gender and sexuality. I thus draw on key concepts of heterosexuality as it came to structure the lives of my participants in very specific ways and I discuss the concepts of gender as performativity.

2.4. QUEERING SEXUALITY: DECONSTRUCTING GENDER AND HETEROSEXUALITY

Previously gender as a concept has been assumed natural, uncontested and taken for granted in mainstream popular discourse (Fenstermaker & West, 2002). Earlier understandings of gender were rooted within essentialist biological discourses, confined within the binaries of men and women (Connell, 2012). Thus, the sex/gender distinction rooted within biological essentialism was sustained to maintain a patriarchal system of power and naturalise the domestic roles of women as wives, mothers and caregivers (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004). Connell (1985) asserts that the theorising of gender first took root as the "social theory of gender", which drew upon sex role theory in understanding the complexity of industrial capitalism to the sexual division of labour to structure family relations. The second argument posited the system of the family in relation to the construction of femininity (Chodorow as cited in Connell, 1995). Connell's (1983, 1995) study of existing theories of gender advanced the concerns of gender underlined by patriarchy.

However, gender theorists "had taken issue" with such essentialising of gender as gender became synonymous with 'sex' in popular years to affix a male or female position in society. Jackson and Scott (2002, p.8), purport that the "rise of second-wave feminism in the late 1960s and 1970s" inspired young sociologists to critically examine studies on the social lives of both men and women. "Second-wave feminism" emphasised inequalities between men and women, and the sex role paradigm was replaced with concepts such as gender and patriarchy (Jackson & Scott, 2002). Thus, the decoupling of sex ascribed to gender roles, naturalised by the division of labour, allowed the analysis of gender to shift to understanding

differences and hierarchies of gender. A key influence in moving the debate further in feminist work was the assertion by "Simone de Beauvoir" (as cited in Jackson & Scott 2002, p. 9), that "one is not born but rather becomes a woman", provided a foundation for the feminist analysis of gender. de Beauvoir (1972 as cited in Pilcher & Wheeler, 2004) promulgated the ideas of gender differences steeped within "hierarchical opposition" drawing upon the masculine as the norm and feminine positioned as the 'Other'.

Pilcher and Wheeler (2004) assert, drawing on Oakley, that a key feature of "second-wave feminism" was the conceptualisation of gender. However, the constant slippage between sex and gender remained a concern for feminist writers (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004). Feminist writers conceded that the meanings attached to sex differences were socially constructed and fluid and given meaning within one's own cultural and historical repertoires (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004). Oakley (as cited in Jackson & Scott, 2002, p. 9) defined "sex as the anatomical and physiological characteristics, which signify biological maleness and femaleness and gender as socially constructed masculinity and femininity". Another key gender theorist, and who has been hailed as one of the most influential queer theorists contributing to the field of gender theorising and more importantly enabling a shift in terms of the reconceptualisation of the nature of gender, was Judith Butler (Lloyd, 1999; McNay, 1999; Davies, 2006; Nayak & Kehily, 2006; Youdell, 2006).

Butler (1990) argued that understanding gender as purported by Simone de Beauvoir implied that gender is constructed by the assumption of the subjects own choice. According to Butler (1990), choosing a particular gender raises the question that the one who chooses to be a woman is necessarily a female. Thus, Butler (1990) argued for the radical discontinuation of the logic that "sexed bodies" would produce culturally constructed genders. In other words Butler (1990, p.6) argued that it was not necessarily the case that a man would "accrue exclusively to the bodies of males or that 'women' will interpret only female bodies". Concurrently Perry and Joyce (2005,p.113) argued that, "Butler's focus on the social mechanisms through which gender is produced, performed, and regulated shifts attention from presumptions of innate biological difference towards an emphasis on the fluidity of gender constructions". Holmes (2011, p. 192) asserts that in deploying a poststructuralist framework to conceptualise gender subjectivities, the focus on gender, revolved around

"regulation, disciplining and performativity". In Butler's (1990) theorising of gender, she draws upon Foucauldian principles of gender, situating the construction of gender subjectivity through discourse (Holmes, 2011). Butler's (1990) situated research within a poststructuralist paradigm provided an account for the deconstruction of gender, sex and sexuality. Butler's (1990) fundamental contribution to the theorising of gender and gender studies is her analysis of gender as a process and gender as performative. Thus, gender is something that is done and not something that just exists in its naturalised form (Butler, 1990). Central to Butler's (1990) thinking is that gender is made through a repetitive performance of a series of acts in which gender is made and remade, destabilising the self.

Within Butler's (1990, p.10) theorisation of gender she argues for the notion of gender to be viewed as more than the "cultural interpretation of sex". Butler (1990, p. 34) purports that gender is not a "noun" (what one has) but rather "the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence". The scholar Salih (2004), employing Butlers' theorisation of gender, asserts that the subject "done" by gender is the "effect rather than the cause of a discourse". Feminist poststructuralist theorist Jagger (2008, p.35) on explicating Butler's (1990) theorising, asserts "gender and gender identities are constructed through relations of power that are inherent in normative constraints that involve the sedimentation of gender norms over time". Thus, drawing on Butler's notion, Jagger (2008) asserts that the practices which position subjects as gendered also have the possibility of "agency and resistance". In addition, Mazzei and Jackson (2012) assert that Butler's theory of gender performativity attempts to destabilise gender categories from normative gender processes and, through a process of repetition, gendered subjectivities are produced. Jagger (2008) asserts that Butler's (1990) notion of gender involves the "ritualised repetition of conventions" made intelligible through "compulsory heterosexuality".

The deployment of queer theory destabilises the association between sex and gender, and the normative thinking that the male body is a construct of masculinity. In essence, queer theory challenges the normative assumptions that masculinity is inherently to men and femininity to females (Aslop et al., 2002). Queer theory has been understood as a poststructuralist approach to understanding gender and sexuality (Richardson, 2000). Other

theorists provide a foundational understanding of queer theory (de Lauretis as cited in Richardson, 2000), but Butler's work (1990, 1993) remains a focal point of this thesis. The concept of heteronormativity remains an integral aspect of feminist and queer theory, offering an explanation of binary gender linked to heterosexuality. Heteronormativity is reproduced in the subjects' daily lives, through conversation and routine activities that intersect gender, sexuality and heterosexuality. Heteronormativity normalises heterosexuality in society and positions non-heterosexuals as anomalies, thus marginalising these identities in the public and private domains (Rich, 1980; Jackson, 2006).

Butler (1993) conceptualised gender as constituted through a hegemonic heterosexual matrix recognised as the "universal and privileged" sexuality. Thus, the intersection of gender and sexuality was key to sustaining and understanding the analysis of heterosexuality (Jackson, 2003) and the normative ways in which subjectivities were to be policed. Jackson (2006, p. 106) asserts that the intersection of gender, sexuality and heterosexuality is socially contingent and subject to historical change within various cultural and "contextual variabilities". Jackson (2003) purports that heterosexuality is not monolithic but a complex system of practices that intersect with gender. However the concept of heterosexuality has remained an unexamined, invisible normative understanding, acknowledged as a sexuality (Renold, 2006). Renold (2006) draws our attention to "Adrienne Rich's" (1983, p.21) conceptualisation of compulsory heterosexuality as something that is "imposed, managed, organised, propagandised and maintained by force". Renold (2006) further contends that hegemonic heterosexual performances are policed through the shaming of non-normative sexual and gender practices. Butler (1990) asserts that social norms regulate gender and sexuality to heterosexual conformity. Sexuality however is fluid and permeable within contextual and historical variables (Jackson, 2006).

Other feminist scholars in the field hold the view that heterosexuality is a central aspect of male power and domination (Walby, 1990, 1997; Delphy & Leonard, 1992). Heterosexuality is viewed as "a socially constructed institution which structures and maintains male domination, in particular through the way it channels women into marriage and motherhood" (Richardson, 2000, p. 20). I concur with the scholars who posit the view that heterosexuality is fundamental to sustaining male power in the context of my own study, as gender

subjectivities are constructed through normative gender and sexuality hierarchies, sustaining unequal gender power relations on the campus environment. Heterosexuality is therefore, by definition, a relationship of gender ordering, not only of sexual life, but also of the gendered division of labour in both domestic and non-domestic spheres (VanEvery as cited in Richardson, 2000). However Butler (1990, 1993), posits the view that heterosexuality is far from being stable, coherent and naturally occurring; rather, it is unstable, reliant and dependent on the repeated performance of doing heterosexuality, which creates the illusion of stability. Butler (1990, 1993) asserts that heterosexuality is thus continuously in the process of being reproduced and is thus a performance (Butler, 1990).

Heteronormativity is tied to binary and fixed male-female gender identities, of which the central feature embodies attractiveness to the opposite sex and the upholding of traditional family norms (Jackson, 2006). For example, the ideal heteronormative woman is available and attractive to men, embodying a voluptuous figure and invested in taking care of herself. In addition, the ideal heteronormative woman is caring and has a nurturing disposition that is invested in having babies and taking care of household chores; thus she accedes to a naturally subordinate position to men in both sexual and non-sexual contexts (Lyttleton-Smith, 2015). An idealised heteronormative man is one who is also concerned with his appearance, but who is further invested in power and physical strength and prowess. He is not only career-minded and excels at his work, bringing home big earnings for his family, but he also possesses a virility that makes him hungry for sex (Hollway as cited in Aslop et al., 2002), whilst simultaneously being a caring and loving partner (Jackson, 2006).

Consequently, the binary configuration of heterosexuality as normative and homosexuality as repudiated is central to the production and maintenance of gender and sexual normativities (Butler, 1990). Thus hegemonic masculinity is necessarily and always heterosexual (Peterson, 2000), in that within its rules, a real man is not a woman and is not gay (Harris, 2011). According to Kimmel (1994, p.126), historically masculinity has been conceptualised and advanced "as the flight from women and the repudiation of all aspects of femininity". Kimmel (1994, p. 128) asserts, "Other men are under the constant scrutiny of other men, as it is other men who grant their acceptance into manhood. Manhood is demonstrated for other men's approval".

In situating this study specifically within the context of South Africa and Africa at large I move to a pointed discussion on African sexuality. Within the context of South Africa, a multitude of factors, impinge upon same-sex identifying individuals, which includes the deployment of cultural arguments to regulate sexuality, heteronormative attitudes and the intersection of various identity categorisations within contextually relevant circumstances (Reygan & Lynette, 2015, p. 708). Scholars argue that despite a very progressive constitution in South Africa the dominance to heteronormative discourses continues to propagate the thesis of homosexuality as 'unAfrican' sustained by customary religious discourses (Bhana, Morrell, Hearn & Moletsane, 2007). Kaoma (2009) asserts that the deployment of the cultural argument to sustain the notion that homosexuality is 'unAfrican', is a matter of 'political investment'. Shefer (2002) purports that the deployment of 'culture' and 'tradition' proliferates to denote specifically African culture in particular. The ongoing debates and tensions between 'Western' and 'African' narratives of gender and sexuality (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994; Epprecht, 2008) continue to promulgate the homosexuality is 'unAfrican' argument throughout the continent. This also has relevance for my study as homosexuality is 'unAfrican' sentiments on campus are sustained through cultural and religious discourses which has negative implications for social cohesion. However, there is also possibility for transformation, as religious and cultural discourses become permeable and fluid structured by participants' narratives.

Against this backdrop, the next section of the chapter discusses the operation of gender relations of power and leans towards Connell's (1995) theorising of gender power and the ways in which masculinity and femininity are constructed and given meaning on campus.

2.5. GENDER RELATIONS AND POWER: MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY

Amigot and Pujal (2009, p. 647), posit the view that gender should be understood as an apparatus of power drawing on history that "operates insistently in diverse ways in interactions with others". In employing Foucault's notion of power to gender it helps shape our understanding that "power is everywhere" and pervasive within all relationships in terms of the exercise of gender specifically, "power functions to subordinate women" (Amigot & Pujal, 2009, p.647). The scholars Radtke and Stam (1994, p. 13) assert that the inclusion of power in an "analysis of gender" provides a lens to examine "how gender is constructed

through the practices of power". Thus, in linking gender to power, we can draw theoretically on the ways in which power is operationalised and produced in my study in constructing subjectivities.

Initially, the division between males and females was rooted to biological essentialism. However, this has been rejected on the basis that it does not explain the fluidity of masculinity and femininity (Aslop et al., 2002). Gender differences, associated with masculinity and femininity, were then determined as being socially constructed (Aslop et al., 2002). An analysis of gender, situated within the Foucauldian framework, requires an interrogation of the socio-political and historical legacies that underpin gender power relations. In deploying a feminist poststructuralist lens to understand the relational nature of masculinity and femininity, poststructuralist notions assert that these constructions are not fixed to male and female bodies, implicating differing notions of being a man or woman, contingent upon different socio-historical and interactional settings (Schilt & Westbrook as cited in Henderson, 2015). Whilst Nayak and Kehily (2008) argue that gender relations are constrained and regulated around acceptable ways in which femininity and masculinity is constructed, implicating the performance of gender under varying constraints and circumstances. Individuals as gendered beings negotiate their social and material selves in relation to gendered norms. According to Butler (2004, p. 48), "it is a form of social power that produces the intelligible field of subjects, and an apparatus by which the gender binary is instituted".

In locating gender within wider ideologies and power arrangements, Butler (1990) situates the compulsory logic of sex, gender and desire within hetero-patriarchal and heteronormative cultural hegemonies. Thus, normative expectations of what constitutes maleness and femaleness maintain gender inequality, as masculinity is associated with male power and dominance and femininity with subordination and submission (West & Zimmerman, 1987). The gender order is hierarchical and places greater emphasis on masculinity rather than femininity (Connell, 1987; Schippers, 2007). Masculinity and femininity are thus defined not by their difference to each other, but rather through their relational nature to each other (Schippers, 2007). Schippers (2007) argues that the concept of femininity is relatively under-theorised and she emphasises the fundamental role that femininities play towards gender relationality. Butler's (1990) work moves the emphasis from difference to performativity,

positioning gender as constructed through the reiteration of norms. Butler (1993, p. 231) purports that "gender norms are made intelligible through the embodiment of masculinity and femininity aligned to the heterosexual bond".

Connell (1987) and Schippers (2007) assert that both hegemonic masculinity and hegemonic femininity are predicated on the disavowal of the homosexual. Thus within cultural understandings of hegemonic masculinity gayness is associated with femininity (Connell, 1995). Kimmel (1994, p.131) posits "fear of being perceived as a sissy" dictates cultural understandings of masculinity. Kimmel (1994, p. 131) goes on to assert that homophobia is the "fear of being perceived as gay" and thus not being constructed as a real man. Connell (1995, p. 78) asserts that "Gayness, in patriarchal ideology, is the repository of whatever is symbolically expelled from hegemonic masculinity… ". Research conducted by Raewyn Connell (1987, 1995, 2009) has been extremely influential in theorising masculinities. In applying power to constructions of masculinity, the work of Connell (1995) is significant in terms of the nature of hierarchical masculinities etched within differential relations of power.

In particular, theories of hegemonic masculinity have provided a significant framework for understanding gender power relations. The concept of "hegemonic masculinity" is utilised to explain power relations between men and the "disparities and connections between cultural norms of masculinities and the realities of men's lives" (Aslop et al., 2002, p. 140). In Connell's (1987) conceptualisation and theorisation of hegemonic masculinity, Connell (1995) applies Gramsci's (1971) understanding of class relations as a cultural logic of power that creates and sustains relations of domination and subordination between differential classes. Hegemonic masculinity, therefore, is always constructed relationally to other forms of subordinated masculinities, as well as to women (Connell, 1987). Theoretically, hegemonic masculinity is an ideal type of masculinity, but it is not embodied by all men.

A central aspect of hegemonic masculinity is the practice of "men's dominance over women" (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p.832). Aslop et al., (2002) assert that in modernised societies the construction of hegemonic masculinity is a rejection of femininity and homosexuality. In addition, Connell (1987) theorised other relational forms of masculinities, such as subordinate masculinities, which are usually embodied by gay masculinities and

associated with femininity. Connell (1995, p. 79) asserts that another form of masculinity is complicit forms of masculinity, which have "some connection with the hegemonic project". Connell (1995, p. 79) asserts that men displayed complicit masculinity by "enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity". Hegemonic masculinity is "powerful, valorised and upheld by complicit masculinity and compliance among heterosexual women" (Connell & Messerchimdt, 2005, p. 832). Thus, the patriarchal social order is upheld by the interplay of different forms of masculinity (Connell, 1987). Aslop et al., (2002) assert that although hegemonic masculinity is an ideal goal to be worked towards it is not fully attainable by all men. Connell (1995, p.81) asserts that marginalised masculinities are always "relative to the authorisation of hegemonic masculinity portrayed by a dominant group".

Hearn (2004) argues that the complexity of the interplay between hegemonic, subordinated, complicit and marginalised forms of masculinity, and intersecting racial identities necessitates further discussion. Hearn (2004, p.57) examines the ways in which power differentials play out in the construction of racialised identities, for example, "some black men may accept certain aspects of hegemonic masculinity, while being simultaneously marginalised in relation to hegemonic masculinity". Kimmel's (1994) research also asserts that power is key to the construction of hegemonic masculinities. According to Connell (1987), "no femininity is hegemonic" among women in the same sense that "masculinity is hegemonic among men". In defining "emphasised femininity", Connell (1987, p.183) asserts that it is a femininity "based on women's 'compliance' with their subordination to men and oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men". Emphasised femininity, according to Connell (1987), is the "most culturally valued" form of femininity.

Within the context of South Africa the scholar Robert Morrell (as cited in Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger, 2012) utilised the concept of hegemonic masculinity to explain the forms of male power shaping South African society. Morrell introduced three types of masculinity that could be applied. A 'white' masculinity as positioned within political and economic capital of the ruling class. An "African rurally based masculinity" that predominated the positions "such as chiefship, communal land tenure, and customary law" and a 'black masculinity' that "had

emerged in the context of urbanisation and the development of geographically separate and culturally distinct African townships" (Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger, 2012, p. 12).

However, despite Connell's theorisation on masculinities being widely accepted and influential, it has been critiqued from a realist and poststructuralist perspective (Connell & Messerschimdt, 2005). According to Hearn (2004), who also played a fundamental role in the contribution towards the field of masculinity and men's studies, the concept of masculinity presents analytical problems and de-emphasises issues of power and domination. Connell and Messerschimdt (2005) assert that the "concept of multiple masculinities" presents a static categorisation of the conceptualisation of masculinity. Hearn (2004) asserts that Connell's theorisation of multiple masculinities does not address other power differentials that take into account class, ethnicity, sexuality and other factors (adapted from Lykke, 2010). The concept of masculinity was criticised for its assumed heteronormative conception of gender, essentialising male and female gender binary categories that logically rest on the dichotomisation of biological sex (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Wedgewood (2009) criticised the interplay between multiple masculinities, and masculinities and femininities as being more multi-faceted and complex than as rendered by Connell. Taking into account criticisms against the concept of masculinity raised by various scholars, these have been addressed and a reformulation of the concept of masculinity has been proposed (Connell & Messerschimdt, 2005).

2.6. UNDERSTANDING SUBJECTIVITY AND MATERIALITY: RACE, CLASS, GENDER AND SEXUALITY

I argue that participants within this study are products of their socio-cultural, material and historical circumstances, therefore, locating this study contextually has significance for understanding subjectivity as fluid and permeable, and connected to gender, race, class and sexuality. This study situated at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) is one of the most diverse and transformed institutions in the country. As discussed in chapter one, UKZN also has the largest intake of black African students who are predominately isiZulu speaking and who come from rural and urban areas. Thus in order to understand how race, class and language is given meaning within the broader structures of power to discursively construct

subjects, I draw upon the ways in which race, class and language coalesce to construct subjectivities.

Within the context of this study, race is understood as a reiterative performance, intersecting with other identity categorisations (Distiller & Steyn, 2004), in particular I explore how race intersects with class and language. Further, in advancing poststructuralist theorising, this thesis advances the understanding that race is unstable, fluid and centred on complex social engagement that has been transformed by political struggle (adapted from Omi & Winant, 1994). Thus, this section advances how racial subjectivities are given meaning within the nexus of race, class and language and transformed by discourses that is contextually and historically significant. Cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1992, p. 258) posits:

> "a recognition that we all speak from a particular place, out of a particular history, out of a particular experience, a particular culture, without being contained by that position… We are all in that sense, ethnically located and our ethnic identities are crucial to our subjective sense of who we are".

In the quote above Hall's (1992) theorisation of racial identities has relevance for my study as I have argued in chapter one, that the constructs of race, class, gender and sexuality need to be understood from a historical and political position bearing the context of South Africa, once shaped by hegemonic apartheid discourses. Thus, Hall's (1992) theoretical position is extremely relevant for my research, as the participants in my study are products of their socio-cultural, material and historical circumstances. In this country, racial separation, formalised and implemented by apartheid discourses, was undergirded by the privilege of white supremacy (Frederickson, 1982) and the subordination of black inferiority. The privilege of white superiority manifested itself as both a political and economic advantage in society (Verwey & Quayle, 2012).

Stuart Hall's (1997) work on identity took to de-essentialising and deconstructing identity categorisations such as race and gender. In particular, Hall (1996) viewed identity as being constructed and intertwined within the dynamics of power. Power worked to exclude certain identity constructions to promote the notion of 'difference' arguing for the construction of

identity through 'difference' and not outside of 'difference'. Thus, the advancement of identity work became integral through the conceptualisation of 'difference' (Hall, 1996). The apartheid government fashioned society along "racial" lines, "going far beyond racism and racial discrimination to generalised social engineering around state-sanctioned racial ideology and legislation" (Seekings, 2008, p. 2). Thus, race became a "primary constituent identity in South Africa" (Distiller & Steyn, 2004, p. 7). The theorising of race within this thesis views race as a dynamic and fluid social creation (Hayman & Levit as cited in Chang-Ross, 2010) that possesses meanings and definitions specific to socio-historical, material and cultural discourses. Further, the theorising of race within this thesis is concerned with the way in which discourses "makes, unmakes, and remakes racial positions" (Dolby, 2001, p. 9).

This thesis rejects a biological essentialist understanding of race and views it as made real through performance. Borrowing from Miron and Inda (2009, p. 99) race "works performatively to constitute the racial subject itself, a subject that only procures a naturalised effect through repeated reference to that subject. This suggests what might be called racial performativity... ". Hence, race within the context of this study is conceptualised as a socio-cultural and political construct made real through performance and which continues to change according to socio-historical, material and cultural discourse. Dolby (2001) contends that racial identities are fluid and constantly changing, and constructed within relations of power, thus arguing for an understanding of racial subjectivities within the framework of broader society. Hence, this thesis rejects an essentialist account of race linked to biological determinism and addresses race through relations of power and discourse.

Within the context of South Africa, during apartheid, race was given meaning through daily-lived experiences based on racial differences rather than biological essences (Posel, 2010). The material realities of race during the apartheid context viewed "white bodies as markers of cultural and economic superiority, as compared with darker bodies which were signs of deficits of civilisation (Posel, 2001, p. 94). Stuart Hall (1992, p. 254 as cited in Mckinney, 2007) in theorising of 'black' within the context of Britain argues for "recognition of the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose the category 'black'; that is, the recognition that 'black' is essentially a politically and culturally constructed category".

Internationally and within the context of the United States (US), the scholars Omi and Winant (1994) have done significant work in providing a sociologically rooted explanation of race. In particular, Omi and Winant's (1994) study on racial formation in the US, deemed a classic, cross-disciplinary work, has been widely used for its contribution towards research into race. Critical Race theory was initially drawn from critical legal studies, an early legal movement towards race thinking (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Omi and Winant's (1994, p. 48) primary assertion concerning racial formation in the US is that race functions as "an autonomous field of social conflict, political organisation, and cultural/ ideological meaning". Omi and Winant (1994) argue from a paradigmatic point of view that race should be conflated with class, ethnicity and nationality, yet this has never been a primary concern for sociological research. Affirming this, Ladson-Billings (2013) argues for the need for Critical Race theorists to understand how categorisations such as class, gender and ethnicity simultaneously operate to give meaning to race. The scholars Woodson and Du Bois (as cited in Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), advance race theorising by linking race as a central construct in terms of understanding inequality.

The tenets of Critical Race theory advances the notion that racism is an ordinary everyday experience within the context of the United States (Delgado & Stefanic, 2001). Furthermore, Critical Race theory offers a lens to understand that race and racism is not the only medium through which power operates, but rather race intersects with other social identities to produce multiple outcomes of experience (Hylton, 2012). It has also been argued that Critical Race theory deconstructs the power and privilege inherent within race, as well as challenges the discursive and structural dynamics associated with whiteness (Deliovsky, 2010). The scholars Delgado and Stefancic (2001) argue that race as a category of division warrants further consideration due to its historical marginalisation.

While Omi and Winant (1993, p. 5) reject the biological and natural essence of race they argue that race is "a fundamental principle of social organisation and identity formation". This is especially relevant in a context such as South Africa where race continues to manifest and shape interactions negatively within the higher education landscape (Department of Education, 2008).) In the context of South Africa, apartheid discourses made 'whiteness' the norm through which racial subjectivities were 'othered' (Steyn, 2004). Hall (1992) recognises

the contextual specificity in which subjects are positioned and the societal processes, which produce dominant identities of whiteness and subordinate identities of blackness (adapted from McKinney, 2010). During apartheid in South Africa, being classified white was a symbol of economic and political privilege and prowess, while being categorised 'black' meant exclusion from socio-economic and political privilege, along with an inferior status in society (Posel, 2010). Steyn (2005) argues that in South Africa whiteness was taken for granted on the naturalness of "being privileged". Thus, race and class became intimately connected and were made real and given meaning during the apartheid context. Magubane (1979) asserts that within the South African context the existence and perpetuation of racism was underlined by the deep-seated need for capitalist development in the country, thereby arguing against the inseparability of the race/class nexus. During the apartheid context in South Africa, racial capitalism was key to upholding the status quo of racial segregation and reproducing white hegemony (Van der Westhuizen, 2007). I now discuss the class dimensions of race and racialisation within the South African context.

Hall (1980, p. 342) enunciates the race/class dimension as the "modality in which class is lived" and the means through which it is both "appropriated and fought". In understanding racial subjectivities within a post-apartheid context through the intersecting lens of race and class to construct subjectivities, Seekings and Natrass (2005) offer a substantial analysis of the shift in class structure in South African society. Seekings and Natrass (2005) assert that one of the most dramatic changes in the social landscape after apartheid has been the accelerating growth of the black African middle class. As part of South Africa's redress, the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policy, deemed as progressive, gave rise to a black African middle class and black African political and economic elite (Alexander, 2007).

Hence, the concomitant effects of the acceleration of black African upward mobility necessitated a rising cleavage in intra-racial inequality (Natrass & Seekings, 2001). However, Soudien (2004) purports that the change in class relations, albeit complex, made it possible for people of colour to consolidate positions of privilege and power, while the working class and poor continue to experience high degrees of vulnerability, discrimination and marginalisation. Natrass and Seekings (2001, p. 47) purport that within the context of post-apartheid South Africa "inequality is driven by two income gaps: between an increasingly

multiracial upper class and everyone else; and between a middle class of mostly urban, industrial, or white-collar workers and a marginalised class of black unemployed and rural poor". Within the context of this study, some of the participants give voice to the materiality of the race/class nexus as a lived daily experience within the campus environment. In applying a poststructuralist framework to understand racial subjectivities at the intersection of race and class I draw upon the Foucauldian notion of power, arguing that power is made tangible through discourse deployed by individual subjects who are regulated and constituted through discourse. This thesis posits the view, and I argue, that race as a discursive construction is fluid and malleable and only made real and shaped through performance that is historically and contextually situated within discourse. Thus, it is important to understand how racial subjectivities are given meaning within the broader structures of power and how material circumstances discursively construct subjects.

Within the context of my study class, language and power are inextricably linked to sustaining hegemonic apartheid discourses as language is operationalised as a tool to construct and sustain racial and ethnic subjectivities within normative discourses. De Klerk (2002, p. 31) purports, "under apartheid, language was perceived and promoted as a core element of culture and ethnicity. Language, culture and ethnicity became virtually coterminous". Whilst post-apartheid South Africa has opened up spaces for the redefinition of ethnolinguistic identities (Rudwick & Parmegiani, 2013) a tension remains within the South African higher education landscape, as it was played out in the #TransformWits and Open Stellenbosch movements which intersected issues of language, race and class, which I expanded upon in chapter one.

However, the palpable effects of apartheid discourses continue to persist, as evidenced by English second-language learners who struggle academically due to their weak grounding in the English language (Van Rooyen & Jordaan, 2009). This bears relevance for my study, as the issues of language are twofold within the campus. Firstly, the campus under study has the largest population of students who are English second-language speakers, and secondly the intersection of race, class and language has special significance in discursively constructing racialised subjectivities within particular discourses. Gqola (2001, p. 95) argues that even in

post-apartheid South Africa "apartheid language continues to determine the manner in which we speak against its discursive construction".

Bearing relevance for this study, the intersection of race, class and language discursively construct racialised subjectivities through the naming and performance of a 'coconut'. In post-apartheid South Africa, one of the most significant changes was the burgeoning of the black African middle class (Seekings & Natrass, 2005). This change in class position afforded the elite black African middle class to insert themselves in an education system that was previously English only associated with "middle-class, English-speaking Whites, the elites of old society" (Mesthrie, 2017, p. 316). The differences in terms of "values, language preferences, and accents against those of the new middle classes" was starkly visible in society (Mesthrie, 2017, p. 316). The changing class positions in South African society emergent in the mid-1990s made visible the conflation of race, class and language of the affluent black African middle class, resulting in a reconfiguration of ethnolinguistic subjectivity termed 'coconut' (Distiller & Steyn, 2004; Rudwick, 2010; Mesthrie, 2017).

The construction of the coconut was purported to be "dark on the outside, white on the inside" (Mesthrie, 2017, p. 317). Erasmus (2010) deployed the use of coconut, employed to race reconfigured by contemporary history, expressing a disjuncture between 'appearance' and 'social habits'. Evidently, the changing class positions concomitantly allowed black African middle-class learners to access the English language as a power investment (Hunter, 2010). Rudwick (2010) asserts that fluency in the use of English, constructed a 'coconut' with associations of the racialised power of whiteness, simultaneously 'coconuts' associated 'blackness' with social inferiority.

It is therefore prudent to understand how socio-cultural, material and historical circumstances hold relevance in the discursive constructions of subjects' lived experience on campus.

2.7. CONCLUSION:

"Perhaps the single most important theme is that race, class, gender and sexuality are historically specific, socially constructed hierarchies of domination - they are power relationships" (Weber, 1998, p. 20).

In this chapter, I sketched the key concepts that underpin this study. I provided a rationale for situating this study within a feminist poststructuralist framework that bears relevance to the socio-cultural, material and historical circumstances within the broader structures of power. I have used an eclectic approach to draw upon the concepts that have come to shape the research process. At the outset of this chapter, I declared that the concepts and theorising presents subjectivity as fluid, unstable and constantly changing under specific socio-historical contexts within situated discourses. Understanding how the participants of this study give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality within discourses of power, signals to the fluidity and instability of the significance that they attach to these categorisations.

In this chapter, I also discussed the ways in which race, class and language coalesce and how this is given effect within the lives of participants, signalling to the fluidity in which racialised subjectivities are constructed. This holds relevance especially within the context of South Africa's socio-economic and political history during the apartheid era. I also discussed the concepts that have shaped the ways in which gender, sexuality, and the relational nature of masculinity and femininity have been given significance by my participants. Further, I expanded upon the concepts of heterosexuality and heteronormativity, in attempting to understand issues of gender and sexuality within the campus environment.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION:

In the previous chapter of this thesis, I discussed the key concepts that advanced the conceptual and theoretical orientation of this study. I used an eclectic approach to understand the discursive constructions that students attach to race, class, gender and sexuality. However, I also discussed conceptually how constructions of race, class, gender and sexuality within the context of this study cannot only be understood as discursively produced, because race, class, gender and sexuality are intertwined and embedded within the socio-cultural, historical and material realities of students' lives.

In this chapter, I review relevant literature that situates my study within an overarching context - higher education. The primary purpose of this chapter is to engage with literature, focusing broadly on the experiences of higher education students within the context of post-apartheid South Africa. The engagement with this extant literature is to provide a textured understanding of students' experiences within higher education and how these experiences affect the issues of transformation and social cohesion. This backdrop is important as it locates my work within a present body of knowledge that is invested in understanding the debates around South African higher education, in relation to the discourse of transformation and how this is troubled by students' experiences. I demonstrate how, despite extant research on student experiences within higher education, little is known about student experiences from merged institutions with distinct histories, such as the one where this study is located, and is created from a merger of a historically white and a historically Indian university. In addition, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, situated in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, is purported to be the most transformed institution in the country. It was the first institution to implement an African language in the curriculum by introducing a compulsory isiZulu module in 2014 as part of the degree requirements for undergraduate students (Rudwick, 2015). Against this backdrop, my participants are located within a diverse social context and the ways in which they give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality shapes their subjectivities in particular ways. How these particular experiences advance the

transformation agenda at the University of KwaZulu-Natal is where I situate this thesis's contribution to knowledge.

I critique how limited research on institutional culture, troubling the discourse of transformation, has focused narrowly on historically white institutions, creating the perception that 'race troubles' are limited to historically white institutions only. The heavy bias towards race 'thinking and doing' skews the insidious and invisible ways that patriarchy, homophobia, sexism etc. come to bear on the transformation agenda. I argue that there remains limited research around institutional cultures at merged institutions and how the experiences of students situated within these institutions affect the discourse of transformation within higher education. Within the context of its own study, UKZN aligned the notion of transformation within the institution as one that "is free of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race, gender, class, nationality, religion, sexual orientation and disability" (UKZN Transformation Charter, 2010, p.2). Yet we know very little about student experiences in the ways in which race, class, gender and sexuality coalesce at my own institution to better understand transformation. Against this backdrop, my study seeks to contribute to understanding the meanings and significance that students attach to race, class, gender and sexuality at UKZN, and how these meanings hold relevance for the issues of transformation and social cohesion. With this notion, I argue that my study is locally grounded and context specific and relevant as the institution under study is a merged institution and is purported to be the most transformed higher education institution in the country. In addition, the recently published book by Pattman and Carolissen (2018), which I will discuss in detail in this chapter, provides an important lens to the broader issues of transformation within higher education. Pattman and Carolissen (2018) illuminate all of the key areas (language linked to multilingualism, racialisation of spaces, institutional culture, heteronormative campus cultures, the student movements and disability within the higher education space), in relation to the issues of transformation troubling current higher education institutions.

In order to situate the discourse of transformation within South African higher education, I begin this chapter by focusing on research that provides a contextual and conceptual notion

of the discourse of transformation and how this concept has been taken up by several scholars.

3.2 THE DISCOURSE OF TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: IDEOLOGICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL OR MATERIAL?

The transformation discourse as an "academic project" within higher education institutions in South Africa has been discussed and debated by several scholars (Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007; Soudien, 2010a; du Preez, Simmonds & Verhoef, 2016; Badat, 2016; Seephe, 2017). It has been argued that transformation within higher education should be viewed as both a structural and ideological phenomenon (Soudien, 2010a). Soudien (2010a) described the structural aspect with a view to understanding how the system was sociologically arranged, reflective of the concurrent relationships within it, and the ideological conceptualisation as framing the beliefs and assumptions of the underlying nature of the problems within higher education and the solutions to these challenges (Soudien, 2010a). Other scholars argued that the notion of transformation within higher education, investigated in scholarly work, should be viewed within three main discourses (Du Preez, Simmonds & Verhoef, 2016).

Du Preez, Simmonds and Verhoef (2016) assert that the first is a structural discourse that is recognised in the work of Soudien (2010a). This notion of discourse speaks of the "transition to a democratic society". The issues of "equality and efficiency" within the system of higher education are key to addressing the issue of transformation within this discourse (Du Preez, Simmonds & Verhoef, 2016, p. 2). The second discourse is rooted within an ideological understanding of transformation and in particular necessitates a deeper understanding of issues that emanated from the Soudien Report (adapted from Soudien, 2010a in Du Preez, Simmonds & Verhoef, 2016). The third discourse includes all the various facets of transformation, for example, "epistemology, curriculum, accessibility, equality, institutional and management structures, teaching and learning", which should be viewed within an international context (Du Preez, Simmonds & Verhoef, 2016, p. 2). Du Preez, Simmonds and Verhoef (2016, p. 2) purport that transformation within South African higher education has been inherently concerned with "equality, efficiency and structural changes", with no emphasis placed on understanding transformation related to racism and racialised

experiences that only surfaced with the emergence of the Reitz incident at the University of Free State (UFS) in 2007.

Research by Akoojee and Nkomo (2007) assert that transformation within the context of South African higher education should address issues of access and entry in pursuit of equity and redress within the context of attrition levels among first-year entry students. However, Seephe (2017, p. 122) argues that "transformation and redress should be conceptualised as going beyond issues of broadening access, representation, and the eradication of discriminatory practices, to include epistemological issues that address ideas and knowledge formulation". However, in South Africa, the impediment to transformation hinges around dismantling white power (Seephe, 2017), as the deeply ingrained culture of whiteness at historically white institutions obfuscates respect for difference and the fostering of inclusive cultures (Badat, 2016). Similarly, Vincent, Idahosa and Msomi's (2017, p. 326) research at a historically white institution elucidated how the pervasiveness of everyday white power obfuscated the notion of transformation aligned to "black deficit". Jawitz (2012) further stretched the concept of transformation, arguing for transformation of higher education to consider factors such as "race, class and gender", which should be understood in relation to institutional academic practices. Several scholars have argued for the examination of higher education transformation to move beyond race. In this regard, a study of social class was necessary to understand the fragmentation of racial identity (Soudien, 2008).

Other scholars argue that institutional culture impedes the transformative potential of higher education institutions (Higgins, 2007; Conradie & Brokensha, 2014; Tabensky & Matthews, 2015), while Suransky and van der Merwe (2016, p. 579) purport that transformation issues focusing on institutional culture should be understood as a "contested social reality". However, institutional culture within the context of South African higher education refers to a narrow focus on race, as argued by Higgins (2007). While Vincent (2015) asserts that institutional culture should be understood on two levels, namely the "discursive" and the "material". It has been argued that higher education transformation should move beyond just getting diverse types of bodies (black, female) into the institution and examine, rather, the "unsettling notions of what counts as normal, and by implication, what is privileged and what is rendered illicit, strange, abnormal" (Vincent, 2015, p. 28).

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Thus, the discourse of transformation within higher education has been conceptualised from an ideological and structural point of view with material realities and effects for institutions in the country bringing student experiences to the centre of the debate. Emergent from the divergent views presented by scholars on the concept of transformation lends itself to the notion of transformation as highly complex, disparate and unsettled (Soudien, 2010a; Vincent, 2015; Du Preez, Simmonds & Verhoef, 2016; Seephe, 2017). In terms of research studies there have been recently three long-term ones conducted at various higher education institutions in the country, which have drawn on student experiences to advance the notion of transformation. I will discuss these studies in detail and then provide an interrogation of the key aspects which emerged from these studies and examine this research with relevance to my own study.

A recent study entitled *"Being at Home",* by Tabensky and Matthews (2015), explores the notion of institutional culture linked to transformation at Rhodes University (a historically white institution) in South Africa. The research explored institutional culture in the foregrounding of racialised experiences. The central aim of the research was skewed towards the issues of transformation using Rhodes as a case study. The study elucidated the pervasiveness of a "white culture" inherited as part of the cultural and historical legacy of the institution. Evidently, their study recommended that key to understanding transformation is to garner an understanding of institutional culture (Tabensky & Matthews, 2015). Some of the findings of this study revealed that students who did not conform to the norm of white heterosexual experience were "othered" in terms of race, language and heterosexuality. African students who were not English first-language speakers were judged by white students in terms of their language use and accents within the campus environment, in their daily communication experiences. The study further highlighted that black African students could not comfortably occupy all spaces at Rhodes University, due to the inherent colonial culture that reinforced white privilege and black oppression.

Within the classroom environment, second-language English speakers were subjected to alienating and racist rhetoric in terms of derogatory name-calling and labelling. The study also highlighted how the institutional culture of Rhodes University was complicit in reproducing a heteronormative culture in terms of the institutional policies for staff and students. The study

recommended using Rhodes University as an example of real transformation: in order for it to happen, there was a need for all individuals to feel comfortable in the space of the institution and to constantly challenge existing prejudices and ideologies that confronted individuals. Vincent (2015) recommended that the role of narrative was extremely important in shifting experiences of race, gender, etc. forward towards achieving meaningful transformation. Matthews (2015) argued that policies that sought to address racism and other forms of discrimination would be limited if creative strategies and mechanisms were not used, as racism operated in complex and subtle ways.

The penultimate work by Swartz, Mahali, Moletsane, Arogundade, Cooper and Groenewald (2018), *"Studying while black – Race, education and emancipation in South African universities"*, is a longitudinal study conducted from 2013 to 2017 at eight higher education institutions, tracking the journey of 80 participants over five years. In particular, participants were drawn from the following South African institutions:

- "Cape Peninsula University of Technology (Belville and City);" and
- "Durban University of Technology".
- "University of Cape Town";
- "University of Johannesburg";
- "University of KwaZulu-Natal";
- "North-West University (Mafikeng and Potchefstroom)";
- "University of Fort Hare (Alice and East London)";
- "University of Limpopo";

(Swartz, Mahali, Moletsane, Arogundade, Cooper & Groenewald, 2018, p.17)

The study sought to investigate and understand students' racialised experiences within the different institutions, with a focus on black African students' access to both physical and financial resources and opportunities for learning. Further, the study investigated the extent to which patriarchy was pervasive on the campus environment and perpetuated cultures of gender inequality. The research investigated the lived experiences of female students, concerning safety and sexual harassment by staff and student leaders, as well as cultures of marginalisation and homophobia. Language was explored as a tool of emancipation and

oppression in relation to students' success, both academic and personal. The research also attempted to understand black students' obstacles to studying, in terms of access and retention, as well as factors that influenced students' success within the campus environment. It further offered a composite overview of the experiences of black African students studying at the identified institutions in the nexus of social transformation.

The findings of the investigation recognised that the challenge facing higher education transformation was embedded within the socio-political and historical trajectories of the country. The results further revealed that while the enrolment rate for black African students increased in the post-apartheid context, the completion rate remained low. Major contributors to this were financial challenges and impediments. Black African students experienced institutional racism and there was a general lack of recognition for African knowledge and languages, with inadequate attempts to decolonise the universities. One of the factors that hindered students' learning was language, as English was privileged on the campus environments. Students' inability to pay for accommodation, tuition fees, textbooks and transport were some of the financial challenges that black African students experienced. The study also revealed that a lack of institutional administrative support served as a hindrance to their success in higher education.

The recently published book by Pattman and Carolissen (2018), *Transforming Transformation in Research and Teaching at South African Universities*, was prompted by the slow pace of transformation within South African higher education institutions and the recent #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall student movements. The rationale for the book was to present research and pedagogical initiatives "that contributed to more inclusive and participatory ways of conceptualising and practising transformation" (Pattman & Carolissen, 2018, p. 4-5). The authors focus on diversity and how it is practised in the lived experiences of students, both on and off campus. The research illuminates all of the key areas (language linked to multilingualism, racialisation of spaces, institutional culture, heteronormative campus cultures, the student movements and disability within the higher education space), in relation to the issues of transformation troubling current higher education institutions. Some of the reflections and recommendations that emanate from the various chapters are the invisible ways in which power operates to "exclude or marginalise certain students by

virtue of race, gender, class and sexuality or combinations of these" (Pattman & Carolissen, 2018, p. 14).

Ratele (2018) argues on the notion of "deep transformation", which requires institutions to move beyond essentialist accounts and experiences to create knowledge that speaks to new experiences and the creation of new traditions "to be part of one another, to be in each other" (Ratele, 2018, p.70). Duncan (2018) argues for initiatives that foster the element of integration across races and research that explores student cultures and tastes in inclusionary and exclusionary ways. This book engages the issues of transformation as it is played out at different tertiary institutions in the country, elucidating the complexity and nuanced experiences of students within the contemporary context of the different campuses.

The three studies above provide a comprehensive overview of the current culture of higher education institutions situated within different historical backgrounds. Common across all these studies, is the notion that racialised identities were foregrounded as the main source of marginalising experiences for black African students. However, the study by Pattman and Carolissen (2018) also illuminated other aspects of identity, such as gender, culture, class and language problematising these as the lived experiences on the campus environment. The study by Tabensky and Matthews (2015) focused solely on the institutional culture of Rhodes University and pointed to the perpetuation of a "white" institutional culture with marginalising experiences for those who differed from the norm (white). The investigation by Swartz et al., (2018) focused on eight higher education institutions from varied historical backgrounds and examined the experiences of black African students with regards to access and success in the university environment.

The study by Pattman and Carolissen (2018) provided a comprehensive overview of the current transformation issues that higher education institutions were grappling with from the point of conceptualisation to expansion of the lived experiences in terms of race, gender, class and sexuality that have been problematised in relation to transformation. There is consensus across all three studies of the extent to which the perpetuation of apartheid discourses remained a poignant and predominant feature in the lives of the majority of black African students at South African higher education institutions. Similarly, a research study by

Suransky and Van der Merwe (2016) sought to understand the institutional culture of a historically white institution; it foregrounded racial identity as polarising black and white experiences, supported by the institutional culture of the historically white institution.

Evidently, these studies illuminate institutional culture of historically white institutions as troubling transformation in particular ways for black African students. While all three recent studies are important towards advancing an understanding for my own study, I argue, that my study coalesces the constructs of race, class, gender and sexuality towards advancing transformation within a uniquely different higher education context. It is one that is most diverse, created out of two distinct institutional histories, a previously white and previously Indian institution. We know very little about the ways in which students positioned within my research site hold significance to race, class, gender and sexuality and its relevance for transformation and social cohesion on the campus. In particular, this study seeks to understand how these constructs are woven into the local and social fabric of student lives, interacting with the broader structures of power, and provides a very different version of transformation. It has been pointed out that it was critical to identify barriers and impediments through contextually relevant research, so as to move the transformation agenda forward (Seabi, Seedat, Khoza-Shangase & Sullivan, 2014). My study intends to contribute to the discourse of transformation, but more specifically through context specific and locally grounded knowledge, to understand how transformation can be advanced within my own institution.

The next section discusses the studies undertaken, which focus on students' racialised experiences in higher education, drawing on research which has local and global relevance. As the body of literature is extant, I will thematically review emerging literature. I begin with institutional culture and racialised experiences. In section two of this chapter, I will discuss research undertaken regarding higher education students' gendered and sexual experiences situating my study within this emerging body of work.

3.3. RESEARCH ON STUDENT EXPERIENCES WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION: RACE, CLASS AND LANGUAGE

Research undertaken at some South African higher education institutions has elucidated the complexity of institutional culture as being complicit in the marginalising experiences of students foregrounding racialised experiences in nuanced ways (Tabensky & Matthew, 2015; Pattman & Carolissen, 2018, Swartz et.al, 2018). To this effect, in recent years, a number of national institutional climate surveys of student and staff attitudes and dispositions towards race have been carried out at various institutions. The results illuminate the persistent and continuing presence of racism and racial attitudes that are manifest within the higher education system (Woods, 2001; Thaver, 2003; Daniels & Richard, 2006 as cited in Soudien, 2010a; Jansen, 2009). Vincent (2008) and Walker (2005, 2006) argue that despite a new generation of individuals who have no recollection of apartheid, students continue to struggle with its structural legacy as well as new, insidious and often subtle forms of interpersonal racism that characterise the current context of higher education experiences.

Further, other South African scholars who have examined student experiences aligned to institutional culture, have framed the experiences of black African students at previously white institutions as alienating and unwelcoming, due to the perpetuation of whiteness within the campus environment (Sennet, Finchilescu, Gibson & Strauss, 2003; Cornell & Kessi, 2017). Research undertaken by Conradie and Brokensha (2014) sought to examine the racialised experiences of racially diverse students at the University of Free State, a previously white institution. Their focus was to understand students' experiences linked to racial prejudice and the social context linked to the apartheid era. Drawing upon a narrative enquiry, the findings of the research elucidated that apartheid discourses were perpetuated and manifest on campus with polarising experiences for black and white students.

McKinney's (2007a) investigation, conducted at a historically white institution, elucidated how students in the post-apartheid context drew upon apartheid discourses to construct and give meaning to their identities in the current context of their institution. Similarly, Vincent (2008), in her study, found that while opportunities existed for mixing in the contemporary context of the university environment, such contact occurred under unequal circumstances, where whiteness was privileged over blackness. It has also been argued, "higher education

institutions are racialised through the intricate interweaving of macro-level processes and discourses that recur in everyday talk and practice" (Robus & Macleod, 2006, p. 463).

A survey study conducted by Cross and Johnson (2008) at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, sought to understand current student experiences and perceptions about student life on campus. The findings revealed that students from diverse backgrounds experienced the campus environment differently. A recommendation emanating from this investigation was to establish a space of dialogue and possibilities that allowed for engagement and enrichment in understanding diverse experiences towards the recognition of difference. Research conducted by Cornell and Kessi (2017) at the University of Cape Town, a historically white institution, sought to explore black African students' experiences of transformation. The findings of the study elucidated the failure of transformation characterised by a dominant culture of whiteness, still pervasive on the campus. However, despite this, the findings illuminated that black African students were not passive subjects of the stereotyping discourse and were finding ways to resist and cope with these discourses. Research by Higham (2012), also situated at the University of Cape Town, argued that, despite the increasing diversity necessitated by the transformation agenda, a range of both new and old patterns of exclusion persisted on campus.

From the research studies above an emerging body of work points to the notion of previously 'white' institutional cultures as troubling transformation in current higher education institutions, with the majority of black African students positioned as custodians of this deficit, resulting in a sense of marginalisation and alienation. However, the notion of "institutional culture" itself is vague as highlighted in the Soudien Report; there was little coherence and common understanding amongst institutions towards the notion of institutional culture (Department of Education, 2008). A study conducted by Niemann (2010, p. 1003) at the University of Free State, described institutional culture as "… an awareness of the complexities surrounding transformation processes, necessitating the unveiling of the underlying values, expectations, and dreams with a view to constructing a strategic framework for cultural transformation within a changing environment". However, research studies have mostly illuminated that the notion of 'institutional culture' and racialised experiences seems to be pegged to previously white institutions (Sennet, Finchilescu, Gibson

& Strauss, 2003; Cornell & Kessi, 2017; Tabensky & Matthews, 2015; Pattman & Carollisen, 2018). Against this backdrop, there is a need to further research institutional culture of merged institutions, to understand the implications of institutional culture as troubling the discourse of transformation in higher education. In particular, the context within which my study is located, is created out of two distinct institutional histories collapsed into one – a transformed institution.

In terms of research studies conducted internationally, within the context of the United States (US) higher education system, despite claims of non-racism, legacies of racial exclusion, reproduction of racialised experiences and discrimination continue to pervade these institutions (Posselt, Jaquette, Bielby & Bastedo, 2012; Garcia & Johnston-Guerrero, 2015). Research exploring institutional culture within the context of the US elucidated the extent to which students of colour, particularly within traditionally white institutions, continued to experience unwelcoming, hostile and toxic racial climates that inadvertently affected their sense of institutional belonging and success within the higher education space (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Gusa, 2010; Hurtado & Strayhorn, 2012; Harper, 2013). Similarities can be drawn with South African studies purporting the same results localised to historically white institutions (Sennet, Finchilescu, Gibson & Strauss, 2003; Cornell & Kessi, 2017; Tabensky & Matthews, 2015; Pattman & Carollisen, 2018). Other scholars have illuminated how students of colour, situated at various higher education institutions in the US, experienced negative racial climates (Harper, Davis, Jones, McGowan, Ingram & Platt, 2011; Yeung & Johnston, 2014). Similarities in research findings can also be drawn to other South African studies conducted on institutional climate and racialised experiences (see Woods, 2001; Thaver, 2003; Daniels & Richard, 2006 as cited in Soudien, 2010a; Jansen, 2009).

A study by Johnson, Soldner, Leonard, Alvarez, Inkelas, Rowan-Kenyon & Longerbeam (2007), sought to understand institutional belonging among a sample of 2,967 first-year students at a US higher education institution. The findings reported that Hispanic/Latino, Asia-Pacific American and African-American students felt less inclined to feelings of institutional belonging compared to their white and Caucasian peers. Stewart's (2008) research, contextualised at Ohio State University in the US, focused on the varied socio-cultural identities of African- American students. Stewart's (2008) findings illuminated that the

process of identity construction, in particular for African- American students at a historically white institution, was a complex process that was framed by the intersectionality of other identity categories that shaped the individual experience.

However, it has been argued that, despite the many policy imperatives and initiatives that attempt to drive 'racial redress' in contemporary South Africa, both society and higher education institutions continue to be "racially wired" (Thaver & Thaver, 2010). Within the context of my study, research investigating racial identities and social cohesion have been taken up (see Pattman, 2007, 2010, Bhana, 2013a, 2014). A study investigating student identities at the then newly merged University of KwaZulu-Natal, investigated racialised groupings and identities on the Howard College campus (Pattman, 2007). The investigation used a social constructionist lens to understand identity as fluid and changing. Student participants used loosely structured interviews and conversations to gather the data for this study and a participatory methodology to address participants as active agents. The study discovered that, despite the recent merger of the institution, "race" emerged as a major influence and marker of student identification, affecting associations on campus and friendship patterns in relation to others. An overall recommendation of the study was that the integration of different students needed to be actively worked at and not just assumed. Pattman's (2010, p. 963) study at UKZN's Howard College campus, which investigated "race and social cohesion", illuminated that "the kinds of relationships and identifications students make are influenced and affected by their lives outside the university and prior to them becoming students, which includes their experiences of schooling". While these studies provided a springboard to my research it was limited to an exclusive focus on race rooted within a social constructionist lens. My study, however, seeks to go beyond race and student experience to understand class, gender and sexuality rooted within a feminist poststructuralist lens. Borrowing from Chris Weedon (1987, p. 20) who contends that theory within a poststructuralist framework is meaningful if it is "able to address questions of how social power is exercised and how social relations of gender, class and race might be transformed". Since my study is undertaken with the intention of understanding how race, class, gender and sexuality coalesce to advance transformation on campus, it was necessary to situate my research within this conceptual orientation.

Walker's (2005, 2006) research examined the life histories of her participants, in the form of narratives. Her sample consisted of 12 black African and white undergraduate students of mixed gender from a previously advantaged white Afrikaans-medium university in the midst of post-apartheid transformation. Her research investigated the ways in which identity and discourse was given meaning across four elements of the campus environment. The findings of the study suggested that social and economic conditions shaped and influenced friendship patterns on the campus environment. Similar findings were reported by context specific research that attempted to investigate race and class intersections bearing on students' friendships (Bhana, 2013a, 2014). Walker's (2005) study also illuminated that all of these students' lives were characterised and steeped within apartheid discourses that made visible racialised subjectivities and a legacy of racial separateness. However, Walker (2005) argued that despite such characterisations, there existed conditions for new possibilities and transitions as students entered into the space of the campus environment, allowing for opportunities of racial mixing.

The findings of the above research illuminate the extent to which race structures student friendships on campus and limits the possibility for cross-racial mixing, but also points to the possibility under which these friendships become fluid (Walker, 2005; 2006). The study by Finchilescu, Tredoux, Mynhardt, Pillay and Muianga (2007) conducted an internet-based survey, comprised of black African students and white students to understand the cultures associated with a lack of racial mixing on campus. The findings of the study revealed that white students were trying to forget the apartheid past, while black African participants drew on apartheid discourses to structure their friendships. Black African students who mixed with white students were stigmatised (also noted by Durrheim & Mtose, 2006, Pattman, 2007). The findings elucidated that socio-economic status and language were critical elements to the obstacle of interracial mixing. While some similarity can be found within the context of my study, my study illuminates how participants are able to go beyond discursive constructions of race, class and language to engage in cross-racial mixing and friendships on campus. Amoateng (2016) investigated students' sense of belonging and acceptance at the University of Johannesburg. The findings revealed that students who attended multicultural schools prior to entering university were more accepting of diversity than those who attended segregated high schools. A similarity can also be drawn to my study, as participants reported

that students who attended ex-Model C[4] schools were able to transcend racialised friendships as they were already used to interacting with students from diverse backgrounds. The research discovered that the country was not socially cohesive and that the youth continued to be fractured along racial and ethnic lines positioning themselves within dominant apartheid discourses (Amoateng, 2016).

The research undertaken by Conradie and Brooks (2016) at a historically white institution focused on understanding the ways in which race was given meaning and understood. The study findings determined that talking about racism exacerbated the problem and language was a problem for perpetuating racism on the campus environment. Bock and Hunter (2015) examined how students at two higher education institutions positioned themselves with regard to race and the apartheid past. The findings illuminated that, common across all race groups, was a desire to leave apartheid discourses behind in finding ways to move on within contemporary South Africa. However, the absence of alternate discourses outside apartheid racial categorisations impeded these new discourses from emerging.

However, some studies have been conducted to advance positive strategies towards transformation in higher education with a notion to addressing racialised differences. Against this backdrop a study conducted by Leibowitz, Bozalek, Rohleder, Carolissen and Swartz (2010), based on a learning intervention strategy at two tertiary institutions in the Western Cape, advocated that differences could be learned through pedagogical intervention. The findings revealed that learning about each other's differences could be enhanced by the "pedagogy of discomfort" and was dependent on various factors, including students' socio-historical contexts. Research undertaken by Githaiga, Gobodo-Madikizela and Wahl (2017), conducted at UFS, in order to ascertain the state of transformation within the university residences, found that although student narratives were interwoven with family backgrounds and influenced by past experiences, there was evidence of transformation towards the racial other, in terms of attitude and behaviour. In addition, findings by Binikos and Rugunanan

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[4] An ex semi-private school for whites only in South Africa introduced in 1991 by the apartheid government.

(2015) recommended the need for a close examination of students' interpersonal relationships in viewing issues of transformation in higher education. I concur with Binikos and Rugunanan (2015) and see this type of research as a necessary conduit to inform and advance social cohesion and transformation.

Within an international context Stewart's (2015) research, conducted at three different colleges in the US, two of which were historically black and the other a predominantly white institution, sought to understand black students' identity. Interviews were conducted with 13 African-American students of traditional age. The study illuminated that for African American students on this campus, racialised identity was foregrounded. However, none of these experiences crystallised into negative outcomes, or hindered these students' experiences or development within the college environment. A similarity can be drawn with the findings from research conducted by Harris and Khanna (2010), also within the context of the US. In an investigation of college students' experiences of the campus environment by race, Rankin and Reason (2005) discovered that black students' experiences of college campuses were significantly different from those of their white counterparts.

Within the context of the United Kingdom's higher education system, Bhopal (2017) asserts that inequalities in higher education continue to exist in accessing particular higher education institutions and degree attainment. Bhopal (2017) argues that despite the significant number of black students entering the tertiary system in the United Kingdom, these students are less likely to enter elite institutions or attend elite universities, thus crystallising the disjuncture between policy and practice. Other scholars argue that working-class and ethnic minority groups have been marginalised from the higher education system in the UK (Reay, Crozier & Clayton, 2009; Evans, 2010).

The research studies conducted above, illuminate the nuanced ways in which race is given meaning central to student experiences in post-apartheid higher education and within the international context. It can be argued that apartheid discourses characterise the ways in which race structures friendships and racial mixing (Walker, 2005, 2005; Pattman, 2007, 2010; Finchilescu, Tredoux, Mynhardt, Pillay & Muianga, 2007; Amoateng, 2016), whilst research illuminates the desire to leave apartheid discourses behind in finding new ways of 'being' in

post-apartheid South Africa, this is limited (Bock and Hunter, 2015). Transformation is made even more complex and nuanced at historically white institutions, which present particular racialised experiences for higher education students. However, Soudien (2010a), Binikos and Rugunanan (2015) assert that there has been insufficient attention given to the ways in which race and class intersect in moving transformation forward in South African higher education. Soudien (2008), in his study of youth identities in higher education, asserted that racialisation processes understood to be uniform required interrogation, as class differentials had now come to characterise the lives of previously marginalised groups within higher education, thus leading to a re-articulation of racialised subjectivity.

In recent years, limited research has been conducted into the ways in which race and class coalesce (Bhana, 2014) to trouble the transformation agenda. Akoojee and Nkomo (2007) asserted that one of the imperative and critical needs of higher education transformation was access and equity in redressing apartheid education. Thus, the significant imperative of the transformation agenda sought to dramatically increase the enrolment of African students into the higher education space, presenting new opportunities for equitable relationships among students (Bhana, 2014). However, as noted by Cross and Carpentier (2009) and Nomdo (2017), students from disadvantaged and socio-economically deprived backgrounds were less prepared for academia and traditional university culture. Nomdo (2017) asserts that despite the long and ongoing transition from apartheid, many black African students feel discomfort while attempting to settle in to historically white institutions. This was mainly attributed to notions of class. Within the context of higher education in this country, studies investigating the significance of the intersection of race and class have been explored (Soudien, 2008; Higham, 2012; Bhana, 2013a, 2014; Chetty, 2014; Singh & Bhana, 2015). I will expand on a few of these studies below. In chapter one of this thesis I demonstrated that the #FeesMustFall student protest, apart from illuminating the fee debacle that students were grappling with, elucidated the intersection of race and class as central to student experience troubling transformation within higher education.

Chetty (2014) asserts that schools and universities are important mediators, through which race and class realities manifest, signalling the imperative to recognise class amidst the deepening social inequalities in South Africa. It has been argued that in the changing social

landscape of higher education, the intersection of social class with racial demographics presents new meanings and expressions of "race" and how these are articulated as lived experiences of students (Soudien, 2008). Thus, a critical interrogation of the racialisation process is pertinent, considering the different class positions within previously marginalised groups prior to 1994 (Soudien, 2008).

Bhana's (2013a) research, conducted within a university campus in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, sought to understand student identities through the intersection of race and class. The findings elucidated that students' expressions and experiences of race within the campus environment was complicated by class, situated within the broader contextual issues of the country. Thus, class inequalities were accentuated as these weaved and intersected with race, troubling student relations. Similarly, Bhana's (2014) qualitative study, conducted at UKZN on the Howard College campus, sought to investigate black African students' racialised experiences within the campus environment, mediated through class. The study findings determined that white students were economically well established compared to the majority of the black African students on campus, whose lives were afflicted by racial poverty. The findings simultaneously challenged race as monolithic, arguing that while the majority of poor students were black, there were also moments of hybridity between working-class Indian students and black students in certain spaces of the campus, such as the cafeteria. Bhana (2014) asserted that any programme or policy aimed at enhancing racial mixing within the university had to consider the ways in which race and class intersected and were intimately connected.

Singh and Bhana's (2015) study of student identities, conducted at the same institution, investigated the racialised experiences of black African students, mediated by class. The study elucidated how the constructs of race and class permeated the lives of students on the campus with implications for transformation and social cohesion. Singh and Bhana's (2015) research discussed how class was strongly implicated with disrupting essentialist versions of racialised subjectivities on campus. The research determined that class dynamics troubled the homogenous construction of identities, in particular, for black African students on the campus. Bhana's (2016, p. 29) study recommended, "attention to the histories of apartheid and continued economic and social disparities is of importance in addressing meaningful

social encounters that seek to end power inequalities". I argue that these studies (Bhana, 2013a, 2014, Singh & Bhana, 2015) also highlight how the material realities of students' lives on campus is situated within the broader structures of power and how these manifestations at the intersection of race and class come to produce particular realities for students. Using these studies as a springboard for further investigation, my study illuminates how race and class intersect to create a particular lens through which transformation on campus should be understood. In this regard, the knowledge obtained from these experiences is translated to recommendations for action, which is discussed in chapter eight of this thesis.

Within an international context, scholars have explored contentious issues of social class within educational experiences, in the context of the US (Wentworth & Peterson, 2001; Kuriloff & Reichert, 2003). An international study, conducted in the United Kingdom by Crozier, Clayton, Colliander and Grinstead (2008), investigated the differences between the middle-class and working-class experiences of students across four tertiary institutions. The sample of students for the study was obtained from four different types of institutions in the United Kingdom, positioned in three geographical areas. The first sample of students was drawn from a modern university, the second from a college of further participation, the third from an elite institution and the fourth from a civic university. The study was prompted by concerns around the widening participation of students who were privileged due to their class positions. The study determined that middle-class students were, in fact, better prepared for higher education than working-class students and were clear about what the university experience entailed. They were able to perpetuate privilege and engage more across the spectrum of the institutions, compared to working-class students, due to their economic standing. Despite progressive policies that had been put in place to ensure the participation of all students (middle- and working-class), inequalities were still reproduced and perpetuated in the higher education environment.

Reay, Crozier and Clayton's (2010) study, which took place at four higher education institutions in the United Kingdom, investigated how class was modified, reproduced and transformed in the students' lived worlds within the university environment and its relation to how learner identities were developed. The different educational contexts presented working-class students with varied and multiple subject positions of either fitting into the

educational context or remaining at the margins. Some working-class identity negotiations involved combining a sense of belonging to a middle-class higher education environment with their working-class backgrounds and upbringing. The findings of the study elucidated that for some working-class students, only a partial sense of themselves as students within varied educational contexts was embraced.

The scholars Langhout, Drake and Rosselli (2009) conducted a study at a tertiary institution in the US, to investigate experiences of social class status, social class discrimination and psychosocial and school related outcomes. The research was conducted at a small undergraduate elite liberal arts college with a student enrolment of 2,880 at the time of the study. The findings indicated that classism was prevalent at the institution and students who were positioned as having a low social class status were afflicted with experiences of classism. The students' experiences of class discrimination had negative outcomes for their sense of belonging, psychosocial worth and a greater intention to leave the college environment. This study, similarly to Bhana (2013a), suggests that the university needed to do much more to bring students together, arguing for the intervention of university policy and activities, such as orientation and transition programmes (see also Borrego, 2008; Soto, 2008). However, Bhana's (2013a) study calls for the consideration of students' different socio-cultural and historical realities and stark inequalities in any university initiative that attempts to bring students of differential classes together. I concur with this recommendation, considering the unique historical and political context of South Africa and South African higher education, which places student experiences as central to the transformation agenda.

In an international context, Kimura's (2014) research at a post-1992 urban higher education institution in the United Kingdom, conducted with mainly non-traditional students and staff, sought to understand the racialised and classed experiences of students from diverse backgrounds. The findings from her study elucidated the nuanced ways in which "race and class" subjectification occurred through dominant discourses of diversity. Kimura's (2014) study elucidated that students who encountered positive experiences of the higher education environment were able to challenge social inequalities, while simultaneously reproducing and reinforcing the social structure of racial inequality, despite an institutional claim to transformation, highlighting and foregrounding the nuanced race and class experiences of

students. Kimura's (2014) research argued against the perception that transformation was primarily structural in form and effect. Similarly, within the context of South African higher education transformation, Soudien (2010a) and Du Preez, Simmonds & Verhoef (2016) argued for the discourse of transformation to look beyond the structural realities of institutions.

In the next section of this chapter, I discuss the studies which investigated racial subjectivities through a discourse of taste, illuminating how students' material circumstances come to produce and trouble racialised subjectivities.

3. 3. 1 Research on racial subjectivities produced through a discourse of taste:

Soudien (2001) in his research on school learners situated within a post-apartheid context argued that contemporary youth drew upon a range of discourses to produce identities that were reminiscent of apartheid-racialised categorisations to give meaning to their subjectivities. Learners within the context of his study drew upon the official, formal and informal cultures of their education system to give expression to their identities in a post-apartheid South Africa. However, as noted by Soudien (2001) limited research within the South African context has been advanced to investigate the construction of racialised identities through a discourse of taste. In Dolby's (2000) research study situated within a multi-racial high school in Durban, South Africa, investigated how youth within the culture of the school context gave meaning to race under shifting discursive and material conditions in contemporary South Africa. Dolby's (2000) research findings determined that learners constructed their racial identities contingent upon both local and global material and discursive forces to give expression to their racial identities. In Dolby's (2001) research study also situated within a schooling context of a former ex Model C School argued that racial identities produced through a discourse of taste, while positioned as a form of conflict and tension, simultaneously produced conditions for flexibility and malleability, creating a space for hybridity.

Singh and Bhana's (2015) investigation, conducted at UKZN, revealed the complexity of engaging in cross-racial friendships characterised by students' choice of brand-name clothing. These served as a marker of socio-economic status and class position, fracturing the homogeneity of racial identities. In Esposito's (2011) research study of a group of racially

diverse women situated in a US higher education institution, the construction of subjectivities through race and class discourses of femininity was examined. The study findings reported within the context of this institution illuminated two types of femininities that were pervasive. The "Hill Girl" femininity was constructed through markers of "white tanned skin" and consumption practices. The "Hill Girl" femininity was symbolic of those female students who are part of the elite, rich and mostly white, whilst the "City Style" femininity was marked by consumption practices pegged to students of colour. The study elucidated that the construction of dominant femininities was enacted through the construction of "Hill Girl" labelling.

I now discuss how race, class and language coalesce to give meaning to racialised subjectivities and the possible implications for social cohesion. However, I begin by first discussing how language is contextually relevant within the South Africa context and why issues of language are necessary for advancing transformation in South Africa and South African higher education. I then draw on research studies that discuss language confronting the South African higher education landscape in particular, as well as research conducted which coalesces race, class and language within higher education and how these intersections give meaning to racialised subjectivities. The issues of race, class and language were evoked in chapter five of this thesis.

3.3.2 Contextualising Language: The Higher Education Landscape in South Africa

I now focus on issues of language that are pervasive within the higher education space. As outlined in chapter one, language and power are intimately connected and hold relevance in a context such as South Africa, where language commanded socio-political and historical significance during the apartheid era. The apartheid government used language as a system of social and political domination and as a tool of subjugation towards the country's majority of black South Africans (Kamwangamalu, 2000; Rudwick, 2018). The Soudien Report emphasised the central role that language played in fostering social cohesion in higher education in a post-apartheid dispensation (Department of Education, 2008). In 1994, as part of the South African government's redress strategy, the democratic government proffered the recognition of a multilingual policy (Kamwangamalu, 2000). On April 5, 2011, the country's Minister of Higher Education announced his desire to make the learning of African

languages at tertiary institutions compulsory. This was on the appointment of an advisory panel to charter the way forward in enforcing these language policies at various institutions (Turner, 2012). In 2014, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, where this study is located, was the first higher education institution in the country to introduce compulsory isiZulu for all its first-year students (Rudwick, 2015). The focus on language will be two-fold in this chapter. I will first discuss studies that coalesce race, class and language in higher education, and then present contextual studies that highlight the pervasive issues of multilinguism within the current context of higher education in the country.

3.3.3 The Intimate, Intricate Relationship of Race, Class and Language

Seekings and Natrass (2005) argue that one of the most visible features of post-apartheid South Africa has been the dramatic shift in class structure, with more opportunities and growth for African people, resulting in widening the gap between the African middle-class elite and African working-class poor. This dramatic shift in class structure also meant that black African children had the opportunity to attend well-resourced English medium schools (Seekings & Natrass, 2005; Lafon, 2008; Hunter, 2010a). Thus, the use of English against the prevailing ethnic languages was extensively used in African middle- and upper-class homes (De Klerk, 2000; Kamwangamulu, 2003). The purported use of English spoken by black Africans resulted in the discursive construction of a "coconut", which, according to Rudwick (2008, p. 102) pertains to a black South African who speak "immaculate English"; while being "dark on the outside", he or she is "discursively constructed as white on the inside".

Within the local South African context, the scholar McKinney (2007b) investigated the role that language plays in constructing youth identities at three desegregated schools in Johannesburg. Data was gathered over two school terms using ethnographic methods of participant and non-participant observation, video and audio recording and semi-structured individual and focus group interviews. The findings of the study elucidated the complex ways in which identity was forged through the use of language. While prestige was attached to English, African students who spoke English were labelled as coconuts and there was opposition to those blacks who acted white. Students from the rural areas were stigmatised in terms of their language use. De Klerk (2008) asserted that a shift away from the use of traditional language to English was evident in middle- and upper-class African homes. Other

scholars viewed African language speakers' recognition of English as a social, political and economically effective language of global prestige (Moodley, 2005; Lafon, 2008). Similarly, other surveys conducted in South Africa elucidate that students who had an African home language preferred the use of English as a language of teaching and learning (Bangeni & Kapp, 2007; Verhoef & Venter, 2008).

Rudwick's (2008) study, conducted in Umlazi Township in the province of KwaZulu-Natal used data gathered from 500 participants, ranging in age from 15 to 40 years, comprising students, teachers and educators. The findings determined that the use of English had a negative influence on culture and, therefore, the use of isiZulu was key to their African identity. Similarly, Nongogo's (2007) study investigated how multilingual Grade 9 learners at a formerly white school used language to position themselves as a marker of identity. Data for the study was collected using ethnographic observation methods for a period of six months. The study illuminated that African languages in the school setting were ignored and English enforced in the desire to create "proper" English speakers. While learners confronted a complex negotiation between enunciated identities and their actual performed identities, the ethnic identity emerged as dominant, marking the use of an African language as the key to their ethnic identity.

3.3.4 Problematizing Language Studies: Examining the National Higher Education Landscape

De Kadt (2005) conducted a study at UKZN's Howard College campus to explore the perceptions and attitudes of some isiZulu-speaking students on campus. The sample comprised students who attended suburban multicultural schools and those who were at township and rural schools. De Kadt (2005) used a poststructuralist framework to understand identity discourses. The study yielded that although most isiZulu learners from the rural areas did not like the use of English, they viewed it as a tool of empowerment in their professional lives. Students also mixed isiZulu with English on the campus environment and multicultural language students were accused of becoming modernised. In contrast, a study by Kapp and Bangeni (2011) conducted at a historically white English medium institution found that students who spoke African languages were rebuked for their language use on campus. African students who spoke English were associated with whiteness. This finding was similar to others in De Kadt (2005). Bangeni and Kapp's (2005) study, also conducted at a previously

white institution, determined that the use of isiZulu was key to an African identity, also evinced by Rudwick (2004, 2008). Other research in the form of surveys conducted across various areas in the country determined that students who spoke an African home language prefer using English as the medium of teaching and learning in their daily lives (Dalvit & De Klerk, 2005; Bangeni & Kapp, 2007; Verhoef & Venter, 2008).

Rudwick and Parmegiani (2013) examined the attitudes of first-year students towards Zulu with regards to English usage at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Their findings determined that despite widespread support for the mandatory isiZulu policy, many students were not keen to learn in their mother tongue. Similarly, Moodley's (2010, p. 52) study, conducted at the same institution, concluded "the collective notion of undesirability expressed by the majority of respondents to bilingual education". However, participants in the study revealed that the use of isiZulu was key to a Zulu identity, as found by other scholars (Rudwick, 2004, 2008; Parmegiani, 2008, 2009). Another study, conducted by Verhoef and Venter (2008) at a higher education institution in South Africa, sought to understand language attitudes of students in light of the language policy. The study illuminated that students preferred English and Afrikaans as the medium of instruction rather than an African language.

Drawing from international literature, an investigation conducted by Vaish (2008) to examine the language attitudes of disadvantaged female students in India, found that while English was considered a global language for the workplace, the use of the Hindi language was key to an Indian identity and to the cultural and religious practices of being Indian. In addition, the study by Greenfield (2010), which took place at a tertiary institution in South Africa, illuminated that utilising the Afrikaans language in the academic space of the institution, created negative feelings of hostility and a marginalising experience for black African learners on campus, while English was revered as the language of the new South Africa.

Within the context of my study, the issues of language cannot be separated from race, class, gender and sexuality and need to be understood within the broader context of the province of KwaZulu-Natal and the study site, the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The context lends itself uniquely to advancing an understanding of language, as the majority of students on campus are English second-language speakers and over eighty percent of black African students are

funded by the National Student Funding scheme (NSFAS), as discussed in detail in chapter one. In the next section of this chapter, I review literature that focuses on students gendered and sexual experiences within the campus environment.

SECTION TWO:

3.4 CONTEXTUALISING GENDER AND HETEROSEXUALITY DISCOURSES WITHIN THE HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE:

Here, I give primacy to students' gendered and sexual experiences within the higher education environment that are embedded, reproduced, resisted and negotiated within particular discourses. Cloete (2002) posits that the increase of diverse student bodies, in terms of gender and race, has been a significant shift in post-apartheid transformation. Francis and Msibi (2011) argue that sexual identity discourses, in interaction with other identity categories, warrants much more significant attention, which has been elided in the transformation agenda of the South African higher education landscape (Msibi, 2013). The rights of homosexual students within institutions of higher education have been a neglected feature of policy discussions (Hames, 2007).

Despite South Africa's progressive Constitution that advocates and protects the rights of same-sex individuals, legislation did not filter to the level of the everyday experience, as negative attitudes towards these "sexual minorities" persist (De Bruin & Arndt, 2010). According to Sigamoney and Epprecht (2013), the claim that homosexuality is "unAfrican" manifests as an articulation of homophobic prejudice throughout the continent. A prevalent notion that holds currency in Africa is that homosexuality is a Western, colonial import (Gevisser, 1995). According to Sanger (2010), the prevalence of homophobia in South Africa signals that societal attitudes towards homosexuality are limited to heteronormative ideas about gender and sexual identity expressions. Articulations of similar findings within higher education institutions have been confirmed (Msibi, 2013; Bhana, 2012; Hames, 2007; Graziano, 2004). Thus, the ideology that homosexuality is "unAfrican", as evinced by some studies (Reddy, 2001, 2002; Van Zyl, 2008; Matebeni, 2009), has been promulgated by African leaders throughout the continent, despite evidence provided by scholars that the manifestation of homosexuality is pre-colonial in Africa (Epprecht, 2008; Murray & Roscoe, 1998). It has been argued that Africa continues to remain a continent with the highest number

of countries where homosexuality is illegal (Itabohary, 2012). This is supported by Inglehart and Welzel (2005), and Bennet and Reddy (2015), who claim that even in recent times, African countries seem to be the least accepting of same-sex sexuality and sexual relations.

Within the context of Malawi, same-sex identifying individuals are deemed "cultural misfits" against moral and religious discourses (Kamwendo, 2015, p. 179). Uganda has been cited as one of the world's worst places to be gay (Mills as cited in Nyanzi and Karamagi, 2015). However, in contrast to the highly homophobic attitudes pervasive in Africa, research within the Nigerian context by Epprecht and Egya (2011), conducted at a small state university in rural Nigeria, revealed that attitudes were changing to intellectual engagement with these taboo topics of homosexuality. Msibi (2012) purported that any challenge to the dominant gender roles was akin to challenging the authority of God. Hence, cultural, religious and moral discourses maintain the hegemonic status of heterosexuality, inadvertently policing and controlling human sexuality. These discourses permeate the lives of same-sex identifying individuals, as they perceive themselves to be sinful and unworthy (Msibi, 2012). In particular, black gays and lesbians in the province of KwaZulu-Natal have been victimised more severely and subjected to homophobic hate crimes compared to other gays and lesbians in other provinces (Rudwick, 2011). This is due to the highly patriarchal values of the Zulu people in KwaZulu-Natal (Rudwick, 2011).

3.4.1 Research on student experiences: The heterosexual campus environment:
There have been a few studies investigating the differing attitudes about same-sex identifying individuals towards homosexuality in non-Western nations. Studies conducted in the US discovered that discourses of religion formed a powerful factor in shaping societal attitudes towards homosexuality (Hinrichs & Rosenberg, 2002; Rowatt, Tsang, Kelly, LaMartina, McCullers & McKinley, 2006; Olson, Cadge & Harrison, 2006; Wilcox in Kane, 2013). Heterosexism and homophobia continue to exist in the lives of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) students (Rankin, 2003, 2005). Within the national context, a study conducted by Ngcobo (2007) at the University of Zululand in KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa, found that queer students at the institution experienced homophobia, disrespect, labelling and the fear of declaring their sexual status. In 2005 at this same institution, straight male students fiercely led a protest against gay and lesbian students who stayed in the same residence blocks as the

heterosexual students (The Natal Witness, 2005). Findings from this study revealed a strongly homophobic campus and residence culture. A study by Graziano (2004), located at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa, concluded that gay and lesbian students remained silent about their sexual orientation due to the hostile and discriminatory campus climate.

In contrast to Ngcobo's (2007) study, Tati's (2009) Master's thesis was conducted at a tertiary institution in the Western Cape, South Africa, with five black self-identifying lesbians aged between 19 and 25. The students' personal narratives elucidated that the university community was open to diverse identities and was non-judgemental of their sexuality. Unlike Ngcobo's (2007) study, which revealed a homophobic residence culture, the heterosexual students in residence who were described in Tati's (2009) thesis, displayed understanding and acceptance of these lesbian students. Taulke-Johnson (2008), whose research was based at a university campus in the UK, conducted a study of the lived experiences of gay male students in their final year of undergraduate studies, reported similar findings to Tati (2009).

In Taulke-Johnson's (2008) research in the UK, he explored how gay students negotiated and engaged with their sexual orientation as self-identifying homosexual identities. Six participants were selected to narrate their lived experiences of the campus environment. The findings elucidated that victimisation and harassment were not dominant discourses that characterised the lives of these students. The study conducted by scholars Msibi and Jagessar (2015) sought to understand the experiences of same-sex identifying individuals in the residence space at a South African university. Ten participants, five males and five females, were selected via snowball sampling. The research reported that the experience of same-sex identifying students at the university was complex, as it involved the accommodation of homophobia and heteronormativity, while simultaneously "resist-stancing" because of the dominant heterosexual space of the university residence. Their study recommended a further investigation into the queering of higher education due to the existence of a heterosexualised and misogynistic institutional culture that was pervasive in the university environment.

In Jagessar and Msibi's (2015) research, which explored the experiences of same-sex identifying students in a residential space at a university in South Africa, found an ingrained culture of homophobia to be pervasive within the university space. However, the findings also

revealed that some of the same-sex identifying students were able to exercise their agency and resist normative hegemonic heterosexual discourses, however, this was also constrained by the conservative space of the university environment. International studies conducted in the US found the university space to be intolerant, unwelcoming, hostile and homophobic to same-sex identifying students (Rankin, 2003; Dilley, 2004; Iconis, 2010).

Research conducted in the UK by Epstein, O'Flynn and Telford (2003) investigated how issues of sexuality were managed within all levels of the formal education system, with a specific focus from schooling to university, within the context of the British system. One of the findings pertaining to the residence halls of the higher education context elucidated the negative experience of a gay student who was forced to move out of residence due to the extreme homophobia that he experienced in the context of the residence hall. This is similar to the research reported in my own study where a gay student was forced to sleep in the females only residence. Contradictory findings in US higher education residence halls were supported by Evans and Broido (2002), who conducted interviews with 10 bisexual and lesbian white females. Evans and Broido (2002) found that the residence halls were a positive place to live and were devoid of discrimination against lesbians and bisexuals. Rivers and Taulke-Johnson (2002) have conducted further studies in the UK elucidating negative residence experiences for gay and lesbian students. Taulke-Johnson (2010) research findings illuminated the university residence hall as a highly heterosexualised space, reinforcing the heteronormative culture of the campus environment.

An international study conducted by Allen (2005) sought to gain a deeper understanding into young people's heterosexual subjectivities. The study was conducted with the intention that the findings would inform sex education in New Zealand. One of the outcomes of the study suggested that while young people positioned themselves within dominant heterosexual discourses to give meaning to their sexual identities their talk revolved around a complex accommodation and resistance of these subject positions. The study yielded that the constructions of sexual identities were also context bound for this youth. Allen (2005) determined that for these young people, their sexual subjectivities were complicated by their resistance to conform to dominant notions of female passivity and active male (hetero) sexuality.

Further studies conducted by Ellis (2009) drew on a nationwide survey in the United Kingdom and collected data from 291 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students across 42 institutions. The research sought to investigate the campus climate for LGBT students as institutions in the UK had implemented an equality agenda, based on widening participation and equal access to all groups of students. The findings elucidated that despite this intervention strategy at a national level, homophobia was still a significant problem at universities across the UK. Similarly, a study conducted by Preston and Hoffman (2015) at a large research university in the United States found that despite adopting formalised programmes that supported the integration and identities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) students, the experiences of these students were embedded within the heterogendered university space.

Within the national context, a study conducted by Mavhandu-Mudzusi and Sandy (2015) at a rural university in South Africa, investigated the stigma and discrimination experienced by same-sex identifying students on campus. Twenty students who identified in the LGBT category were selected to participate. The study determined that negative experiences of LGBT students were rooted in hegemonic discourses of religion; and religion related stigma were also reported in another study by Mavhandu-Mudzusi and Ganga-Limando (2014). The LGBT students were labelled as "demon possessed", "sinners" and "devils". These students faced negative experiences in other support sectors of the institution, such as the denial of healthcare services and financial assistance, subject to threats of rape. A recommendation emanating from this study was that policies needed to be adopted to socially include these students within the university environment and acts of discrimination against these students needed to be dealt with. Similarly, a study conducted in the US advocated for the inclusion of a human sexuality course to change negative attitudes and perceptions towards gay and lesbian students within the US higher education system (Chonody, Rutledge & Siebert, 2009).

A South African study conducted by Cornell, Ratele and Kessi (2016) at a historically white institution, the University of Cape Town, attempted to understand higher education students' experiences of transformation, specifically relating to race, gender and sexuality. A photovoice methodology was deployed to extract the data for this research. The findings of this study elucidated that in the daily lives of black, female, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender

and intersex (LGBTI) and working-class students, symbolic and physical violence featured strongly. The study found that certain spaces of the university environment, such as the residence halls and university bathrooms, were highly heterosexualised spaces. Jagessar and Msibi (2015) reported similar findings in their study at a South African higher education institution. Participants within the study who did not conform to these heterosexual norms were subjected to marginalisation and high levels of scrutiny. The study presented evidence positioning the academic culture of the institution as heterosexual in nature. The study also determined that the visibility of artwork and artefacts around the campus symbolised the hegemony of white colonial heritage of the institution, exacerbating the marginalising experiences for black African students and denigrating the black body (Cornell, Ratele & Kessi, 2016).

In an international study conducted by Hirsch, Reardon, Khan, Santelli, Wilson, Gilbert and Mellins (2018) at two higher education institutions in the US, the social context within which sexual assault occurred on the campus environment, was examined. The findings of the study reported that the intersection of multiple factors such as individuals' notion of sexual citizenship, interpersonal factors such as random hook-ups, compared to established relationships and social factors, such as gendered roles and social spaces, all contributed to the social production of sexual assault beyond the broader context of the university campus. In addition, while sexual assaults were experienced by cisgender[5] heterosexual women on the campus, higher rates of sexual assaults were experienced by gay, lesbian and bisexual students. Very few cases of sexual assault were reported by cisgender heterosexual men. One of the recommendations emanating from this study, as a preventative measure to sexual assault, was to introduce a pedagogic intervention at school level that educates learners on issues of gender and sexuality prior to entering the college system.

I now discuss the literature that informs higher education students gendered experiences and the ways in which masculinity and femininity is constructed and given meaning. Constructions of masculinity and femininity within the higher education context are mainly

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[5] Denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex.

legitimised through dominant discourses of heterosexuality, exacerbating inequitable gender power relations (Department of Education, 2008).

West and Zimmerman (2009) assert that gender is a social process, shaped interactionally and institutionally. Gender, therefore, is not singularly possessed, but rather continually created and recreated through daily social and cultural practices, through "performativity" (Butler, 1990). West and Zimmerman (1987) assert that gender is something that one does and enacts, and not something inherent or what one has, but rather maintained through constantly reified practices (Butler, 1990, 1993). The "performance" (Butler, 1990) of appropriate gender reproduces regimes and upholds norms (Butler, 1988). Butler (1990, p. 191) asserts that gender performativity is a stylised repetition of acts working to produce a stable gendered identity. Within the context of South Africa, a major socio-political shift has been the re-emergence of cultural identities as a legitimation of the new socio-political order of the country (Clark, 2006). Culture then becomes a pivotal way in which race, class, gender (sexual) identities are constructed, given meaning and "performed" (Butler, 1990), as part of identity and power in contemporary South Africa (Clark, 2006). I argue that gender subjectivities are complexly positioned, embedded and constrained within hetero-patriarchal cultural norms, shaped by societal norms tied to specific socio-historical cultural contexts (Bhana, De Lange & Mitchell, 2009; Bhana, 2010; Bhana, Nzimakwe & Nzimakwe, 2011).

Recent research determined that, pervasive within the higher education space in South Africa, women have been positioned within discourses of vulnerability and danger, and were subject to rape culture (Dosekun, 2007; Clowes, Shefer, Fouten & Vergani, 2009; Shefer, Strebel, Ngabaza & Clowes, 2018), gender and sexual violence within the campus environment and university residences (Tolsi, 2007; Hames, 2009; Mackay & Magwaza, 2008; Collins, Loots, Meyiwa & Mistrey, 2009; Collins & Gordon, 2013); and the pervasiveness of unsafe spaces for women (Ngabaza, Bojarczuk, Masuku & Roelfse, 2015). Within an international context, female students have been positioned as subjects of sexual violence and sexual assault (Fisher, Dagle & Cullen, 2010; Fedina, Holmes & Backes, 2016), situating sexual assault on university campuses within discourses of vulnerability subject to public health concerns (Hayden, Graham & Lamaro, 2016; Puigvert, Melgar & Garcia-Yeste, 2016).

Within the South African context, Khan (2017) deployed intersectionality to understand the #studentmovements that occupied currency in 2015-2016. In particular, Khan (2017) employed an intersectional analysis to understand black queer woman and non-binary activists in the movement. The study determined that the movements were largely patriarchal and the experience of patriarchy, homophobia and transphobia was made invisible in the #studentmovements. Similar findings were also reported at another South African higher education institution (see Bradbury & Mashingo, 2018). South African Feminist scholar Amanda Gouws (2017) also employed intersectionality to deconstruct the #studentmovements in 2015- 2016. Her findings determined that whilst African women, and black queer women in particular, mobilised around gender violence and rape culture the movement also highlighted the stark differences between women of other race groups.

Weinzimmer and Twill (2016) who conducted research in higher education in the US, assert that the college setting is a fertile site to analyse the production, reproduction and continuous negotiation of gender and sexuality norms of students, where masculinity and femininity are upheld and kept in place. Thus, social and cultural norms construct masculinity and femininity in relational and normative ways. The scholars Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) and Peralta (2007) assert that if the privileged form of masculinity is about dominance and competition, then an idealised form of femininity is constructed as compliant, passive and being attractive to men (Weinzimmer & Twill, 2016). Thus, hegemonic masculinity and "emphasised femininity" work together to reinforce inequality as opposite and hierarchical (Connell, 1987). I argue that there remains a paucity of research, within the context of South African higher education on women's agency and the construction of alternate femininities, which could otherwise perhaps shift the "vulnerability discourse" pervasive in the lives of some women in higher education as documented by research (Dosekun, 2007; Clowes, Shefer, Fouten & Vergani, 2009; Shefer, Strebel, Ngabaza & Clowes, 2018). Little is known about these women and how their narratives can shift the transformation agenda. In this regard, I found the literature lacking. Within my own study, chapter seven elucidates how some female participants resisted being positioned within dominant discourses of femininity, which normalises subordination and compliance. Harris (2004) and McRobbie (2009) argue that, due to cultural processes, women now formulate their own understandings of femininity that revolve around "traditional feminine pleasures and self-entitlement, self-reliance and

individual freedom". Chapter seven of my study illuminates the ways in which contextually specific gendered discourses position students in particular ways and how their choice to accommodate or resist such discourses have implications for heterosexualised campus spaces. The research I discuss below is largely informed by the findings and themes that emerged in chapter seven of my thesis.

Research conducted at higher education institutions globally constructed these as spaces of sexual exploration (Ergene, Cok, Turner & Unal, 2005; Adam & Mutongi, 2007; Dugan & Yurman, 2011). Higher education institutions have also been associated with sexual risk behaviour linked to disease and danger (Abels & Blignaut, 2011; Mutinta, Govender, Gow & George, 2012; Mutinta, Govender, Gow & George, 2013; Van der Riet & Nicholson; 2014; Mutinta, Govender, George & Gow, 2014; Flack, Hansen, Hopper, Bryant, Lang, Massa & Whalen, 2015). According to Stevens (2004), undergraduate students who arrived on campus utilised their time to explore and make sense of their sexual identities. Dominant notions of traditional femininity aspire to sexual relationships within long-term commitment, hence young women's sexual exploration is polarised against traditional gendered and sexual norms (Hamilton & Armstrong, 2009).

Lambert, Kahn and Apple's (2003) research conducted at an institution in the US discovered that hook-ups were a common occurrence on the campus. Hamilton and Armstrong's (2009) study, which explored hook-ups in the college environment within the context of the US, found that many privileged, middle-class females pursued hook-ups in order to carve out a position of independence and self-development. However, as argued by Grazian (2007) and Kalish and Kimmel (2011), hook-ups were in the main viewed as a heterosexual process and thus supported heteronormativity. In a Canadian study by Fisher, Worth, Garcia and Meredith (2012), conducted at a higher education institution with 138 female and 62 male students on campus, found that the majority of the participants had feelings of regret after casual sexual encounters, mainly the female students. Lewis, Granato, Blayney, Lostutter and Kilmer (2011) reported similar findings at a US higher education institution. I now discuss literature that informs chapter seven regarding the nuanced ways in which gender subjectivities is constructed through sugar daddy relationships, and in doing so I draw upon national and international literature.

Within the national context, a South African study conducted at the University of Cape Town by Clowes, Shefer, Fouten, Vergnani and Jacobs (2009) revealed that the university was, indeed, a highly heterosexualised space. According to Hoque (2011), higher education students were at a stage in their lives characterised by seeking out opportunities for sexual experimentation. Hoque (2011) maintained that university students who lived and socialised with other young adults were encouraged to engage in sexual activity that may not be mutually monogamous. A growing trend among female higher education students is their engagement in transactional sex, also known as "sugar daddy" relationships (Luke, 2005), which, according to Poulin (2007), defines these relationships as sexual in nature between an older (wealthier man) and a younger (usually lower socio-economic status) female. The need for investigation into transactional sex relationships within institutions of higher education were rooted around increasing concerns on HIV/Aids transmission and gender-based violence within the context of South Africa (Shefer, Clowes & Vergnani, 2012; Blignaut, Vergani & Jacobs, 2014). Masvawure (2010) purports that universities are places where traditional gender roles are rethought and challenged, as masculinities and femininities are actively fashioned in the making of gender identity. I concur with Masvawure (2010) because the women in my study challenge normative gender roles and in the process enact their agency.

A study conducted by Shefer, Clowes and Vergnani (2012) at a South African university sought to gain further insight into the dynamics of transactional sexual relationships. A convenience sample was deployed to recruit both male and female students at an English-medium historically black university. The sample comprised students who were at all levels of study, from undergraduate to postgraduate. The findings of this research elucidated that transactional relationships on the campus with female students from lower socio-economic areas were hinged around gender and class, and the desire for material goods, thus implicating poverty as the main driver of sustaining these kinds of relationships. The men in the study were constructed as economically privileged, with access to economic resources and exhibiting "provider masculinity" (Hunter, 2009). However, some students within the study rejected these transactional relationships, framed within a moralistic lens and religious discourse. This study also highlighted the insertion of class, gender and the binary between urban and rural, as middle-class femininity was constructed within a moralistic discourse as

"respectable" versus "bad femininity", which was highlighted in this study. The females in my study, however, rejected sugar daddy relationships as a form of agency and empowerment.

Masvawure 's (2010) study, conducted at the University of Zimbabwe, challenged the notion that transactional relationships were situated within discourses of survival by economically disadvantaged young women, only for the exchange of sex and money within these relationships. The data for the study was collected using participant observations and in-depth interviews of 10 female students and four male students. The findings of the study revealed that the females from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds used these relationships to attain status and a modern lifestyle, while the students who came from middle-class backgrounds used these relationships to maintain their wealthy lifestyle on campus. However, some females engaged in these relationships without fear of commitment, thus displaying their agency. Similarly, like Shefer, Clowes and Vergnani (2012), transactional relationships on this campus were situated within the nexus of gender and class identities.

In Selikow and Mbulaheni's (2013) study, conducted at a South African institution, 10 female students selected through snowball sampling were already in sugar daddy relationships. The findings of the study revealed that at all stages of the relationship, the participants demonstrated active and significant agency in negotiating power relations. The females held the power, as they were able to terminate the relationship once financial sustenance from the sugar daddies was depleted. The female participants in this study, unlike in studies by Masvawure (2010), and Selikow and Gibbon (2010), did not engage in these relationships for an elusive modern lifestyle. Meanwhile, scholars in other contexts have highlighted individuals' agency in transacting these relationships in order to obtain social benefits that move beyond financial necessity (Leclerc-Madlala, 2003; Poulin, 2007; Swindler & Watkins, 2007; Hawkins, Price & Mussa, 2009).

Other international studies within the context of higher education in Ghana, found that female students enacted agency when choosing to engage in a transactional relationship for material gain, while hiding the relationship from family and friends for fear of reprisal from society (Amo-Adjei, Kumi-Kyereme & Tuoyire, 2014). Similarly, to Masvawure (2010), in the study by Amo-Adjei, Kumi-Kyereme and Tuoyire (2014), transactional relationships were

entered into for the gains of an elusive modern lifestyle and high-class situatedness. Key to the above findings are the ways in which class and gender intersected with agency and power.

In addition, reporting on a school-based study, Bhana and Pattman's (2011) research with a group of young women revealed how ideals of love intersected with their desire for material goods. Gukurume's (2011) research, undertaken at a higher education institution in Zimbabwe, highlighted that the main motivation behind transactional relationships in the context of the university was for material gain. However, Gurukume (2011) cautioned on viewing transactional relationships within this context in far more complex ways. Meanwhile, other scholars (Poulin, 2007; Bhana & Pattman, 2011; Masvawure, 2010; Selikow & Gibbon, 2010) have challenged the notion that sugar daddies were imbued with absolute power, while females lacked agency and power.

3.5. CONCLUSION:

In a context such as South Africa, the categorisations of race, class, gender and sexuality form the cornerstone of 'political projects' in relation to the transformation agenda in higher education. The heavy bias towards race 'thinking and doing' skews the insidious and invisible ways that patriarchy, homophobia, sexism etc. come to bear on the transformation agenda. Francis and Msibi (2011) argue that sexual identity discourses, in interaction with other identity categories, warrants much more significant attention, which have been elided in the transformation agenda of the South African higher education landscape (Msibi, 2013). Whilst there is an emerging body of work, albeit limited, the voice and narratives of queer and 'other' women are rendered invisible in the discourse of transformation (Gouws, 2017; Khan, 2017). I argue that in order for UKZN's Transformation Charter to be impactful and meaningful we need to understand how race, class, gender and sexuality coalesce to give effect to the transformation agenda of the institution.

Whilst some studies have provided contextually relevant information as a springboard for further research (see De Kadt, 2005; Pattman, 2007, 2010; Mackay & Magwaza, 2008; Bhana, 2013a, 2014, Singh & Bhana, 2015; Jaggesar & Msibi, 2015; Msibi & Jaggessar, 2015), we do not know overall, how students positioned within a transformed institution hold significance to race, class, gender and sexuality, and how this comes to implicate and advance transformation on the campus. Research of this nature has not been undertaken at the

institution before and will contribute to the growing body of research within higher education, but more importantly it will contribute to understanding and giving effect to the issues of transformation, which will be advanced in chapter eight of this thesis. In particular, this study seeks to understand how these constructs are woven into the local and social fabric of student lives interacting with the broader structures of power, and provides a very different version of transformation. It has been pointed out that it is critical to identify barriers and impediments through contextually relevant research, so as to move the transformation agenda forward (Seabi, Seedat, Khoza-Shangase & Sullivan, 2014).

My study seeks to make a contribution to the literature in higher education by providing contextually specific research, that is grounded in understanding how students give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality and how this implicates transformation on campus. I argue that students are products of their socio-cultural, historical and material circumstances embedded within the broader structures of power. I seek to understand how these meanings coalesce a greater understanding towards transformation on campus.

In the next chapter, I discuss the methodological framework of the study

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.

Lao-tzu

The above quote introduces the research journey undertaken in this study. This chapter gives attention to the research journey undertaken in order to understand how gender, race, class and sexuality are given meaning by higher education students' on a campus. In chapter two, I discussed the conceptual and theoretical orientation towards this study, situating my body of work within a feminist poststructuralist paradigm. Since my thesis attempts to understand race, class, gender and sexuality as intricate relations of power, the poststructuralist paradigm enables "occasions of domination and self-subordination, but also accentuates avenues for resistance and change" (Tracy, 2013, p. 44). In chapter three, I sketched out the literature review that informs this study, drawing upon sources from a national and international context. This chapter discusses the methodological framework deployed to understand my overall study and arrive at my data. I further discuss the research context and the research techniques utilised to support my methodology and data analysis.

I further attend to the ethical issues that concern conducting a study of this nature and discuss the credibility and reliability of my research. Rather than adopting a "formulaic" or "stylistic" account of the research journey, this chapter offers a reflexive, detailed and descriptive discussion of the journey, which I write myself into as I embark upon it to gather my data. This study seeks to understand the ways in which higher education students at a particular campus of a South African university give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality. The issues of race, class, gender and sexuality in South African higher education are framed against the backdrop of the larger issues of transformation and social cohesion as elucidated in the Soudien Report (Department of Education, 2008), which I have discussed in chapter one of this thesis. The rationale and motivation for the pursuit of this study and its significance were also outlined in chapter one.

According to Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2004), one of the main purposes of the methodology chapter is to provide the reader with a "thick description" (Holliday, 2001) of the methods deployed to document and analyse the research journey. Further to this, Henning et al., (2004, p. 36) purports that "methodology refers to a coherent group of methods that should complement one another to achieve a 'goodness of fit' to deliver data and findings that suit the research purpose". Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) assert that the methods refers to a range of approaches utilised to gather data for the study while methodology is framed around an understanding of the research process (Kaplan as cited in Cohen et al., 2007). I employ a narrative roadmap to demonstrate the experiences and challenges that I encountered during the research process, with an emphasis on fieldwork practices, the nature of the research setting and my role as a researcher.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) assert that within the qualitative framework of research the process of reflexivity entails recognising the role of researchers as an inescapable practice of the social world that they are researching. Reflexivity demands that the researcher write his or her own selves into the research journey. Throughout this chapter, I remain cognisant of the process of reflexivity and my role as researcher in documenting the unfolding of events, hence I examine my own subjectivity within a similar nexus of power relations. I therefore insert myself into this research, since I am an inescapable part of it. In another section of this chapter, I reveal the troubling research processes encountered during the research journey. I document it in narrative detail to vicariously draw the reader into a virtual reality (Barone & Eisner, 1997).

I had immense difficulty writing this chapter, as I wanted to document my research journey in a creative way without losing the "academic essence" of my thesis. My study examines the ways in which higher education students give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality at a South African university campus. My interest for conducting this study was piqued by the findings of the Soudien Report (Department of Education, 2008). However, one of the main reasons for undertaking this study is attributed to the progressive stance that the institution under study took to address issues of transformation and social cohesion, by being the first institution to chart a transformation charter (Vice Chancellors Communique, 2010). The rest of the chapter discusses the research journey in narrative detail.

4.2 DESCRIBING THE RESEARCH DESIGN

I draw on qualitative research processes to understand this study. According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006), qualitative researchers are concerned with meaning, and garnering an understanding of how people make sense of the world as they give meaning to their experience of events. Further Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) aim to understand "what it was like" to experience particular conditions, because the qualitative researcher tends to be interested in the "meanings attributed to events" by the research participants themselves. Since my study attempts to understand how higher education students give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality in their lived daily experience on the campus environment, it was important to have a "goodness of fit" (Henning et al., 2004), thus I situated my research within a qualitative framework. Further, it follows the social constructionism paradigm, since I am interested in "meaning" (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Crotty (1998) argues that one of the most basic tenets of the constructionist paradigm is a view to understanding that the world is not "discovered", but rather "constructed". According to Crotty (1998), within the constructionism paradigm human beings construct meaning during their engagement with the world that they are interpreting. Hence, in the constructionism paradigm, we do not create meaning but rather meaning is constructed (Crotty, 1998). Hence, the constructionism paradigm seems best to suit the purposes of this study. Similarly, according to Burr (2003), the central tenet of social constructionism is the way that we as humans understand the ways of the world – this is not derived from objective reality, but from other people, thus an examination of social relationships, including power relations, is key to social constructionism.

4.3 THE RESEARCH SITE:

As outlined in chapter one of this thesis this study is located on the Howard College campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), created in 2004 as the result of a merger between two historically different institutions – namely, the historically white University of Natal and the historically Indian University of Durban-Westville. I have outlined the contextual relevance of this study in chapter one of this thesis. UKZN comprises five campuses, with the Howard College campus holding the highest number of registered students, at 16,427 (Institutional Intelligence, 2018). Howard College is racially diverse and multicultural, and has

the largest number of African students, followed by Indian, white and coloured students. In addition, research on identity and social cohesion at the campus has been conducted by other scholars, providing a springboard for further investigative research into areas of race, class, gender and sexuality (Pattman, 2007, 2010; Bhana, 2013a, 2014; Mutinta, Govender, Gow & George, 2013; Singh & Bhana, 2015). Further, an audit of the safety and security issues at UKZN's residences was conducted in 2008, by a panel of internal and external researchers. The findings of the audit reported that "gender-based violence was 'rife' in the Halls of Residence supported by cultures of misogyny and homophobia" (Mackay & Magwaza, 2008, p. 21). UKZN was also the first institution in the country to launch a transformation charter in response to dealing with issues of transformation and social cohesion (Vice-Chancellor's Communique, 2010). Below is a statistical representation of the number of registered students for 2018 in terms of race and gender. In chapter one, I provided the statistical breakdown for each campus of UKZN.

Race	Cam	Campus	Gender	2018
A	H	Howard College	F	8018
A	H	Howard College	M	5585
C	H	Howard College	F	224
C	H	Howard College	M	92
I	H	Howard College	F	1439
I	H	Howard College	M	1149
O	H	Howard College	F	26
O	H	Howard College	M	19
W	H	Howard College	F	248
W	H	Howard College	M	246

Table. 4. Howard College statistical breakdown by race and gender. Table extracted from Institutional Intelligence (2018).

4.4 THE METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

When deciding which methodology would be most suited for this research, I determined that the case study design would be the most appropriate. Yin (2014, p. 34) purports that one of the desired outcomes of this approach is that "the case should be some real-life phenomenon that has some concrete manifestation". Yin (2014, p. 34) contends that a case study cannot simply be an abstraction; rather, the researcher needs to "define a specific real-life case to be a concrete manifestation of the abstraction". My study attempts to provide an understanding

of how higher education students, situated on a specific campus, give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality in their lived daily experiences. This study is undertaken in the belief that the meanings and experiences that students attach to race, class, gender and sexuality on this campus can provide a lens to accumulate knowledge that can be utilised for and contribute to some aspects in fostering social cohesion on the campus. Merriam (2009) purports that in order for research to be considered a case the phenomenon under investigation must be "intrinsically bound".

A further rationale for situating my study within this research design is described by Yin (2014, p. 16), who opines that a case study is an empirical inquiry that:

- "Investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its real-world context, especially when";

- "The boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident".

In further understanding Yin's (2014) definition of a case study approach and applying this to my own study, I argue that the contemporary phenomenon that this study seeks to understand is the ways in which higher education students give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality in their lived daily experiences and the boundaries of this study is the Howard College campus of UKZN. Thus, in my rationalisation for adopting a case study approach, I have explained the phenomenon under investigation as well as the bounded context within which this study is located. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 253), argue that "case study research offers a unique way of understanding real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting with abstract theories or principles". The scholars Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 25), assert that a case is "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context". In addition, Stake (2005, p. 459-460) provides an overall understanding to approaching a case study, by identifying the following elements:

- "Bounding the case, conceptualising the object of study;
- Selecting phenomena, themes or issues (i.e. the research questions to emphasise);
- Seeking patterns of data to develop the issues;

- Triangulating key observations and bases for interpretation;

- Selecting alternative interpretations to pursue; and

- Developing assertions or generalisations about the case".

Stake (2005, p. 459-450)

Merriam (2009, p. 41) purports that the bounded system, or case, "might be selected because it is an instance of some process, issue or concern". In chapter one of this thesis, I have outlined the rationale for undertaking this particular study and the imperative need to understand contemporary issues of race, class, gender and sexuality as they are given meaning and significance by students in their lived daily experiences on the Howard College campus. Thus, in choosing a case study design, this thesis also builds on further research on identity and social cohesion at the site of inquiry (Pattman, 2007, 2010; Bhana, 2013a, 2014; 2016; Singh & Bhana, 2015). Cohen et al., (2007) assert that case study research has the ability to investigate and report on complex and dynamic situations that involve interaction of both events and relationships in a unique instance.

Merriam (2009) purports that a case study research, which is situated within real-life contexts, is able to provide a holistically rich account of the phenomenon under investigation. Merriam (2009, p. 51) further contends that a "case study plays an important role in advancing a field's knowledge base". In chapter one, I outlined how the significance of race, class, gender and sexuality must be seen against the larger issues and political backdrop of the country, as described in the Soudien Report (Department of Education, 2008). Thus, in applying a case study design, as expanded by Merriam (2009), Yin (2014), Cohen et al., (2000) and Stake (2005), I provide context-specific research on issues of race, class, gender and sexuality, with possible implications towards understanding the broader issues of social cohesion and transformation that this country is grappling with.

Further, an important feature of case study research is the use of different and multiple sources of evidence towards data collection (Yin, 2014, 1994). Since my study aimed to understand how students give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality in their lived daily experiences within the campus environment, case study research allowed me the flexibility to engage in multiple methods for data collection. Thus, for me as a researcher, it was prudent

and important to describe what "'it is like' to be in a particular situation, in order to catch the close up reality and 'thick description' of participants' lived experiences of thoughts…" (Geertz as cited in Cohen et al., 2007, p.254) on the campus environment. Case study research therefore offers a rich understanding of people (in this case, higher education students) and their behaviour within their natural context (the campus environment), rather than a mere description of elements. However, in order to offer a rich description of this study, I deployed ethnographic principles of observation, which "seek to generate a rich and detailed description of the observable and learned patterns of behaviour, customs, and ways of life of a culture-sharing group" (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 31).

Stake (1995, 2005) argues that case study research can be either intrinsic or instrumental. According to Stake (1995), an instrumental case study, while simultaneously providing insight into the case itself, can also be used to understand something else. Hancock and Algozzine (2006, p. 47) purport that an "instrumental case study research design is applied to gain a better understanding of a theoretical question or problem". Thus, in applying an instrumental case study design to my research, I am inadvertently undertaking this study to provide knowledge that will point to possibilities towards social cohesion at the site of enquiry. Stake (as cited in Merrian, 2009), identifies four important ways in which knowledge gained from case study research is different and differs from other research knowledge in the following four important ways:

- "More concrete – case study knowledge resonates with our own experience because it is more vivid, concrete, and sensory than abstract";
- "More contextual – our experiences are rooted in context, as is knowledge in case studies. This knowledge is distinguishable from the abstract, formal knowledge derived from other research designs; and"
- "More developed by reader interpretation – readers bring to a case study their own experience" (Stake, 1981, 35-36 as cited in Merriam, 2009).

In using the above, I discussed how this chapter addresses the features of case study research.

4.5 GAINING PERMISSION AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF MY STUDY:

In order for me to enter the field and begin the actual process of data collection, I had to seek permission from the relevant gatekeepers, due to the diverse spaces in which I was conducting my fieldwork on the Howard College campus. Of course, I had already attained my letter of full ethical clearance from my institution's Research Office in order to conduct my research. Once I had received this clearance, I began approaching the other gatekeepers, whose permission was crucial to this ethnographic aspect of the research. I wrote a letter seeking permission from the Deans and Heads of Schools (UKZN has a College system and within it are schools, not faculties). I then wrote a formal letter, which I sent via email to 10 lecturers, whose lectures I intended to observe, with a detailed explanation of the research I was conducting. I received great support and congratulations from the 10 academics at UKZN. I thought to myself: "Ah, that was a relatively easy process."

I followed the same process to gain permission to begin observations at both the white and black cafeterias on campus and was met with the same support and enthusiasm. However, my happiness was short-lived, as I did not receive the same support from the Head of the Student Residence Office. It took about three months of going back and forth, with email reminders, to eventually receive a response from the head of this division. When I did receive this, a little handwritten note on the letter of consent read: "Check out for the Mabes (Mabel Palmer) male residence; I have been receiving complaints about the behaviour patterns of this residence" (Student Residence Manager, 2011). I was impressed with the footnote and I took it as an encouragement to begin the fieldwork journey.

I was finally ready to begin my research, however, I only obtained all the fieldwork clearances in June and students had already begun their July vacation. Observation was therefore pointless, as there were too few students on campus. This meant that I had to wait until August for the university to resume lectures, when students were back on campus. It was disappointing to experience this unanticipated delay, but I took comfort in the fact that the reality of observation was not orderly and I should anticipate obstacles along the way. I began my observations once campus had resumed for the second semester, beginning in August. I spent a month observing students in the academic spaces of the lecture rooms, the social spaces of the cafeteria (white coffee shop and black cafeteria) and the living spaces of three

residences. As an employee of UKZN, I have been on the Howard College campus since 2000 and am thus highly familiar with the campus environment.

In the main, the decision to conduct observations at the very outset of the research was to gain some knowledge of the context of the campus environment from the students' perspective (Merriam, 2009) and to purposefully select my participants from these spaces. The decision to observe these particular areas of the campus environment was guided by previous research studies. My reason for choosing the student residences on the Howard College campus was due to Pattman's (2007) study, which determined that the student residences were almost exclusively black and thus lacked the element of integration. In addition, the safety review of the residences conducted by Mackay and Magwaza (2008) signalled to the homophobic and misogynistic nature of the residence culture. The Soudien Report also illuminated that residences were not "socially cohesive in the sense that they are spaces of shared norms, values and practices" (Department of Education, 2008, p. 75). Hence, the university residence was an imperative "space" that needed to be observed.

The reason for choosing the lecture halls and cafeterias was due to previous research conducted at this university (Pattman, 2007, 2010; Bhana, 2013a, 2014; Singh & Bhana, 2015). Pattman's (2010) study revealed that despite the recent merger, race emerged as a major influence on student identifications, affecting associations on campus and their attitudes to others. Bhana's (2013a, 2014) research findings revealed how students demarcated themselves on the university environment, according to race and class. A doctoral study by Buhle Zuma (2013), which examined the friendship patterns of students at the University of Cape Town, determined that racial mixing only occurred in instances of class crossovers by students who shared the same middle-class background, while students who emerged from racially homogenous backgrounds continued to maintain apartheid-style friendship patterns. These studies therefore provided a critical backdrop to the campus environment in terms of race, class and social cohesion.

In order to conduct my observations, I took a month off work to be in the field every day in order to observe students. According to Cohen et al., (2007), data obtained by means of observations affords the researcher the opportunity to gather data as it is happening in its real life context. Tracy (2013, p. 65) draws a distinction in terms of the difference of causal observations that one might engage in a relaxed environment compared to "focused

systematic participant observation" which Tracy (2013) argues is the "hallmark" of the fieldwork process. Stake (1995) asserts that using observations in case study research allows the researcher to obtain a deeper understanding of the case, while Yin (2014), contends that the evidence gained from observations makes provision for the phenomenon being researched to be understood in greater depth. Thus, in addition to observing students in their daily natural setting of the campus environment, the observations would also allow me to select my participants for the study. Merriam (2009) contends that the deployment of using participant observation strategies for data collection allows the researcher to gain first-hand knowledge and expertise of the phenomenon under observation, juxtaposed against just once-off interview accounts. In drawing up my observation schedule, I listed a few items that I needed to look out for as a starting point to my fieldwork journey. In so doing, I had a visual picture of the elements I had to look out for. Firstly, I understood that I would need to observe how students saw themselves as "different" to others on campus in terms of race, gender and sexuality. Hall (1996, p.17) purports that identity is subject to difference "discursively constructed and fragmented" across time and history constructed through "intersecting" and "antagonistic" discourses.

I also drew upon the Soudien Report (Department of Education, 2008, p. 94), which states: "Language is the key to understanding oneself; it is the key to understanding others; and language mastery is the window to success in life – certainly in education. In essence, language affirms the individual; and it serves as a means of communication and, therefore, facilitates social cohesion." The report emphasised the role that language plays towards a socially cohesive culture (Department of Education, 2008), therefore, it was equally important for me to observe how students' negotiated friendships in their daily interactions on campus and how language was utilised in the social spaces to enable this process.

Tracy (2013) asserts that another significant process after the fieldwork observation has been concluded, is the process of making sense of the data gathered from observations by writing up fieldnotes. The scholars Lofland and Lofland (1995, p. 96) contend that "field notes can be written in a loose fashion because they are 'behind the scenes' documents not intended, at least initially, for any audience other than the researcher herself as the future reader". However, Marshall and Rossman (2011) offer a different perspective on field notes, describing them as detailed, non-judgemental (as much as possible), concrete descriptions of what has

been observed. Marshall and Rossman (2011) further argue that field notes can be utilised to discover complex interactions in their natural social settings. I thus entered the field enriched, having read up on observations and the accompanying field-notes strategies.

At the beginning of this chapter, I stated my bias and that I intended to document my research journey in a creative manner without losing the academic essence of this thesis. In addition, I described my reflexive role as researcher and how I, too, form an inescapable part of this study. In the excerpt below, I document this journey of observation in the belief that the reader will be drawn vicariously into a virtual reality (Barone & Eisner, 1997) and relate this journey within an "impressionist tales" style of writing (Van Maanen, 1998, p.7). According to Van Maanen (1998, p.7), "these are personalised accounts of fleeting moments of fieldwork, cast in dramatic form; they therefore carry elements of both realist and confessional writing".

4.6 MY OBSERVATION JOURNEY – DAY 1 AND DAY 2 FIELD NOTES:

In this section of the chapter, I describe the first part of my fieldwork journey, which constitutes the observation phase in narrative style. I wrote field notes on the spot during observation or immediately after the observation to ensure that I accurately captured the details of the observation site. My narrative journey of the observation of the black cafeteria is not detailed here as I only began observations of the black cafeteria on day three of my observation month as I used the first two days to get into the 'feel' of the fieldwork routine. I used the following themes to provide a narration of the different spaces I observed for the first two days of my fieldwork journey.

- The lecture halls – The peculiar old student.
- The residences – The elephant in the room.
- The coffee shop/cafeteria – The invisible.

Day one: The beginning:

I am excited, as this is the start of my actual research. Seeing this PhD proposal translate into reality, I am confronted by multiple emotions: Happiness, excitement, freedom, liberation, anxiety, fear and restlessness. This is it, but what if they (the students) notice this "silly old woman" who is sitting and copiously writing notes? And staring into oblivion? And looking and writing and looking and writing? Indeed, it all seems strange, right? Will I be accepted?

Will I become part of a group? This vignette characterises the multitude of emotions that I was bombarded with prior to the start of my research journey. My impressionist tale begins here:

Day one: The lecture halls: The peculiar old student

It is now 10.30am and students enter the lecture venue in Shepstone Level 6. Some of them rush in and grab a seat, while others stroll in slowly and cautiously scan their surroundings. I enter the lecture room feeling a bit odd and strange. I certainly don't look like a student and perhaps the others are wondering what on earth I am doing there. Who is this peculiar old student? The lecture room is a bit scruffy. The green carpets smell a bit musty and the desks and chairs are arranged classroom style. (Oh boy, I was in the game of being a student again). There are cans on the floor, sweet wrappings and empty chips packets. Most of the students are black Africans. A handful of them are Indians and there are two whites and one coloured student who are in the lecture venue. The women chatter and are quite loud. It's noisy and everyone is talking. The students seem happy to be in this lecture. I wonder why? Could it be interesting? I feel excited again. The room is filling up quickly. I grab a seat and sit down quietly, almost squeamishly, not wanting to be noticed. An Indian male and a white female are sitting together. Perhaps they could be boyfriend and girlfriend? I need to note this down with a sense of urgency. There is a mixed group of students comprising of three Indian women and two African men.

The lecture room is arranged in a typical classroom style, with rows of desks and chairs. The Indian students are loud and rowdy, and one Indian women is particularly fashionable; she looks as if she is oozing wealth … she has a designer handbag and shoes and her nails are well manicured. (I look at mine and shake my head … she obviously has time to do these things and the money, never mind the studying.) The African women are constantly applying lip gloss. Could this be the positioning and repositioning of self as heterosexually desirable? I need to interrogate this further. I wonder if what I am writing makes sense or if I am writing because I have found nothing worthy for the research so far? I feel confused.

The lecturer walks into the classroom. She is a white, middle-aged woman who is well-kept and reasonably fashionable. Silence immediately descends upon the lecture room. The

lecturer greets her students: "Good morning, class. Is everyone well?" The lecturer asks the students to take out their homework. (A million thoughts are flying through my head … This is what happens in school. Surely it can't be happening in the higher education environment? Perhaps the homework is just for this lecture). I am surprised that the lecturer knows each student by his or her name. One Indian male student disturbs the class by continually talking to his friend in a loud whisper (and I think to myself, how disrespectful). I actually want to ask him to be quiet, but I resist, of course – after all, this is my first day. The lecture proceeds and I learn a bit about literary tourism and actually enjoy myself while I sit and listen. Another striking observation that I jot down is the late arrivals, with some students arriving 15 minutes into the lecture. Of course, the lecturer reprimands them and tells them that in future they should not bother coming this late as they have missed a big chunk of the lecture.

I want to applaud in support of the lecturer, but of course that would not be professional of me. I am supposed to be one of the students. Looking around at the seating arrangements of the students, I notice that mostly same race groups sit together, while the African students have positioned themselves at the front of the lecture room. The middle section of the room has a sprinkling of mixed races[6] sitting together. One white male is with two Indian males. (Are they seated together because they are males or because they are friends?) The Indian students sit at the back of the lecture room. So it seems that racialised seating patterns persist even now. (I make a note to myself that, during the interviews, I must ask students the reason why they sit in homogenous racialised groups).

Emanating from just outside the lecture room is a lot of noise and this creates a disturbance. (I think that this is not acceptable). The lecturer continues as if the noise is not happening and gives the students a spot test. She compliments the two African women for doing well, but later on, when she hands out the class assignments, she congratulates the others who did well too. When the lecturer asks questions, one woman raises her hand to reply, while the other students shout out the answers. I note in fascination that the lecturer still uses the Overhead Projector (OHP) rather than a PowerPoint presentation. (I reminisce about my student days and my good old lecturers). The students taking this module are from different disciplines. They are all registered with the College of Humanities and not necessarily the

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[6] Mixed race refers to apartheid categorisations of Indian, White, African and coloured students.

English Department. The lecturer asks them to engage in group work to complete the rest of the tasks. Astonishingly, they join same-race groups. Even the group that was mixed has now moved into the "same-race space". Genders are mixed for this group work exercise, but the race remains in-group. The lecturer draws the students' attention to this, but they pretend not to hear.

The rest of the lecture proceeds in this manner as the students complete their group work task. Finally, the lecture is over and everyone leaves the lecture room.

Day one: The coffee shop – The invisible

I enter the coffee shop – the "white cafeteria", or "Musgrave", as it is better known by the students. I am immediately confronted with loud giggles, bursts of laughter, a sprinkling of conversation, loud shouts and the overwhelming stench of tobacco. The students indulge in a game of cards, some students exchange notes, some are excitedly chatting and some are delirious with laughter. It is a very relaxed atmosphere, but my heart is racing and my mind is pulsating. Am I comfortable sitting here? Can I do this? Nail-biting moments? What do I do? I quietly pull up a chair and take a seat. I almost sink to the bottom of it, hoping that I won't be noticed, although I realise that I am noticeably awkward. I open my notebook, take out my pen, put on my critical lens and just wait. I try to remain inconspicuous to blend in, but I know that I stand out, as I am all alone, sitting with a notebook and pen.

Almost all the table and chairs are occupied by young people who are sitting in groups. Some of the groups are very large, while some groups are very small. I think: "Oh, how nice to be young again and relive my student days … or maybe I am, but in a different way – through the identity of a researcher?" Through my critical gaze, what do I notice? What strikes me immediately is that the groupings are racially homogenous, although there is a sprinkling of mixed-race[7] groups.

I see some tables of mixed races and mixed genders sitting together, talking and interacting. But there are many students who are still sitting within their own-race groups – Indians are separate, black Africans are separate and whites are separate. I also observe that some of the Indian students are grouped at a Muslims-only table. Some of the women (mixed race) are

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[7] Mixed race refers to apartheid categorisations of India, white, black African and coloured.

very fashionable; they are beautifully made up, wearing mascara, blush and lipstick. It is a cold day, yet they are wearing shorts and high-heel shoes. This is very different from when I was a student; we simply donned jeans and tennis shoes, ready to take on the business of learning. The men are dressed casually; some are in jeans, while others are in shorts. When I look more closely, I see that only the white male students are wearing shorts and flip-flops. The black and Indian men are wearing jeans and sneakers– they look casual, but they actually are quite dressed up with brand name clothing.

The most repugnant element about this coffee shop is the smoking. The air is dense with cigarette smoke and for a non-smoker like myself; I find this an irritating habit that I will have to just get used to. The number of Indian women who are smoking surprises me … being an Indian women myself, I have a stereotypical notion that Indian women are conservative and should not indulge in delinquent behaviour (delinquent by my standards). Another shocking observation is that more female students are indulging in the habit than males. (I think about their future babies and wonder if these women, as future mothers, would be able to raise responsible children into the world.) My identity as a heterosexual Indian woman is constantly positioned and repositioned as I continue to observe the students.

I cannot hear the conversations above the noise in the "white coffee shop". I look around at my watch: It is now 12.45pm, lunchtime. I decide to indulge myself and have a coffee. I join the queue of students who are waiting to purchase lunch, but it is as if I am invisible; there are no kind smiles or warm gestures from them and I feel as if I am not there. I am therefore hesitant to start a conversation, as the women look me up and down I feel an "awkward gaze". (Perhaps I am dressed too formally in my grey suit; maybe I will dress more like them tomorrow, more fancy; then perhaps we could at least have something to talk about.) I place my order for a cup of coffee with cream and proceed to sit down.

I sip my lovely cup of coffee and listen to the conversations. The language used is very loose, informal, and casual, containing slang and some foul words. I look around again. One group seems odd – a mixed-race[8] group of mixed gender who wear odd clothing and have body piercings. The women do not conform to any fashion sense; their hair is differently coloured. The entire group smokes. The first query that crosses my mind is what makes this student

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[8] Apartheid categorisations of Indian, White, Coloured and Black African students.

group so different from the others? What is it about this group that allows them to be integrated – their laughter, happy conversation and slang words? So the research process begins. I smile to myself as I see the picture unfolding perhaps I have captured my first group of participants… but let us take it slowly … let me watch them more closely, more carefully. After all it is only the first day.

Day 1: The residence: Elephant in the room

I walk down to the university residences along a pathway that I have never used before. I am greeted by loud music streaming from the windows of the females-only John Bews Residence. (There is also a John Bews males-only residence.) I ask myself: Really, in the middle of the day? Is this acceptable and I wonder what the student rules are? I am greeted by a security guard at the access-controlled entrance. I show her my letter of permission and she allows me to enter without any further questions. The outside of the residence looks sort of like a prison and the access control gates with the security guard outside merely completes the image. I smile and enter, and am immediately confronted by floors of closed doors. Things are eerily quiet and there are no students in sight. I think that perhaps they are attending lectures and will return later. I venture on and encounter the communal facilities, such as the kitchen, TV and lounge area, and toilets and bathrooms. I walk into the kitchen and I am greeted by two white women. I am a little shocked at first to see two white women preparing food, because I was under the impression that the students at the residences were all black. I break the silence and smile. I explain to them the purpose of my visit, what the research is about and the fact that I will be a regular face here for the next month. We begin to chat and I realise that they are international students (my automatic assumption of whites), who are at UKZN for a semester. I ask them about residence life and whether they are enjoying themselves. They said that the African women in residence were extremely friendly and welcoming, and were excited to learn more about the international students' country, Norway. The African students also wanted them to learn more about the African culture and country, South Africa.

When I asked the women whether they feel any racial tension while living at the residence, they immediately respond that it does not exist here in this residence and, in fact, the African women helped them to settle in when they first arrived. I am then privy to a tour to one of the students rooms. It is very small and basic, with a single bed, cupboard, desk, chair and

washbasin. The student indicates that the room is fine and comfortable, but the residence is noisy. I ask the international student where all the students who live at the residence are and she said: "Well, I think if you want to speak to the students, then the best time to come would be after five in the evening … that is when most of them return and the residence gets quite busy." I think that perhaps I need to rethink my observation strategy and consider my timing, but I wonder whether it will be safe for an Indian woman like me to wander around the residence after hours, perhaps in the dark.

When I question the women about their safety and security, they indicate that they had been advised by their peers in residence to be vigilant, but they have no concerns about safety at this time. The student from Norway indicated that the African woman that she befriended called her 'exotic' because of her looks. I thank the students for their time and leave. I walk around the residence and hear a loud, droning noise … I walk towards it and enter the laundry room. It strikes me that, apart from the academic side of life, students also inhabit the social spaces in the residences, where cooking, cleaning, etc – the daily activities that people must do in order to survive – is done. What I do notice, though, is that there are no common eating spaces. There is only a kitchen for cooking, but no dining hall. I wonder where do the students gather to eat together. Surely we need to change this practice if we want to promote social cohesion among students? I decide to leave for the day and return tomorrow at another time, perhaps later in the afternoon.

I then stroll over to the neighbouring male residence, Mabel Palmer, next to John Bews. After the first security check, (I feel like I am boarding a plane), I enter. It is almost 3.30pm. The building is the same cold concrete as the women's residence and it also looks like a prison, but instead of cells with burglar guards, there are just many doors. This residence is also a rather odd colour, with brown walls and red or maroon doors. I am confronted by many closed doors. I hear other doors banging and music coming from the third floor. I walk around the residence and visit the common facilities. It is exactly the same as the John Bews female residence.

I decide to pull up a chair and sit down to begin my note taking. A door opens and then it closes and opens again, and I see an Indian man peering at me … at first I just sit there and write … he walks past me and doesn't say a word. Neither do I. (He is probably wondering what I am doing there – am I conducting an audit in residence or doing an inspection?) He

could have just been wondering what I was up to. He knocks on a nearby door and another black African male student opens the door and the Indian student enters the room. About 10 minutes pass by and then a couple of other students enter the residence. At first they look surprised, but then they greet me: "Good afternoon, ma'm." I think that they are much more polite than the Indian student. The students proceed to their rooms. I decide to leave the residence about 10 minutes later, as it is getting late. I note that I have spent the first day observing students in the academic spaces of the lecture halls, the living spaces of the residence and the social spaces of the cafeteria. I wonder to myself, a little concerned: Will I ever get participants for my study in this manner? Surely, there has to be a way that I can befriend them? Surely there must be a way that I can sit in the kitchens of the male residences to see what they do, take note of how they socialise and what languages they speak? I am beginning to worry that if this pattern of observation persists in the residence, I might not have any participants for my study. But it's only day one.

Day 2 – The coffee shop: The invisible

It's day two of observation. Again, most of the students at the white coffee shop are of the same race - the seating patterns continue from yesterday … separate, segregationist seating with just a few integrated groups. I can actually count them. Even in the social space of the coffee shop, limited integration is taking place. There are many tables at which same-race groups are seated. There is a group of very "different" white students (I wonder whether these are the same students who belonged to the strangely dressed, integrated group that I saw yesterday). I focus my attention on the smokers and ask myself why so many students smoke in this specific area. I know that this has nothing whatsoever to do with my research, but still it bothers me. I reflect on the name of this area. Although the coffee shop is called the "white cafeteria", most of the students who are frequenting it are Indian, with a handful of black African and white students. No coloureds are here today. I am now 15 minutes into my observation time.

I see the same familiar faces – the same people who I saw yesterday at the coffee shop. I wonder if these students even attend lectures. Today I am here at a different time, yet I see the same faces. Some of the female students are dressed very beautifully wearing very fashionable clothing. Some are dressed to the nines and I feel ashamed to be wearing my non-branded clothing. It seems that both the Indian and black African women are really well

dressed, whereas the white woman seem relaxed and comfortable in their unobtrusive outfits. I have noted that there is just one cross-racial relationship today and I did not observe anything yesterday. I notice how some of the women make themselves attractive, perhaps to catch the "male gaze". This young Indian woman smiles intermittently, she tilts her head to one side while talking to the male student … she is definitely attracted to him. I would know, having been through the love-marriage discourse myself. The non-verbal language is visible, as they stand close to one other; they smile and talk, and are very friendly and sweet. The coffee shop is extremely expensive and you have to be rich to purchase meals here everyday. I certainly cannot afford to spend that sort of money here daily, but I cannot bring my lunch from home and eat it at the coffee shop every day either! Perhaps I should not come here at lunchtime.

Day 2: The lecture halls: The peculiar old student

After the coffee shop, I proceed to attend a lecture to conduct observations. I enter the lecture room and again notice the same-race seating patterns. There are mostly Indian students in the lecture room, with a sprinkling of whites and blacks. I wonder why this is so? Is it because this is an Engineering lecture and not many black African students are studying Engineering? Is this true? Could this be a possibility? Note to self: I need to confirm this. Racial integration is minimal. In this lecture, the racial segregation is visibly apparent. Same-race, same-gender groups sit together. I observe that some students are not interested in the lecture. The Indian students converse with one another whilst the black African students pay attention to the lecturer. They (black Africans) are quiet and attentive.

A distinct racial division permeates this lecture room. The three white male students sit next to each other in the front of the class and no one else joins them. The Indian women dress fashionably and position themselves as opulent and intelligent (beauty and brains syndrome!). The black African women are dressed simply and comfortably. A group of Muslim male students stick together. One white male student sits next to an Indian female. Perhaps they are in a relationship. It is striking how caring the lecturer is. She continually checks and asks the class if they are okay and if they have understood the content that is being taught today. I think this is truly amazing. The lecturer, an Indian woman, continuously engages the students and encourages them to think critically. The Indian students who sit behind the

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white students answer the lecturer. The lecture continues. Note to self: Yet again, racial segregation is endemic – even in the Engineering lecture. Why is this so?

Day two: Mabel Palmer: *The elephant in the room*

After the lecture, I proceed to the student residence. Today I come across Mbali, a pregnant 19-year-old who will give birth to her baby next month. I enter the residence in the same fashion as yesterday. I produce my gatekeeper's letter and enter the "prison" access control. I see Mbali sitting in the TV lounge, relaxing and watching TV. The lounge is simple. There is a mid-green carpet, a few sofas of the old-fashioned, uncomfortable type. I think to myself: I can't possibly sit here for two hours. I engage in a casual conversation with Mbali and she reveals that the baby's father is her first boyfriend and, since learning about her pregnancy, the relationship has become somewhat strained. When asked why she thinks this is so, she said: "Well, things are not as they used to be." She shrugs off the question. She indicates that after she has the baby, she will go to the "farm" and leave the baby there. Mbali's boyfriend is also on campus. She hurriedly leaves, saying that she has to go and eat. I take down her details and tell her that I will be in touch with her, and explain what my study is about.

As I walk around the residence again, I feel as if I am in a prison … I hear doors open and close, but there is no one in sight. I walk into the kitchen and observe careless behaviour. There is a pot of rice cooking on the stove, but the pot has been left unattended. Students walk into and out of the residence … gates slam … doors bang. A male student enters the residence, walking hand-in-hand with a female student. They glance at me before they proceed to her bedroom. I do not observe much else, although the pot is still unattended. I proceed to the TV lounge area again to chat with the women (black African) there. They see me, but barely acknowledge my presence. I smile and break the ice by introducing myself and I tell them why I am at their residence. I explain what the study is about and whether they will be willing to participate in it. I also check with them if they do not mind if I meet them each day in their residence, to see what res life is all about. They are happy to do so and this makes me happy too. It is day two and it already seems like there is some movement.

It is very late in the afternoon as I proceed to the female residence opposite Mabel Palmer. The usual access control is required. As I walk into the kitchen, I see a young black African

woman preparing her meal. Note to self: The kitchen has just the basics: a portable cooking stove, some steel cabinets for storing crockery and a fridge with a lock. Really? Why? Note to self – check on this. I have a brief conversation with her and ask her about life in the residence and she says that residence life is about socialisation, communication and happiness. The students who live in this residence come from different backgrounds, but there is a common understanding between them. She mentions that there are no international students at this residence. I ask her whether she means the students from abroad like USA etc. and she says yes. Note to self: John Bews has international students from abroad. I have this strange feeling that students from African countries are not regarded as international students. The student adds that "you will not find an international student (the ones from the US) fighting for residence because it is a given that they will receive residence". From the conversation, I get the sense that the local black African students in residence think that the international students (from the US) do not have financial issues and have it easy when they come here. The student indicates to me that the female students "do not feel unsafe in the residence … they feel safe". When I asked why, she replies: "Perhaps residences are black dominated." (There are so many questions going through my mind … does this mean that black African women are safer from gender violence because of their race? Note to self: These are the questions that I must follow through with during the interviews. My mind is racing. Perhaps I will take down her details for further research.

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF MY STUDY:

"When we enter into a research relationship with participants and ask them to share their stories with us, there is the potential to shape their lived, told, relived and retold stories as well as our own" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 422).

"… we owe our care, our responsibility, to the research participants and how our research texts shapes their lives" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 422).

The quotes above epitomises the ethical considerations of my study and the issues around confidentiality. Anderson (1998, p.26) asserts, "ethical responsibility begins with the

individual researcher and the researcher is the main determinant of ethical standards". Therefore as a responsible researcher, I had a moral obligation to ensure "non-maleficence" as described by Rule and Vaughn (2011), which is a principle that should be adopted to ensure that no harm would come to the participants as a result of my research. In order to accomplish this I had to abide by certain ethical principles prescribed by my institution in undertaking research of this nature. I will discuss the ethics of this study and then describe the interview process that followed. In order for me to follow due ethical processes in my study, I allocated time at the beginning of each interview to provide clear and concise information about my research and the nature of the content that would be discussed in the interviews. I then provided the participants with information about what the interview was about, why it was being carried out and how I would utilise the information that I obtained from the interviews.

I also emphasised to the participants the issue of anonymity and the fact that only pseudonyms would be used in the written thesis. I explained to the participants how the data would be stored and the period for which it would be stored. Participants were then invited to ask any questions prior to the signing of the letter of "informed consent", which I presented to them before the commencement of the interview. I informed the participants of the study that they should feel free to ask any questions or raise any concerns during the interview process or intervene if the situation suddenly became uncomfortable or they required clarity on a particular issue. Once this was verbally communicated to each participant, I then proceeded to provide each participant or groups of them with a letter of consent that informed them of the aims and procedures, and their roles in the research process. I also asked them to take a few moments to decide about whether they felt comfortable enough to participate in the research process or not. This double-edged process provided me with the comfort and reassurance that my participants understood their roles and responsibilities in the research process before they signed their letters of consent. Christians (2000) affirms that the participants in a study must agree to voluntarily participate in the study and their agreement and understanding of the research must be based on full, honest and open information provided by the researcher. Once the students were satisfied with the explanation that I provided them about the study and the research process they signed the letters of consent.

4.8 THE RESEARCH SAMPLE:

After engaging in a month of observations at the university student residences, cafeterias and lecture venues of the Howard College campus, I had a clear idea of the sample of students that I would interview, based both on my experiences at the observation site and the conversations that I had engaged in with students during my observation. During the time of observations, I took down students' contact details and some had already appeared on my WhatsApp as soon as I stored their numbers on my phone. I deployed a purposive sampling strategy in order to select my participants, drawn from my observations. According to Plummer (2001), qualitative researchers are concerned with seeking samples that are rich in information and less concerned with representation from which bold generalisations can be made. According to Henning et al., (2004, p. 71), "purposive sampling also has elements of theoretical sampling (which looks for people who can help to build the substantive theory further)". One of the reasons that I engaged in observations prior to interviewing students was to enable me to choose my participants in a purposive manner to be the voices of my study. It was also important to involve international students as part of my sampling strategy, as they are part of the university community, yet are often times neglected in the research process.

During my observations, I had engaged in conversations with many students in their daily spaces, such as the social spaces of the cafeteria, the living spaces of the residence and the academic spaces of the lecture venues. The criteria I deployed to select my focus groups was to select those groups of students who I had met in the cafeterias('white and black'), who had sat together either in same-race or mixed-race groups. From the on campus residences, I selected only same-race groups. For the international students, I interviewed groups from the same countries such as groups from Zimbabwe, students from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and students from the United States (US). However, in two focus group discussions, the sample is representative of local and international students. For the individual interviews, I selected participants from the focus group discussions, or participants that I had spoken to individually at the different spaces of the campus during my observations.

For the interview process, I approached every student that I intended to interview either individually or as a group. The one month of observation allowed me to become a somewhat familiar face in the university environment at the different sites of observation. In total, I conducted 19 focus interviews and 23 individual interviews in the months after my observation on campus. While the individual interviews usually took the form of a traditional one-on-one interview, at four interviews, two people were interviewed together upon their request and insistence. The individual interviews spanned 50–60 minutes and the focus group discussions spanned 60–90 minutes each. In one focus discussion (FG12) that took place at the student residence, I had ten participants and the interview spanned about 120 minutes due to the large sample size. I tried to maintain a fair representation of my participants in terms of race and gender as important criteria. Whilst UKZN is a racially demographic institution it also has the highest number of black African students followed by Indian, coloured, white and international students (from abroad and Africa). The age of my participants ranged from 19–39 years. Below is a table of the interviews that I conducted over eight months. Despite the large number of interviews conducted for this study, as reflected below, I chose the data as informed by my key research questions. In the three analysis chapters of this thesis, I refer to the observation site where I met the participant/participants.

Table 5. Table of participants both group and individual:

1. **Focus group of local black African females – FG 1**
2. **Focus group of mixed[9] race and mixed gender – FG2**
3. **Focus group of mixed race and mixed gender – FG3**
4. **Focus group local black African females – FG 4**
5. **Focus group of mixed race and mixed gender – FG5**
6. **Focus group of mixed race and mixed gender – FG6**
7. **Focus group of international students of mixed gender – FG 7**

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[9] In this context mixed race refers to black African, Indian, white or coloured students.

8. **Focus group of same race and mixed gender – FG 8**
9. **Focus group of mixed gender, mixed race and international students (from Africa) – FG 9**
10. **Focus group of international students (USA and Germany) of same gender – FG 10**
11. **Focus group of international students (from Africa) of mixed gender – FG 11**
12. **Focus group of same race and same gender – FG 12**
13. **Focus group of black African females only – FG 13**
14. **Focus group of international students (from Africa) of mixed gender – FG 14**
15. **Focus group of mixed race including international (from Africa) and same gender– FG15**
16. **Focus group of mixed race and mixed gender – FG16**
17. **Focus group of mixed race and mixed gender – FG 17**
18. **Focus group of mixed race and same gender– FG 18**
19. **Focus group of mixed race and mixed gender – FG 19**
20. **Individual interview with two black African females – II 1**
21. **Individual interview with African female – II 2**
22. **Individual interview with African female – II 3**
23. **Individual interview with African female – II 4**
24. **Individual interview with gay coloured male – II 5**
25. **Individual interview with Indian female – II 6**
26. **Individual interview with Indian female – II 7**

27. Individual interview with 2 females – II 8
28. Individual interview with Indian male – II 9
29. Individual interview with two International males from Africa – II 10
30. Individual interview with African female and African male – II 11
31. Individual interview with international Canadian female – II 12
32. Individual interview with international female from Africa – II 13
33. Individual interview with African female – II 14
34. Individual interview with African female – II 15
35. Individual interview with African male – II 16
36. Individual interview with African male – II 17
37. Individual interview with African male – II 18
38. Individual interview with Indian female – II 19
39. Individual interview with Indian female – II 20
40. Individual interview with Indian female – II 21
41. Individual interview with Indian female – II 22
42. Individual interview with International male – II 23

4.9 TROUBLING THE INTERVIEW PROCESS:

In this section of the chapter, I outline the interview process that I engaged in, with the intention of also documenting the immense difficulties I experienced in setting up the interviews. According to Yin (1994, 2009), interviews are an essential feature of case study research, as most case studies are about "human affairs". The table above (Table 5)

represents my full sample of students who were interviewed for this study. Although I had generated a large volume of data from my interviews, I used interviews that was relevant to my case guided by my research questions. As part of the ethical process of my research, I sought permission from all my participants to have the interviews tape-recorded in order to enable me to transcribe the data verbatim. The use of the dictaphone was non-intrusive. The reason that I deployed unstructured and semi-structured interviews, rather than any other style of interviewing, as discussed by Willig (2001, p.22), is that semi-structured interviews "provides an opportunity for the researcher to hear the participant talk about a particular aspect of their life or experience. The questions asked by the researcher function as triggers that encourage participants to talk". Thus, the employment of unstructured and semi-structured interviews was an important criterion to elicit detailed and rich information from my participants. The interviews took place at a location and time suitable to the students. This sometimes meant conducting interviews very late in the afternoon in the residences and in the cafeterias, which did not prove to be a comfortable experience. My intention was to conduct the interviews in my office boardroom, which often times did not conspire, as I will explain below.

I outline the difficulties, anguish and frustration that I experienced in setting up the interviews with my participants and possibly the frustration that other qualitative researchers of this nature have encountered. An inordinate amount of time was wasted trying to just coordinate the interviews and manage the groups that I intended to interview. The observations proceeded smoothly, because I was conducting them on my own terms and under my own conditions. After a month of observation, it was time to begin the formal interviewing process after the "casual chats" and "coffee mornings" ended. I was excited about this, because I had seen so much and heard so much that I couldn't wait to begin the other phase of the research. Of course, I had written down names and cellphone numbers, taken down email addresses and even invited a significant number of my participants to WhatsApp me, to ensure that the actual interviewing process ran smoothly.

I returned to my office for the normal routine of work after my leave. It felt strange and odd at first to settle back into my working routine, but I knew that it was time to begin the second phase of my research journey. I began calling up students to arrange the interviews. I went

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back and forth with them, with calls, emails and texts to try and arrange a common time and venue … this persisted for about three weeks. I was, of course, beginning to get extremely concerned at this turn of events, as it seemed virtually impossible to try to get the students at one common venue at the same time. As anticipated, I wanted to interview students in my office boardroom, taking the cue from Anderson (1998), who asserts that if the interview is to be conducted in a busy office, where there are many interruptions, then the interview process could be profoundly affected.

I was therefore not prepared to compromise the quality of my interviews and desired that they take place in my boardroom, as it was a quiet and appropriate venue, but it seemed this would not to be the case. I lost three weeks trying to set up one interview, with students giving me the run around. I eventually realised that I would have to go to the students, as they were not going to come to me. My first focus group interview took place in the residence late in the afternoon, a little after four. In an earlier section, I mentioned my hesitation in visiting the residences too late in the day, due to them having been labelled "unsafe spaces". Nevertheless, I had little or no option but to conduct the interviews at the residences. When I arrived at the residence to conduct the interview, I had to wait a further 45 minutes for all of the women to arrive. When they did arrive, they seemed a bit annoyed definitely not the same jovial students I met earlier during the observations. I had expected to interview eight women, but only six had turned up, yet they had seemed so willing and eager to be interviewed when I spent time with them in the residence. When the women appeared in the TV lounge for the interviews, they told me: "Oh, we were expecting some food … all of the *girls* (author emphasis) were looking forward to eating something nice." I was rather taken aback by this and felt somewhat embarrassed that I had not thought about food at all for my participants. I apologised profusely to the students and thanked them for bringing this to my attention. I think I might have just found my draw-card for the rest of the participant interviews. Food – perhaps this would work.

I also consulted with my other PhD colleagues about the strategies they utilised when setting up their interviews, because I was afraid that I was losing valuable time. They suggested that it was important to reward students who participated in the interviews and one of the most desirable draw-cards for them was food. This would be my strategy too. For the rest of the

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interviews, I would purchase juice, cool drinks, muffins and samoosas (Indian savoury snacks) for every interview. When I arranged the interviews, I indicated to the participants that snacks and beverages would be provided. I began making calls and emailing students again, but this time I asked them to come about 10 minutes early, because I had refreshments for them. This seemed to work quite well, but on four occasions, I had to cater and re-cater because my participants did not arrive for their interviews. I tried calling them, but their cellphones were switched off. However, I persisted with the interviews again the next day.

I think that the worst experience I encountered was when I had to interview a group of students at the coffee shop also called the "white cafeteria". In an earlier section of this chapter, I outlined my discomfort regarding students who smoked. The coffee shop, or should I say, "smokers' zone", as I came to call it, was where I had to conduct one interview. I suffocated on the cigarette smoke, but had to sit through and endure my discomfort because the interview was with the group that I identified as being different and integrated in the observation phase. Their "talks" would therefore be most valuable to my research (so I thought). Apart from the smoke that almost choked me (my interviewees were chain smokers and asked if I didn't mind if they smoked while I interviewed them – of course I could not refuse; after all, I was at their mercy), I also had to scream at the top of my voice to get their attention. Indeed, the whole process was extremely challenging and exhausting. Despite these, though, I loved listening to the participants. I thoroughly enjoyed the interviews and the moments of engagement that I had with them. I felt a void when the sessions were over, but at the same time, a sense of relief, as it was time to progress to the next phase of the research process.

4.10 DATA ANALYSIS:

> "The process of bringing order, structure, and interpretation to a mass of collected data is messy, ambiguous time-consuming, creative, and fascinating. It does not proceed in a linear fashion; it is not neat" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 206).

The above vignette describes the data analysis section of this chapter, in which I outline the strategies I utilise to analyse my data. Henning et al., (2004) purports that data analysis is the

"heartbeat" of any research process, while Plummer (2001) maintains that analysis and interpretation should always accompany research interviews, since the accumulated data will provide insight into new research problems and alert scholars to changing issues. Plummer (2001) argued that planning and preparation would inevitably be taking place on an ongoing basis. I collected a large amount of data, thus analysis was a constant part of the research process, as I reflected on every interview after its completion. The scholars Marshall and Rossman (1999) assert that within qualitative research studies the process of data collection and analysis are closely tied in order to derive a coherent set of meaning from the data. As a starting point, I created an inventory of all my fieldwork interviews, loose conversations, field notes, as well as the documents I had gathered from my institution as part of the document analysis. Thus, the data set was gathered and categorically labelled as best as I understood it (adapted from Merriam, 2009).

During the observation phase, I maintained a diary to record my field notes, gathered from my observations, during which I regularly jotted down questions, thoughts, feelings and areas of interest that I wanted to explore further during the interview process. In addition, during the process of each interview, I also noted non-verbal cues elicited from my participants – responses that the dictaphone would not pick up, for obvious reasons. Thus data was gathered in the form of transcripts generated through recorded group and individual discussions, conversations held during the fieldwork process, field diaries and other documents that I obtained from the university itself (document analysis); these all formed part of the process of data analysis. This constituted the primary data set for analysis. According to Holliday (2001, p. 99) "…the carving out of data already takes the researcher at least one step from social reality, and is the first act of interpretation". Marshall and Rossman (1999, p.150) describes the process of data analysis as "a process of bringing order, structure and interpretation to the mass of collected data".

As a novice researcher, I personally transcribed all of the interviews verbatim from the interview recordings. In ensuring that integrity of the process was maintained, I revisited the original tape recordings for verification purposes if the transcript did not read coherently or if it did not make sense. This was the second stage of analysis, which allowed me to become familiar with the data and in this way observe the analysis patterns of my data. I reiterate that

the first stage of analysis was conducted during the fieldwork, as I listened to each interview after it had been conducted. My reason for personally transcribing the data set was due to the fact that I wanted to remain close to it, as an insider to the research, since this was my study. Transcribing the data would put me back in the moment, as I would be able to visualise the "nuanced" versions of my participants' talk and text.

The third stage of the analysis required that I immerse myself more fully in the data. I read individual transcripts three times over, together with the notes that I had made earlier on, during the interview process. Henning et al., (2004, p. 104) defines this process as "open coding, whereby the analyst reads through the entire text in order to get a global impression of the content". Henning et al., (2004) asserts that open coding is an inductive process, as analysis codes are selected according to the meaning deduced from data made tangible and recognisable by the researcher itself. This allowed me to pick out concrete themes and categories for coding. Punch (2005), asserts that coding is the start of the process in qualitative analysis. Punch (2005, p. 176) defines a "code as tags, names or labels and coding is therefore the process of putting names, tags and labels against data". I labelled all of my data with specific codes and themes for ease of reference and to allow me to move backwards and forwards through the data (an iterative process) with relative ease. This was an "inductive" process (Henning et al., 2004), as the codes and themes arose from the data itself. Terreblanche and Durrheim (1999, p. 231), purport that themes in data analysis "be explored more closely to capture the finer nuances of meaning not captured by the researcher's original coding".

Once all the data had been coded, I cut and arranged the codes thematically identifying key thematic and sub-thematic areas to visibly see the overlaps and the key themes emanating from the data. I undertook this process manually, by using chart paper and different coloured highlighters. I also employed this process as a method of cross-checking data and searching for interrelatedness and coherence in the coded categories and subcategories. This process allowed me to shift through the data systematically and to visibly observe the coherence of themes as they emanated from the data. As outlined in chapter two of this thesis, my overall study is rooted within a feminist poststructuralist framework; therefore, in choosing the themes of this study, the guiding principle that I utilised in analysing my data was carefully

looking for binary categories of relations of domination/subordination, agency and empowerment. Therefore, throughout my data analysis, I was cognisant of presenting my participants with agency and resistance, signalling to the breakages and ruptures framing dominant discourses of race, class, gender and sexuality as categories of inequality and disempowerment. Having undergone this process, I was able to write my three analysis chapters, carefully guided by the key questions that this thesis sought to understand. However, despite having read numerous articles on the process of data analysis, it was a hugely challenging process, as I was confronted by masses of data and spent many months attempting to comprehend, interrogate and make sense of the data.

4.11 VALIDITY AND CREDIBILITY OF THIS STUDY:

Despite the rich and in-depth data that can be gained from case study research, one of the strong criticisms of this approach is the issue of generalisability and representation. However, scholars such as Hays (2004), Rule and Vaugh (2011) have contested this by asserting that the issue of generalisability is not the sole purpose of case study research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) have posited other measures of quality. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), for qualitative researchers, the use of the terms "credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability" is more appropriate than internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity for qualitative studies. Pandey and Patnaik (2014, p. 5746) assert that the "credibility of a qualitative research paradigm depends upon the ability and effort of the researcher". According to Rule and Vaughn (2011), the provision of a "thick description of the particular case and its context" allows the researchers' findings to gain a level of transferability. This occurs when the reader believes that this case resonates with similar cases that he or she has absorbed, which, according to Johannson (2003), can be termed naturalistic generalisation. Stake (2005) argues that readers can learn from a particular case through the narrative description of the researcher. On the issue of the generalisability of case study research, Hays (2004) purports that each case is unique, as it intends to uncover new and unusual interactions and connections.

Merriam (2009) utilises the concepts of "trustworthiness" and "rigour" in the qualitative research paradigm, as opposed to the traditional terminology of "validity" and "reliability". Merriam (2009) asserts that addressing the issues of trustworthiness and rigour ensures that

the research investigation has been conducted in an ethical manner. It has been argued that advocacy and ethics are interconnected drawing upon researcher positionality with the responsibility to invoke a sense of "response-ability" from participants in the field (Madison, 2012, p. 97). Madison (2012) further argues that the role of critical ethnography is closely entertwined with ethical research that invokes the researcher's critical self-reflection and contribution towards eliciting research that is grounded in principles of social justice. Against this backdrop, I argue that my study is intended to coalesce and advance an understanding towards social cohesion at my university. This I would argue is broadly grounded towards the principles of social justice.

Lincoln and Guba's (2000) notion of credibility relies upon the quality of the findings, which are in turn reliant upon the credibility of the data. According to Merriam (2009, p.217), another strategy for ensuring the credibility of the study is "member checks" also termed "respondent validation" which allows the researcher to discuss emergent findings with some of the participants of the study. Merriam (2009) purports that the use of multiple methods of data collection also known as triangulation is utilised to ensure the validity of the study. Yin (2011) argues that an ideal form of triangulation would be to not only collect data from three sources but rather to ideally collect data from three different kinds of sources. Lincoln and Guba (2000, p. 183) expand on the importance of the researchers integrity throughout the research process and reflexivity in qualitative research as "the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, the 'human as instrument'".

In expanding upon the issues of credibility, transferability and reliability to my own study, I explain the following methods that I deployed to achieve this:

- Triangulation – I utilised several different ways in which I engaged in the process of data collection, namely, observations, semi-structured and unstructured interviews and document analysis, as a means of triangulation to ensure that the data and the study's findings were credible.
- My interview transcripts were read and verified by my colleague in the office to ensure coherence and sensibility of the emerging data.

- Guba (1981 as cited in Rule & Vaughn, 2011) in describing the credibility of the study refers to the extent to which the case study provided a comprehensive and full essence of the reality of the case. In addressing the issue of credibility in my study, I provided a full account of the first two days of the observation. In addition, I also provided a narrative reflective account of my participants and where on the campus I met them in all three analysis chapters of this thesis.

- In terms of transferability of my findings to other similar case studies, I have employed a rich, thick description in terms of the data analysis to present my case enhancing the aspect of context rich and context specific research (adapted from Merriam, 2009).

4.12 REFLEXIVITY AND RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY:

Berger (2015) asserts that reflexivity from the viewpoint of qualitative research is the extent to which the researcher writes him or herself into the research process. Berger (2015, p. 220) contends that qualitative researchers need to understand their self in the process of knowledge creation and to be able to monitor their biases in delineating the "personal from the universal". In order to address the issue of researcher bias in this study, I was extremely cognisant and cautious in the manner in which I engaged with my participants. I identified many parallels between my personal experiences as a higher education student during one phase of my life and later as the "adult" who had graduated from this phase. It is for this reason that I am compelled to acknowledge that my own background and interests in this project will inevitably influence and shape the process of data analysis and interpretation. I have taken cognisance of the ways in which my involvement in the research process can alter my views about others, as well as highlight realisations about myself. Thus, in declaring my position as a researcher and employee of this institution, and my interest in this study, I have attempted to provide a sanitised version of this case study research, while simultaneously declaring that I have been an inescapable part of this journey. In articulating a reflexive account of my research journey I draw upon the theoretical stance of the 'outsider-within' proposed by black feminist writer Patricia Hills Collins (1986). Bhambra (2015, p. 2317) asserts that Collins notion of the 'outsider-within' was initially deployed to "examine the ways in which particular social locations facilitate us as scholars in bringing different perspectives to bear upon problems shared in common". The notion of Collin's 'outsider-within' emerged

as a theoretical orientation to the social situatedness of African American women employed as domestic workers in white headed households (Bhambra, 2015).

However, this notion of the insider/outsider distinction has been challenged by Naples (1996) who argued that the power differentials between the research and researched was dissimulated. I was therefore consciously and acutely aware of my role as researcher and the multiple positions I invoked with respect to my race, age, gender, class, sexuality, positionality and dress sense within the university environment. Within my own study, I found tension with the power differentials between my participants and self, always being cognisant of the multiple positions I invoked within the university environment. Therefore, as I progressed through the fieldwork I adopted the stance of "dressing down" in an attempt to look more casual and comfortable almost a sense of 'fitting in' to their (the researched) world. However, at times I experienced a sense of subversion of the power relations between my participants and self in respect of my "dressing down" which I have alluded to in my fieldwork narrative in this section.

It has been argued that the insider/outsider relationship should be predicated as "ever-shifting and permeable" rather than as "fixed or stable" positions (Naples, 1996). I concur with Naples (1996) as often times I shifted positionality from employee to student, from mother to friend to student. I circulated in ever shifting roles during my fieldwork. Other scholars have also noted the fluid and shifting positons of insider/outsider in the literature (Haviland, Johnson, Orr, & Lienert, 2005; Ochieng, 2010). I find similarity with Naples (1996) and Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Kee, Ntseane and Muhamad (2001) who purport that in real time data collection there is fluidity and slippage between the insider/outsider. This resonates strongly with my fieldwork experiences as often times I too would imagine my student experiences and felt that I had to share my thoughts with my participants taking me 'back in the moment' of my student days. Thus, my shifting insider/outsider status was symbolic of the differential power dynamics between researched and researcher in the field. I also find relevance in DeVault (1999, p. 190) who asserts that as ethnographers "My aim is to write about others carefully, in both senses of the word – with rigor and with emphatic concern". Against this notion, I have attempted to stay true to my data and participants of my research.

4.13 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have attempted to provide the reader with an in-depth discussion of the methodological framework and the strategies that I utilised to gather data for this research. In addition, I presented my rationale for situating this research within a case study design, drawing attention to the phenomenon under investigation and how knowledge gained from the research can be utilised to provide a lens to other issues illuminated in this thesis. I have also documented my journey in narrative detail, inserting myself fully into the research process, while simultaneously striving to present a sanitised version of events. The varied and diverse means of data collection (triangulation) that I employed served to ensure the credibility of the study's findings. I also included the first two days of my observation journey in narrative style, to demonstrate to the reader that the researcher is an inextricable constituent of the research process and to give an idea of the extent to which the reflections and accounts of the research process are key aspects of qualitative research. Due to the volume of field notes, it was not possible to include every day of my observations in this chapter. I indicated at the beginning of this chapter that I intended to document my research journey in narrative detail, so as to draw the reader vicariously into a virtual reality (Barone & Eisner, 1997). Therefore, I have presented only the first two days to demonstrate "breaking terrain" in the research process. In all three analysis chapters, when I introduce my participants to the reader, I indicate where (coffee shop, black cafeteria, residence or lecture venue) I had initially met them. These reflexive accounts allowed me to step back and examine the process of my fieldwork and interrogate the power relationships that underscore such a research process, whereby the researcher becomes the researched. This is indicative of the dynamic and fluid nature of this research relationship.

CHAPTER 5:

RACE, CLASS AND LANGUAGE

5.1 INTRODUCTION:

As noted in chapter one of this thesis, this study is concerned with a single case study of higher education students as they give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality in their everyday student realities on campus. In chapter three of this thesis, I discussed the literature that informs this study, drawing from a diverse body of work that examines the national and international landscape of higher education and higher education students. I also merge the broader discussions and debates that are emerging on a national scale, in order to situate this thesis contextually. In the previous chapter, I provide a methodological roadmap to illuminate the means by which the data for this study has been obtained and locate this study within a case study design informed by a constructionist paradigm.

In order to make sense of my data, I draw upon Foucault's (1979) account of power and discourse, to arrive at an understanding about how race is given meaning and shaped through discourse within the nexus of class and language. Further, to understand my participants, I deploy Foucault's (1979) theory of power, which argues that subjects can simultaneously be complicit in maintaining oppressive power, while being resistant at the same time. According to Foucault and Faubion (2002), power acts through its subjects, rather than upon subjects, drawing them into circuits of social exchange that simultaneously reproduce and transform them. Following Foucault (1979), this thesis views race and the construction of race within relations of power, and draws on the multiple ways in which power functions to construct racial identities. I also refer to Judith Butler's (1988) theoretical dismantling of identities as racial identities are made real only to the extent of it being performed.

The issues of transformation within South African higher education elucidated how race has been troubled with class. The recent national #FeesMustFall student protest illuminated the political and economic plight of students in higher education, with the majority of them being poor and black (Bhana, 2013a; Chetty, 2014; Naicker, 2016). The #TransformWits movement, which originated at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, challenged the

unchanged, untransformed institution of the apartheid era that has been complicit in the exclusion and marginalisation of black African students (Naicker, 2016). Race has also been troubled with language, as revealed in the Open Stellenbosch movement, originating at the University of Stellenbosch in Cape Town and largely orchestrated by black African students to demonstrate against the enforcement of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at the institution (Naicker, 2016).

This chapter is invested in understanding how intersections of race, class and language are interpreted and given meaning by a select number of students, through their interactions within the campus environment, and the possible implications for social cohesion. It also draws on the experiences of male and female students, to investigate how racialised subjectivities are constructed within the nexus of class and language. As discussed in chapter one, this study is situated at a racially and ethnically diverse campus in Durban, in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The greatest number of students on campus are black African, whose first language is isiZulu, followed by Indian, white and coloured students (Institutional Intelligence, 2018). This chapter therefore takes cognisance of how race, class and language are intimately connected and tied to the socio-cultural, historical and material realities of students in their lived daily experiences.

This chapter comprises of two sections: The first discusses the construction of racial identities through the interstices of class. It has been noted that in South African higher education, less attention has been paid to the ways in which class and race coalesce to produce student identities (Bhana, 2014) and also in schooling settings elsewhere (Byrne, 2009). Soudien (2008) asserts that within the present context of higher education social class shapes the racial experience in variegated ways. Motala and Vally (2010) assert that overlooking class in any social analysis has critical implications for the process of social transformation. The second section of this chapter will focus on how race is given meaning through the nexus of language and class.

SECTION ONE:

5.2 Navigating students racialised experiences on campus through the nexus of class

Of primary concern in this section of the chapter is to understand the ways in which race is given meaning through the nexus of class in examining cross-racial relationships and friendships patterns, viewed as a necessary conduit for social transformation within higher education institutions. Recent studies conducted at some South African higher education institutions illuminate how homogenous constructions of race are troubled by the insertion of class complicating student relations on campus (Soudien, 2010b; Bhana, 2014, 2016; Singh & Bhana, 2015). Other scholars have also illuminated the complexity and nuances of cross-racial mixing within higher education (Steyn & Van Zyl, 2001; Erasmus & De Wet, 2003; Vincent, 2008; Higham, 2012). Other investigations – by Durrheim, Trotter, Piper and Manicom (2004), and Pattman (2007) – purport that racial mixing and interactions are important in reducing the ways in which race structures student identities. Vincent (2008), however, argues that greater racial contact does not signify greater cross-racial interaction. The discussions below illuminate how race and class place structure around student friendships within the campus environment. In the conversation below, I explore how cross-racial friendships manifest on the campus environment.

Mzo and Nikeni are both African male students who are in their second year of studies. Both are beneficiaries of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), a government-funded finance scheme that assists students who cannot afford to pay for their tuition and living costs while they study on campus. Andia, an African female, is also in her second year of study and relies upon the NSFAS scheme for support. The Howard College campus at which this study is located has a high number of students who depend on the NSFAS funding scheme to meet their studying and living expenses. Mzo, Nikeni and Andia are friends within a larger, mixed gender group of only black African students. I met this group of students outside the "black cafeteria" on campus.

> **Mzo:** Well, I think friendships on campus is a complex problem that can't be solved by asking students in the university to talk and get along, because what do you say to a student who (I am from Umlazi) … comes from Umhlanga [when] we meet in the

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morning before class? What is there to talk about? The student from Umhlanga has probably watched the news from DSTV and I don't have that at home. The student … has probably had access to a number of books, which I could not have access to. The student has a high command of a language, which is expected from me as somebody who has been speaking my language (isiZulu) the whole time. The student has access to technology that I can only imagine I would ever have access to. The student comes to the university using a mode of transport that even my parents can't imagine they would ever have, so there is a lot which divides us … the minute you talk about your Mercedes Benz as a student – "My father just bought me a Mercedes Benz" – [but] you don't even have a bicycle. How can you create a friendship like that … the next thing is: how do we celebrate your Mercedes Benz if I don't even have a bicycle?

Researcher: So, you are saying that a student from a township cannot make friends with a student from Umhlanga. Why?

Nikeni: Well all I can say to that … the way we do things in the townships and even the rural areas differs to what is done in upper-class areas … like for example on campus it's not a problem to befriend someone who comes from Inanda if you are say- from Umlazi. The upper class areas like La Lucia and Umhlanga for example are fancy and highly sophisticated and have the latest when it comes to technology in those areas… then the thinking and the language will also be different to the township and rural areas. You want to talk about the latest technology gadget, yet the child from Umlazi and Inanda does not know about the old gadget … they have not even touched it, felt it. Now you don't have anything to talk about. So tell me how then do you interact and socialise?

Andia: I am going to bring the whole thing of class. Just say that you are from Chatsworth and I am from KwaMashu – I hardly get to see Indians and white people, so I hardly know how to approach them. I don't know how to mix with them, so when you throw me in class next to one [of them] … I'm going to be like, we are not going to connect. We don't have anything to talk about, because she grew up in a completely different environment to … mine … Whereas, if she [an Indian female] walks in and

she is from Westville and I'm from Ballito, we know the beach, we usually go to Gateway[10]; yes, then we can connect and be friends. Once again, I think it goes to class and I'm thinking she [Indian female] probably went to a private school, she probably played sports or we did books … you get a lot more content to go on. Whereas, if I grew up in KwaMashu, then I found different things [that were] exciting, [compared to] to what she [did], because we are total opposites and it makes it really difficult then to connect. (FG 8, focus group of same race and mixed gender).

In the above accounts on cross-racial friendships and mixing at the university, presented by Mzo, Andia and Nikeni, all three students share the same socio-economic status, as all are reliant upon the NSFAS financial aid scheme to sustain their education and living expenses, while on campus. In Mzo, Andia and Nikeni's explanation of cross-racial friendships, race is intimately connected to class, and class is complicit in fracturing cross- racial mixing. Thus, cross-racial mixing as a reality for these students is appropriated through a discourse of exclusion crystallised through class inequalities. Their construction of their racial identity is situated within the interplay of larger social forces and social conditions that are intimately tied to exclusion and marginalisation (Bhana, 2014). According to Seekings (2008), white South Africans remained privileged after apartheid, while most African people remained poor, and we see how this is still a reality in the lives of Mzo, Andia and Nikeni in their expression of racial subjectivities.

Mzo, Andia and Nikeni's economic disempowerment within the campus environment, which manifests in their lack of access to technology and material comforts, reproduces racialised relations of power. According to Chetty (2014, p. 90), "poor students are further disadvantaged with regard to access to technology and resources", and we see this exhibited in the lives of Mzo, Andia and Nikeni. Their construction of racial identities is reproduced in tandem with apartheid constructions of racial subjectivities that perpetuate the status of the poor and marginalised black African. Mzo, Andia and Nikeni's experience with cross-racial friendships on campus signal to the ways in which race is given meaning through class and how this characterises even present-day student relations on campus. Seeking's (2008)

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[10] A large shopping mall in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

maintains that apartheid entrenched racial identities and divisions simultaneously exacerbated inequality in the distribution of income. In terms of the three students, the manifestation of entrenched apartheid identities is played out in their lives. Similarly, in a study conducted in the United States (US) at an elite white college, the possession of material items such as laptops, accessories and branded clothing serve as markers of social class. The study illuminated that these markers reproduced racialised identities, as affluent whites and poor blacks became polarised within the campus environment (Aries, 2008).

Mzo, Nikeni and Andia also draw upon their socio-cultural and material realities in given meaning to their racial subjectivities. They view Umhlanga, La Lucia, Ballito and Westville – historically affluent, previously white suburbs in Durban – in a polarised light to Umlazi, KwaMashu and Inanda, which have remained historically black, poor urban township areas. The students' testimonies intimately connect and implicate the historical legacies of the apartheid era as exacerbating class inequalities. Thus, Mzo, Nikeni and Andia reproduce the stigma of blackness, attached to associations of a lack of power and being poor (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006). Due to their (Mzo, Nikeni and Andia) lack of economic privilege and power, they resist opportunities to engage in cross-racial friendships with students who come from wealthy, previously white suburbs and thus place race and class at the centre of student interactions on the campus.

These students' socio-economic status and position within the university environment reproduces the status quo of the apartheid era, drawing on discourses of inclusion and exclusion, which privilege whites and denigrate blacks, thus holding racialised power in place. Others scholars writing within a South African higher education context have highlighted how students give meaning to racialised identities in tandem with apartheid discourses (Walker, 2005, 2006; McKinney, 2007a). Apparent in all three testimonies is the way in which race is given meaning through these students' socio-cultural and material realities which also regulate their cross racial interaction in the university environment, with negative consequences for social cohesion on campus.

Therefore, despite avenues for mixing at the university, the above student testimonies illuminate how race and class is entangled and implicated in the reproduction of inequalities,

particularly for working-class black African students. Further, Mzo, Nikeni and Andia illuminate that the lack of material gain – such as access to technology, the latest gadgets and books – erodes their agency and renders them powerless, as elucidated in their statements: "Now you don't have anything to talk about …" (Nkineni), "… so I hardly know how to approach them; I don't know how to mix with them …" (Andia), and "… you don't even have a bicycle how can you create a friendship … the next thing is, how do we celebrate your Mercedes Benz if I don't even have a bicycle" (Mzo). Their statements elucidate how the material circumstances of their lives regulate their friendships on campus. Thus, they illuminate how power, embedded within class, complicates racial subjectivities and fractures cross-racial mixing. Mzo, Nikeni and Andia are "summoned into place in the discursive structures" (Hall, 2000, p. 27) within the discourse of exclusion highlighting how race is constructed through material circumstances troubling cross-racial mixing within the campus environment as race inequalities persist (Walker, 2005) through class.

However, difficulty in navigating cross-racial relationships within the campus environment has not only been expressed by African students, as purported by Robin, a white female student in her second year of studies. Robin is part of a larger, mixed-race[11] (comprising different races) and mixed-gender[12] group on campus.

> **Robin:** They are not friends'–just acquaintances. I am going to be honest. I see myself as being very different to them (African students). Like I won't go up to a person who is dressed in Zulu skins to talk to them. I don't see how their group and my group, or me, would really have anything in common to talk about – like, what would I say? It's not like I don't like them, but I don't see the need to walk up to them and say: 'Hi.' There still feels like there is segregation on campus – like we know we are richer, because we are white, and maybe they (African) think we are trying to do them a favour by speaking to them and then they are very judgemental. (FG 16, focus group mixed race and mixed gender).

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[11] Mixed race comprises of black African, white, Indian and colored students.
[12] Mixed gender means comprising of male and female.

Historically, whites have held power for generations and, while apartheid discourses have ceased since 1994, Robin notes the historical legacies that continue to mark her white identity with economic power and privilege. Weedon (1987, p. 4) argues: "The appeal to the 'natural' is one of the most powerful aspects of *common-sense* thinking, but it is a way of understanding social relations which denies history and the possibility of change for the future". It is evident that Robin's skin colour continues to privilege and consolidate her position within the campus environment, reproducing racialised relations of power in maintaining the apartheid discourse of segregation.

Walker (2005) asserts that although apartheid discourses have transitioned into opportunities that entrench privilege, they are likely to be racially shaped and influenced by notions of social class, gender and wealth – and we see this working in Robin's life. She makes visible her agency, by declaring that she is different because she is white; she is richer and therefore does not find that she has anything in common with students dressed in Zulu skins. Robin draws upon the "Zulu skin" to illuminate how appearances on campus becomes a site for "authentic racial display" and the cultural production of identity as race is made and given meaning (Stewart, 2015, p. 248). In a study conducted at a US Elite Black College, expressions of black identity were tied to racial and ethnic ancestry, and to experiences of structural inequality (Charles, Kramer, Torres & Brunn-Bevel, 2015). According to Hall (1996), identity is constructed and intertwined within the dynamics of power and it is this process that serves to exclude, through its power to promote "difference". In this way, Robin, who is white, sees the students dressed in "Zulu skins" as other and marginal.

Robin's repeated use of "us", "them" and "we" positions her as different to the students dressed in Zulu skins. Her construction of her white identity as privileged and wealthy positions her hierarchically to the "other", as racialised power is made real through the apartheid discourse that continues to pervade the campus environment. Robin's economic superiority positions the student who wears Zulu skins as "other" and inferior, thus elucidating how race and class intersect into sharp inequalities for students who are not like Robin. Her testimony reinforces how whiteness continues as a "frame or standard against which blacks are judged" (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006, p. 161), implicating a class hierarchy as it is produced and reinforced through race within the campus environment. In Robin's

experience of cross-racial friendships, whiteness is made normative and enduring (Youdell, 2006) through class. Further, it can be seen that Robin uses her white identity within the campus environment to maintain apartheid discourses with negative outcomes for social cohesion.

However, cross-racial friendships within the campus environment are much more complicated and complex than the simple essences of racialised black and white subjectivities, as noted by Bheki (male) and Fiona (female), both final-year law students who are black African. I met them during my observations in a lecture venue. The excerpt below is in response to how race and class intersect in same-race student relations on campus.

> **Bheki:** Yes, it matters, as there is also an element of those (blacks) that are rich, who always want to say no – we want to maintain a certain status – and they (blacks) will always tell their children that no matter what you do, make sure you always maintain that high status. So some of the children on campus, even if they are black, they would not accept the fact that I am among my black fellows because they have a different social background to mine. Therefore, he or she will always see themselves as somebody who is capable of talking to whites, just because they (black and white) are in the same social status (FG 6, focus group of mixed race and gender).

Bheki's testimony highlights how racial subjectivity is given meaning through class, complicating and troubling student friendship patterns, within same-race relations on campus. Further Bheki's statements illuminates how race intersecting with class ruptures essentialist constructions of homogenous racialised subjectivities signalling to the fluidity of race, as race is made and unmade. "So, some of the children, even if they are black, they would not accept the fact that I am among my black fellows." In his account, Bheki highlights the cleavages of cross-racial friendships implicating class, as poor black African students are marginalised from the circle of friendships (Singh & Bhana, 2015). The empowered economic position held by other black African students on campus is constructed as relational and oppositional to Bheki, who inhabits a different economic background (poor working-class student). The economic background provides them (middle-class students) with the necessary tools to engage with ease in cross-racial friendships. Bheki explains that "they see

themselves as somebody … capable of talking to whites, just because they are in the same social status".

Historically, in South Africa, socio-economic power remained the preserve of whites. Therefore, establishing friendships with a white student on campus was an association of racialised power, as Bheki explains, also aligns to an elevated social status within the campus environment. This racialised power maintains the status quo normalised by the apartheid discourse yet, at the same time it displaces and erodes Bheki's agency to engage in friendships even within his own race group. The binary of poor working-class black African becomes polarised against rich middle-class black African, due to the changing socio-economic conditions that resulted from the demise of apartheid.

Also in evidence is how the asymmetrical relations of power are played out, catalysing imbalances of privilege and affluence separating dominant and marginal groups (Hook, 2006) fracturing same-race relations, as in Bheki's case. His testimony elucidates how the changing class positions on the campus environment work to rupture the monolithic construction of race illuminating how cross-racial friendships between a black African student and a white student on campus is naturalised within the hierarchical prism of class. Bheki's account also draws attention to the ways in which higher education students in contemporary South Africa are finding new expressions of identity as race intersects with class (Soudien, 2008). However Bheki also highlights how relations of domination and subordination are maintained, thus catalysing inequalities for poor black African students, despite the rapid diversification of the university environment. As noted by Keddie and Williams (2012), common experience in society has deprecated black working-class people in particular, with the potential to develop common themes of marginalisation. Thus, Bheki's experience of friendship on campus is structured and regulated by the imposition of class, which troubles the homogeneity of the black African identity (Singh & Bhana, 2015).

> **Fiona:** Our class is the one defining factor in forming friendships on campus, because if Jocelyn (African female) and I (African female) are friends and I am very, very poor – Jocelyn has all the money and stuff, and she's grown up with everything, and she can buy whatever she wants and I can't – it is going to be very hard for us. Although

we might have a similar culture and background and we might be the same race. But it is going to be very hard for us to first of all hang out together, because I am not going to be able to go to the places she hangs out at, because I am not going to be able to afford it (FG 6, focus group of mixed race and gender).

In Fiona's testimony, she also implicates class in perturbing friendships, even in ideal circumstances: "Although we might have a similar culture and we might be the same race … it is going to be very hard for us to, first of all, hang out together." In giving meaning to her racial identity, Fiona identifies with a version of blackness congruent with the past and economic deprivation (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006). She positions herself relative and oppositional to Jocelyn, drawing on her socio-economic and material realties to give meaning to race, which also regulates her friendships within same-race groups on campus: "I am not going to be able to go to the places she hangs out at, because I am not going to be able to afford it." Similarly, like Bheki, Fiona also adopts a negative attitude towards friendships within the university environment. In their testimonies, class is evinced as distorting and attenuating friendships in same-race relations. Class, therefore, occupies a hegemonic position in defining and framing friendship patterns within the university environment, and also complicates, and troubles how students give meaning to race on the campus. The economic disparity that marks the lives of Fiona and Bheki has negative outcomes for students, not only across races, but also in same-race relations, as class attenuates mixing on campus perturbing aspects of social cohesion on the university campus.

The discussion below features a group of students of mixed race (group of different races), who were friends from their first year on campus and who had attended the same school prior to entering university. This group discusses the conditions under which cross-racial friendships occur within the campus environment. Camilla is a white female, Nobhule is a black African female, Jama is a black African male and Vishaad an Indian male. All four students are part of a larger, mixed race and gender group on campus, and are in their second year of studies. I met them at the Coffee shop/white cafeteria (explained further in chapter four) and was intrigued by the camaraderie that this group shared.

Camilla: For me, I think it is educational background *cos,* like all of us here, I went to a Model C[13] school, so I think if a girl who went to a rural school came to our group and we crack jokes … she will have a hard time trying to catch them and fit in.

Nobhule: [For] most people that have a group (mixed race) like us, I am certain the black girls went to a private school or Model C.

Researcher: Why do you think this is so?

Jama: Well, and not to say that those who go to Model C schools or private schools have a higher intellect than those who don't, I am not saying that … there is a certain way of thinking that comes from there, with a Model C school, and, see, I don't want to imply that being from a rural school means you are less intelligent. That's not what I am saying, but I noticed that I can … speak about more intellectual things and crack more intellectual jokes with people who went to Model C schools, rather than with people who went to rural schools.

Researcher: Really? Why do you say so?

Vishaad: Well, it is also exposure to different things – like here, we are … in an urban environment; [we are] so media-oriented and technology-driven, so the things we talk about are often common experiences for all of us and it is much more multicultural and diverse in a Model C school, whereas in a township, it is only one culture and one race group – so you see what I am saying? For us being more multicultural and exposed to, like, international topics, is more like an everyday thing, so it is normal for us to talk about these things, but for someone who comes from a rural area and doesn't necessarily have that background, it is a lot more difficult to understand what is being spoken about and to be able to like contextualise it and relate to, so *ja*, this creates the difficulty. (FG 16, focus group of mixed race and mixed gender).

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[13] The term "model C" is still commonly used to describe former whites-only government schools.

A recently completed study by Buhle Zuma that examined social relations among students studying at the University of Cape Town in South Africa highlighted the fact that racially diverse friendship ties include only those of middle-class standing (Zuma, 2013). Similarly, statements by Camilla, Jama and Nobhule reflect that cross-racial mixing at university is catalysed and regulated by class, as students who attended former Model C schools are able to transcend the racial binary and forge friendships across race. Contrasting this, studies conducted at higher education institutions in the US found that wealthy students' friendship groups were racially and socio-economically homogenous (Aries, 2008; Espenshade & Radford, 2009). Model C schools, were previously advantaged schools, located in white suburban areas during apartheid. Thus, Model C schools engendered the medium through which cross-racial mixing was enabled within the campus environment, as elucidated by Camilla, Jama and Nobhule.

Black African students who attended Model C schools had the opportunity to insert themselves in middle-class values, as elucidated by both Jama – "I can do and speak about more intellectual things and crack more intellectual jokes with people who went to model C schools than with people who went to rural schools" – and Camilla, who said: "Most of us went to a model C school, so I think if a girl who went to a rural school came to our group and we crack jokes, I think she will have a hard time trying to catch them." Race is given meaning through the discourse of materiality, students from Model C schools are polarised against students from the rural areas, thus reproducing inequalities for poor working-class black African students. This inequality manifests not only in terms of the lack of cross-racial mixing, but also has negative academic outcomes for the student from the rural area. This is clear in Jama's statement: "I don't want to imply that being from a rural school means you are less intelligent, but I noticed that I can do and speak about more intellectual things and crack more intellectual jokes with people who went to Model C schools." The researcher Kessi (2013, p. 54) argues that stereotypes continue to persist, as "black students lack the necessary competencies to embark on a university education as they 'struggle to keep up'" and this opinion has been reflected in the group's conversation.

Vishaad draws on the discourse of consumerism to regulate cross-racial mixing in the nexus of global culture. He explains that a student from an urban area would have been exposed to

the global culture, juxtaposed against a black African student from a rural area, who did not attend a multiracial school, thus limiting exposure to the global culture, other races and prospects for socialisation. Camilla, Jama, Vishaad and Nobhule illuminate the hegemonic position that class occupies in defining and perpetuating apartheid-style relationships and friendships, with negative outcomes for social cohesion. However, these students also illuminate, through their accounts, that class provides fertile ground for germinating cross-racial mixing on campus and that class transcends race in their account.

5.3 Racial identities constructed through a discourse of taste: Fashion, the urban-rural divide and food choices:

Continuing with the first section of this chapter, I discuss how students give meaning to race through a discourse of taste, as shifts and continuities in class and race are formed in a crucible of youth culture, fashion and food. According to Kellner (as cited in Farber, 2010, p. 133), assert, "within the broader global arena of design, fashion and aesthetics, artefacts are frequently viewed as commodities through which various identity options (cultural, political and social) are adopted." The scholar Dolby's (2001) ethnographic research case study, conducted at Fernwood High School, an urban, multiracial institution in Durban, illuminated how pupils constructed their racial identity at school through a discourse of taste. Dolby's (2001) study evinced that racial identities were produced through an engagement with both local material forces and the effect of globalisation. Dolby's (2001) research illuminated that racial identity construction through a discourse of taste functioned as a site of conflict and tension, but its flexible and changing borders also generated a space for instances of border crossing and hybridity. According to Bourdieu (1992), cultural preferences – such as choice of clothing, leisure activities, food, entertainment and all matters of taste – are the product of upbringing and education. This is reflected in a statement made by Thandiwe, a black African female student who I met in the university residence.

> **Thandiwe:** So, sometimes, you kind of scared to approach people of high class because of your social, economic background and of who you are and how you dress. And if you look at how they (white and Indian students) dress, they have brand names and

stuff, and you would have just ordinary clothes, and you see that you can't fit in (II 3, Individual interview with African female).

According to Thandiwe, "high class" students are those who wear brand-name clothing on campus and bring race and class together in reproducing material inequalities that result in marginalising experiences for poor students within the campus environment. Motsemme (2003) argues that it is through performance and representation that the practice of adornment, within the context of brand-name clothing, becomes implicated in the process of remaking and maintaining social status and distinction. Racialised identities are given meaning through brand-name clothing as a marker of white and Indian racialised subjectivities. Thandiwe's lack of social and economic capital within the university environment functions to marginalise her among her peers because she cannot afford to wear brand-name clothing and thus does not "fit in" the campus environment. Thandiwe illuminates how hierarchical relations of domination and subordination are both reproduced and naturalised through a discourse of taste as she, an African female, comes to see herself as relative to other white and Indian students bringing class inequalities to the centre of student relations.

On the other hand, Vusiwe, also a black African female student in the final year of her undergraduate degree, lives at the university residence and has a mixed race group of friends. Vusiwe highlights the ruptures and continuities concerning the construction of racialised subjectivities as race is expressed through fashion and dressing on campus.

> **Vusiwe:** The same goes for those – okay, I'm going to say this – the same goes for those blacks coming from very, very rich families; they also associate together with the others. Even the way you are wearing it classifies you [according] to which group are you going to fall under. If you just wearing normal clothes, Mr Price ones, you definitely associate with others that are more or less like you, but those that are wearing those fancy, fancy clothes, they go together (FG 15, focus group of mixed race, mixed gender and international students from Africa).

Vusiwe draws upon her socio-cultural economic and material realities through the discourse of fashion to discursively construct a racial identity that marks her as "other" within the campus environment. Hall (1996, p. 17) argues that "identities are constructed within and not outside, discourse we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices". This also works within the campus environment, as wealthy black African students maintain their social status by wearing expensive clothing and associating with similar people, thus implicating class as troubling race. The combination of black, rich and fancy is juxtaposed against black, normal and ordinary. In both Vusiwe and Thandiwe's accounts, their agency is weakened and eroded against the rich white, Indian and black African students who wear brand-name clothing and fancy clothes, thus blurring racial divisions that have been normalised through the apartheid discourse. This, however, simultaneously further marginalises poor black African students, who remain ordinary while wearing Mr Price clothing.

However, race and class shifts, and continuities within the campus environment, were not only apparent through "brand-name clothing" but these shifts and continuities were also catalysed and distinguished by a discourse about the urban/rural binary discussed in the excerpt below by Nobhule, Cindy, Zwane, Simangele and Noluthando. Their conversations below elucidate the complex ways in which class works to construct racial subjectivities through dress and fashion that have been made distinct through the urban/rural binary. In the data below, Nobhule, Cindy and Zwane are African females living in an urban suburb in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. All three were friends at school before joining a larger, same-race group on campus. I met this group of students in the John Bews female residence on campus.

> **Nobhule:** You find … the other people who are from the rural areas … the minute you hear that, what immediately comes into your mind, having been born in an urban area, it is like they are stupid, they don't know anything, they are just way behind, you know, so like I know everything. Like what is it, I am more "waked up" than they are.

> **Cindy:** Uh, farm girl. Uh, farm girl.

> **Researcher:** What is a farm girl? Please explain that to me.

Zwane: It is a term that they (students) use for people from rural areas; people who you assume know nothing … someone who is not clued up on urban life.

Nobuhle: [Silence] Eish, you know, I have not been labelled a farm girl.

Zwane: I have not been labelled a farm girl. (FG 13, focus group of black African females only.)

Nobhule and Zwane reject the discursive constructions of blackness and locate their African identity within the urban-rural discourse, which describes urban black Africans as educated, wealthy, modern and advantaged (Durrheim, Mtose & Lyndsay, 2011), and rural black Africans as traditional, uneducated, poor and respectful (Durrheim et al., 2011). The urban-rural discourse offers polarised versions of African identity, as class is hierarchically ordered against race. Nobhule and Zwane position themselves as intelligent, knowing and modern because of their urban upbringing, as opposed to Africans who hail from a rural area, who are viewed as stupid and "way behind". Nobhule and Zwane locate themselves within the discourse of urban culture, which perpetuates a hierarchical prism influenced by class inequalities. These imbalances construct asymmetrical racial identities, as Nobhule and Zwane can differentiate between an African student who hails from an urban area and one who comes from a rural area, with racialised constructions that are juxtaposed in terms of being wealthy, modern and educated (urban construction) and traditional, uneducated, poor and respectful (rural construction).

Hence, the construction of an urban-rural black African identity is disrupted by the insertion of class, which fragments Zwane and Nobhule's African identity and indicates shifts and changes that have moved beyond apartheid constructions. The constructions that concern African identity are fragmented, as power inequalities become reproduced and class imbalances manifest to marginalise and create differences among same-race relations, as indicated by the students. Within the South African higher education context, studies note how students construct identities in tandem with apartheid constructions (Walker, 2005, 2006; McKinney, 2007a) and how class disturbs a simplistic understanding of race (Seekings, 2008; Bhana, 2014; Singh & Bhana, 2015).

Simangele and Noluthando, who I met at the female residence, are both black African students. They are in their second year of a Bachelor of Arts degree. They further expand on how females, particularly from the rural areas, are stereotyped, negatively labelled and policed through the discourse of fashion.

> **Simangele:** There are even names that other people [use to] refer to those people … for example … she said that if you are coming from a rural area … other people may label you by the way you dress … okay, I won't mention the name, but she looked at this other lady who was wearing this very long dress and, yes, she was just wearing her clothes in her own unique manner, and she was like: "That girl is a farmer." I'm like: "What's a farmer?" She was like: "No, a farmer is a person who comes from a rural area and dresses like *that* [author's emphasis]," and I'm like so shocked, and asked: "So how did you know?" and she was like: "No, you can see it by the way she is wearing those clothes [laughs out loud]." (FG 13, focus group of same race and same gender).

> **Researcher:** So how do dress and being from a rural place go together?

> **Noluthando:** Well, the way you are cultured from a rural place, you can see. The way you dress, look at me, even for the whites who are more privileged than others, they even see you for the way you are, walking or dressing, and if you [are] from the rural area, the girls will know. (FG 13, focus group of same race and same gender).

Simangele and Noluthando highlight how race and class intersect to regulate gender through the discourse of fashion, as urban students are pitched against rural students, thus marginalising student experiences. Simangele and Noluthando highlight how race and gender is given meaning distinguished through dress and the urban-rural binary as rural black African racialised subjectivities is pitched against urban black African subjectivities, with negative consequences for student relationships on campus. Their narrative highlights how the rural black African students "identify with the 'positions' to which they are summoned; as well as how they fashion, stylize, produce and 'perform'these positions" (Hall, 2000, p. 27) through the discourse of materiality. The scholar Collins (as cited in Savas, 2014, p. 509) argues that

the "interlocking systems of race, class and gender constitute a 'matrix of dominance', whereby a person experiences multiple disadvantages through combined identities". And we see how this is played out in the construction of the rural feminine identity as expressed by Simangele and Noluthando. Simangele and Noluthando position whiteness hierarchically, as the norm and standard by which all things should be measured; holding power in place as the "other" is marginalised and denigrated through a discourse on fashion. In addition, Motsemme (2003, p. 14) purports that within the context of South Africa, "beauty has been, and continues to be, violently raced or articulated through the medium of skin colour and hair texture". This is played out in the campus environment as Simangele and Noluthando highlight how "sexuality, gender and race/class are knitted together to produce the ideological power of whiteness" (Bhana & Pattman, 2010, p. 382) that holds racialised power in place.

However, students did not only draw on the discourse of fashion and dressing to give meaning to their racial subjectivities, as discussed above. What strongly features in the conversations that follow below is how food and food choices are implicated in constructing racialised subjectivities, with negative implications for social cohesion on campus.

In a study conducted by Bhana (2014), at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the coffee shop situated on the Howard College campus, was marked as an important site for the constitution of class, as it highlighted how the shifts in class and race impacted upon how students congregated on campus. In Bhana's (2014) study the "Italian coffee shop" epitomised power and social inequality, and was supported by economically advantaged white, Indian and black African students. According to Pattman (2007), whose study was also conducted at the same institution as Bhana (2014) positioned the Coffee shop as an elite upmarket place that served relatively expensive beverages and snacks. In the excerpt below, Mellisa and Yeshin, an Indian female and Indian male student respectively, are asked about the types of students who frequent the coffee shop. I met both Mellisa and Yeshin at the Coffee shop on separate occasions.

> **Mellisa:** The way people dress and carry themselves is a major point to note. You will notice in the coffee shop [that] everyone portrays this image that they are richer than you, that they have more than you. They are not the type of people who are laid-back,

like you would expect them to [be]. They drive the best cars and live in the best places because they seem to have it all and they seem to be the perfect kind of people … just how you would go to an area, like a rich area, and you go to a coffee shop or something and you see all these celebrities sitting there [and] you feel kind of weird being there, because you [are] not a celebrity (II 20, individual interview with Indian female).

Researcher: So who frequents the coffee shop – anyone, or any particular group?

Mellisa: It is anyone who can afford it only. It can be any race group; they must have the *moola* [money]. [She laughs out loud.]

And according to Yeshin:

Yeshin: Yes, you tend to find that coffee shop prices are a lot more expensive, probably because of the style of food they sell … students who feel they have more money than others, or they have this higher status than others, because they can't possibly buy a pie, because they have to buy a lasagne, an Italian pasta or a slice of pie or muffin, because of the status that they associate to themselves; those are the people who will go there (II 9, Individual interview with Indian male).

In Mellisa and Yeshin's accounts, the coffee shop epitomises class, but it also provides an avenue for the intersection of race and class – with only rich students of all races frequenting that space. Students who visit the shop are part of the middle-class elite, who display material status by wearing fashionable clothing and driving the best cars. According to Mellisa, they are accorded celebratory status. The coffee shop is therefore constructed, through the discourse of materiality, as a space where race and class intersect as a marker of exclusion between the middle-class elite and the rest of the poor students. It is also a space where power is produced and reproduced, as wealthy students gather to have coffee and meals, with the effect of marginalising poor students. In addition, the coffee shop is a place in which class is positioned hierarchically to race, as class supersedes race.

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Thus, the coffee shop serves to polarise the middle-class elite against the poor working class, implicating class and obscuring the racial binaries; race is obfuscated and class is foregrounded in students' constructions of identity. According to Yeshin, racial subjectivities are given meaning through a discourse of taste, to solidify their status on campus: "They have to buy a lasagne or slice of pie or muffin, because of the status that they associate to themselves." Yeshin and Mellisa elucidate how the coffee shop symbolises the shifting ground (Dolby, 2000) of race, as class is exerted to challenge the nationally defined identities of white, black and Indian students, who come together here.

However, Sibusiso – a black African male and a representative of the Students' Representative Council who I met in the black cafeteria – conflates taste with race and class, and describes how poor black African students are further marginalised on the campus.

> **Sibusiso:** Well first of all … inevitably people must go and buy something to eat but you must know there is a cafeteria that is used mostly by white students that is the MTB one, they do come to the other cafeterias, but the MTB one is mostly used by white students. You also have a cafeteria that is mostly used by Indian students … and you find as many black students using the 'Black cafeteria'. It doesn't mean they enjoy the food better … but also in terms of prices many of the students who are black are poor… because of their pockets they have to eat Amagwinya[14]… or whatever cheaper meals that is sold in the university [rather] than to buy coffee that is sold at R15 or R20. So those are some of the things that are divisive. So, its class, but we cannot run away from the fact that within the class there are racial lines, because, like I said, So, along the racial lines there is the class issue, which is also affecting them and it is divisive in nature. (II 18, Individual interview with African male).

Sibusiso draws upon his socio-economic and material realities to give meaning to his racial identity, highlighting how material inequalities play out within the campus environment and create tensions among students. Sibusiso's material realities within the campus environment dictate his choice of food or lack thereof. His account highlights the hierarchical ordering that

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[14] Amagwinya (Zulu name) and Vetkoek (Afrikaans name) is a traditional (Zulu) pastry filled with polony and cheese. Amagwinya is normally a very cheap meal.

structures student relationships and "encounters with race" (Bhana, 2016a), as class and race are asymmetrically arranged and result in catalysing and reproducing inequalities for poor black African students. Food choices within the campus environment are made in tandem with socio-economic status, as race and class are positioned hierarchically and asymmetrically, through the discourse of taste, with negative outcomes for social cohesion within the campus environment.

Amanda and Zethu further elaborate how food choices on campus are intimately connected to students' racial identities and socio-economic positions.

> **Amanda:** Obviously, when you try to fit in, it is not you I'm trying to be … we are being ourselves, like you come from home and bring whatever lunch you eat; you don't try to put pressure on your parents.

> **Researcher**: So how does fitting into the campus environment connect to food?

> **Zethu:** We share it (food), *cos*, like, somebody will come with like no money, but we *gonna* buy fries, we *gonna* buy bread, we *gonna* buy cake, we *gonna* break that among all eight of us … a packet of chips or, you know, no matter how small, no matter how big something [is] … we share it (FG 1, focus group of local black African females).

Amanda and Zethu are African female students who belong to the same race and gender group on campus. I met them outside the "black cafeteria" and they spoke of the plight of poor black African/working class students who purchase cheaper meals on campus to get by. Despite the low-ranking social standing of Amanda and Zethu in the university environment, they flout "trying to fit in" and, in so doing, occupy a space within the social setting of the university that allows them to exercise their agency and subvert the relations of domination and subordination that usually accompany a privileged economic status on campus. Amanda and Zethu have undergone a process that Weedon (1987, p. 111) describes when she writes: "Resistance to the dominant at the level of the individual subject is the first stage in the production of alternate forms of knowledge or where such alternates already exist, of winning

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individuals over to these discourses and gradually increasing their social power." Further, we see how Amanda and Zethu are able to shift their marginalised position on campus to one of emancipation and power through the discourse of taste.

The act of communal sharing of food that Amanda and Zethu refer to is aligned to the spirit of ubuntu, which is the capacity in African culture to "express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity in the interests of building and maintaining community with justice and mutual caring" (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 2). Thus, the spirit of ubuntu espouses community strength out of community support (Swanson, 2007). This group's act of sharing is an act of solidarity in their plight of poverty. Soudien (2011) argues that the youth are in complex engagement with a range of structures, both formal and informal, in order to produce newly emerging identities in the new South Africa. This requires a process of engagement and negotiation, which is cognizant of apartheid remnants. Further, we see how Amanda and Zethu apply this to their lived experiences on campus. Thus, despite their impoverished state, they are able to resist being pushed to the margins by displaying a strong sense of ubuntu, illuminating how they make sense of their lived experiences on campus.

SECTION TWO:

5.4 NAVIGATING LANGUAGE AND CLASS IN STUDENT INTERACTIONS: EMERGENT RACIAL IDENTITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduction:

The first section in this chapter highlighted the myriad ways in racial subjectivities were given meaning through class cleavages, and the discourse of fashion and food, in its examination of students' racial mixing and friendship patterns. This section of the chapter, discusses how class and language coalesce in the construction of racial subjectivities and how this proliferates in the daily lives of students within the campus environment. As discussed in chapter one, the largest intake of students at the institution under study is black African students who are predominately isiZulu speaking and who come from rural and urban areas. KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) is the second largest province in the country, with a total population of 11, 4 million citizens, of which 82, 5% are isiZulu speaking (Statistics South Africa, 2018).

Trends also reveal that the number of isiZulu speakers increased by five percent, from the period spanning 2011 to 2016, while English is the most influential out of the 11 official languages, but is only spoken by 12,5% of people in KZN (Statistics South Africa, 2018).

Bhana (2014) argued that language competence in English for black African students is linked to student success at UKZN, intertwined within the dynamics of class and how relations of domination and subordination are reproduced with the deployment of language as a powerful tool, leading to the marginalisation of the disadvantaged African student and reproduction of power inequalities. With virtually no desegregation in African schools and limited access to English, particularly for students outside of the urban contexts, power inequalities are reproduced, with "negative academic outcomes" (Bhana, 2014, p. 360). Steyn (2016) further argues that black students entering higher education in the country come from communities and schools exposed to only one language, thus presenting challenges both academically and socially in the higher education environment. The university at which this study is located was the first institution in the country to implement a language policy in 2014, which mandated that all students need to pass a prescribed isiZulu module in order to meet graduation requirements (Rudwick, 2015; Swartz, Mahali, Moletsane, Arogundade, Khalema, Cooper & Groenewald, 2018).

The data below is supplied by students Joe, Simangele, Siphiwe and Sizwe, who I met in the academic space of the lecture venues during my periods of observation. They are a homogenous group of African males from working-class backgrounds who attended previously disadvantaged rural schools in Durban. This group of students are studying towards a Bachelor of Arts degree. They met for the first time upon entering the campus environment. The discussion below relates to how language and class are implicated in the construction of racial identities on the campus environment.

> **Joe:** Okay, I wanted to say something about language, *ay*, as the university is being in, sort of, this transformational stage, [with] Africans leading, but, *uh*, I want to speak on the issue of language. Why precisely [is] because there is still this stigma that exists, not only among students but even academics and management, that the minute you speak English fluently, then it means that your intellectuality is at a higher level. There

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is still that assumption that there is a correlation between your language and the way you think and I am saying that precisely because most of the students here in particular are African students … who are from those disadvantaged schools. It tells us … that language is going to be a problem and how to speak English properly, so if there is someone from Durban North who speaks fluent English, it oppresses those that are not good in English and, really, how then do we make friends across races?

Researcher: So what is it exactly about language and friendships then?

Simangele: Well, there can also be the class issue here with language, because if I come from a very disadvantaged background, your capabilities are limited; maybe you can't even type, you can't use a computer, you can't even write a proper sentence in English, so it is a real struggle and if you are from a rural place, there are certain ways of carrying yourself that may differ from urban students. So it's a struggle to make friends then.

Siphiwe: Class is confidence … [having] confidence in themselves (African students) and the knowledge they know, so basically they could be, *ja*, they could be there at varsity … [with] confidence in portraying themselves and carrying themselves with other students, so it could be the whole language factor that maybe they don't speak well, so they doubt themselves – although they have the skills and the knowledge and whatnot – but since they can't convey themselves fluently in English, they lack confidence in themselves.

Sizwe: I think it is very hard to make friends of another race, because you have to stick to one language and … for me it is very hard. I will have to go back to my mother tongue and speaking in Zulu so … [a] friend of mine who is of another race wouldn't get what I want to say clearly, because sometimes English is not our first language, so you go wrong at times (FG 12 focus group of black African males only).

Joe, Simangele, Sizwe and Siphiwe intimately connect class and language to their socio-economic and cultural material realities, which continues to mark and shape their racial

subjectivities in the present context of the campus environment in their inability to mix across racial boundaries. For these students, isiZulu is their first language, having come from rural schools in KZN, where Zulu is the predominant language of instruction, but formal written work and tests are conducted in English. The testimonies of Joe, Simangele, Sizwe and Siphiwe elucidate how the dominance of English within the campus environment shapes student friendship patterns, with negative outcomes for cross-racial mixing and friendships. Similarly, a study conducted by Parkinson and Crouch (2011), at an English medium higher education institution in Durban, used participants who were registered for an access programme at the institution. The study concluded that the use of isiZulu was crucial to the participants' construction of a Zulu identity. English was used instrumentally as a means to get by at the institution, but was viewed negatively as the language of the colonisers. Initial studies conducted at higher education institutions discovered that students who came from less advantaged schools had a greater inclination towards the use of their mother tongue within the campus environment (Rudwick, 2004; Kapp, 2004). However, in contrast to research by Parkinson and Crouch (2011), Ngcobo's (2014) study, which took place at a tertiary education institution in the country, revealed that the use of the mother tongue language in the academic domain was viewed in a negative light, while the use of English was seen positively, as a language attached to socio-economic benefits.

Joe, Simangele and Sizwe demonstrate their orientation to utilise their mother tongue, due to confidence and familiarity with the language. Breier (2010, p. 60) argues that due to the historical legacy of the South African political and education landscape, "blacks achieved the worst quality and least financed education and were – and still are – the poorest in spite of a growing elite". Joe acknowledges the disadvantages of the historical legacy of apartheid's race-based education (Hurst, 2015). He also highlights the perceived assumption within the campus environment that fluency in English meant that you were more intelligent. This links to the material realities that discursively construct racialised identities. Van Rooyen and Jordaan (2009) assert that the palpable effects of apartheid discourses continue to persist as evidenced by English second-language learners who struggle academically due their weak grounding in the English language.

However, Joe indicates that most of the African students on campus are from rural disadvantaged schools, implicating language and class in the construction of racial identities on campus. It is these students who are challenged, as English occupies a hegemonic status on the campus environment, while isiZulu has a marginal status; these differences carve out the power relations that are etched in the intersection of race, class and language. Joe's testimony elucidates the difficulty and real struggle that black African students, who are second-language English speakers, confront in their lived experiences on campus. It is clear that English is a necessary marker enabling cross-racial mixing and lack of English proficiency has negative outcomes for students who are not positioned within this hierarchy. A study conducted by Seabi, Seedat, Khoza-Shangase and Sullivan (2014) located at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa undertook to explore the perceptions and challenges that students faced in the context of teaching and learning in a transformed institution. In total 194 students from the departments of humanities and health sciences were recruited to participate in a survey research design. The study findings illuminated that English second-language African students were academically challenged in the university environment. It further highlighted that white students, who did not speak indigenous African languages, experienced challenges in providing services to their clients.

Simangele, too, forms a link between class, race and language when he describes his marginalised position on campus. He highlights how the material realities of his background play out in his ability to engage in cross-racial friendships, due to the language barrier, and also describes class as central to the construction of his African identity – as his lack of access to a computer and incompetence in English is due to his socio-economic status of being poor and black (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006). In the case of Sizwe, he implicates the discourse of language in positioning himself as a marginalised student at the university, as he finds it challenging to make friends and maintain friendships across race, due to his incompetence in the English language. Hunter (2010a) notes that increasingly class mobility cannot be dismissed from further exacerbating the marginalisation of poor black Africans from the rural and townships areas, who do not have the economic means to send their children to predominantly resourced English-medium schools. Through the discourse of language, power relations are maintained as English occupies a hegemonic position. In the case of Siphiwe, cross-racial mixing and friendships becomes strained due to lack of confidence in

communicating in English with students on campus. Siphiwe, Joe, Sizwe and Simangele draw upon socio-cultural economic realities and their marginalised position in relation to the use of English when constructing their racial identities.

However, there are conditions under which class and language coalesce within the campus environment in fostering cross-racial friendships. The data below elucidates how black African students' residential location, as elaborated by Hunter (2010a), provides them with the opportunity to insert themselves within middle-class values by accessing the English language as a power investment to negotiate cross-racial friendships at university.

According to Hunter (2010a), contemporary South Africa has been characterised by a class shift, with a greater tendency for the affluent black middle class to send their children to well-resourced English-medium schools outside African townships. The children benefit from attending these schools and one noticeable advantage is gaining competency in the English language. This simultaneously allows them to insert and locate themselves within middle-class values. Black students who are competent in English are part of a growing feature of South African townships, where there is mass movement of learners who can afford to pay fees at multiracial institutions as they access English-medium schools in former white, Indian and coloured areas (Hunter, 2010a). Below is an extract from my interview with Pearl, an African female who is in her final year of Architecture. I met Pearl in the John Bews female residence.

> **Pearl:** When I arrived here and I am just a tad well-spoken than her [African female] and I sound a bit different all of a sudden, they [white and Indian students] want to talk to you and be friends. So I think language, because if you grew up in KwaMashu and Umlazi, trust me, your English is not going to be like someone who lives in Westville (II 15, Individual interview African female).

Pearl, an African female who grew up in Westville – a previously wealthy, white suburb in Durban – is able to negotiate friendships with relative ease, due to her fluency in English. She draws upon the urban-rural discourse to naturalise her competence in English, situating English in terms of wealthy middle-class values gained from her urban upbringing. Rudwick

(2008) argues that among black people in South Africa, there is a clear correlation between socio-economic position and fluency in English, which is evident in Pearl's construction of her racial identity. In her account, KwaMashu and Umlazi – both township areas in Durban previously designated for poor black African working-class people – is polarised against Westville, an urban residential area in Durban that had been designated during the apartheid era as a place for white people. Rudwick's (2004) study in Umlazi found that language usage and attitudes were deeply embedded in the cultural system of Umlazi society. Pearl uses her confidence in the use of English as a tool to negotiate friendships with other (white, Indian and coloured) students within the context of the university. She is able to insert herself and identify with middle-class values by drawing upon her socio-economic and material realities in constructing her racial identity within the campus environment. Pearl's testimony further illuminates the complexity of race, class and language, which troubles the homogenous construction of an African identity as poor and black.

Accounts by Sithembile and Siphiwe further discuss this complexity of the intersection of class and language in the construction of racial identities and how this plays out in the campus environment. Sithembile (female) and Siphiwe (male), who are both African students and belong to a same race group on campus, use the metaphor of a "coconut" or "oreo", which features strongly in the conversation below:

> **Sithembile:** Some people say that a coconut is a person who lives in a certain area, maybe like a white suburban area, maybe like Umhlanga or something. The coconuts are also those black kids who went to highly expensive schools and then you hang out with only white people. They (Africans) speak only English, then the people call them (African) a coconut.

> **Researcher**: So, being labelled a coconut – is it good or bad as an African student?

> **Siphiwe:** Well, I have been labelled a coconut, I figure, from my schooling days, because I had friends of all races, then when you get to campus, and you socialise with other groups, [is that] notion that you are a coconut follows you … like they (African students) will say: 'Why are you hanging out with them [white people and all the

'other'] people?'. So you are labelled and accused of not 'conforming' to being a Zulu … (FG 8, focus group of same race and mixed gender).

Hunter (2010a) asserts that with shifting racial positions necessitated by changing class dynamics, a certain identity "emerged" among African students, who were identified as more affluent and privileged. According to Distiller and Steyn (2004), hybridity seeks to account for what occurs when cultures meet in the context of unequal power relations. The performance of hybrid identities is necessary in order to retain the advantages gained from "racial" categorisation. Pattman (2007) asserts that the use of the term "coconut", as with Fanon's "Black skins/White masks", was used as a metaphor for imagined black identification with white. Thus, the term coconut is employed to label African students who resonate with elements of a white identity. Being labelled a coconut on campus resonates with privilege and power made possible by the changing and shifting class positions of a few black African students. The assimilation (Dolby, 2001) of a white identity works in tandem with the apartheid construction of this identity being aligned with economic power and elevated social status, which works to maintain the status quo on campus (Singh & Bhana, 2015). According to Erasmus (2010), the use of race, reconfigured by contemporary history, enables young South Africans to name someone a coconut when they experience a disjuncture between appearance and social habits.

Siphiwe gives meaning to his racial identity by drawing on the label of a "coconut". According to research by Ropers-Huilman, Winters and Enke (2013, p.29), whiteness became a construct, for those who identified with it, in order to "gain and maintain socio-economic power". However, in the case of Siphiwe, his racial construction as a coconut at university is met with tension and stigmatisation by other black African students, who ask him: "Why are you hanging out with them?". Vincent (2008) asserts that within the post-apartheid context although opportunities exist for racial integration these are policed by ones very own peers to conform within racialised strictures in maintaining racial authenticity. Similarly, Siphiwe is also policed for not maintaining 'racial authenticity' through language. Thus, Siphiwe, whose racial identity is constructed through the label of a coconut, is criticised by his fellow African students for associating with whites and other groups. His racial construction as a coconut within the campus environment is met with tension, which subverts the power relations held

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with his fellow black African friends, who police and regulate Siphiwe's cross-racial mixing. This clarifies how race, language and class fragment the essentialism of identity construction. Siphiwe also elucidates that being labelled a coconut implies that he rejects an authentic Zulu identity. In applying Butler (1988) to Siphiwe's construction of his racial identity, Siphiwe's performance of a coconut on campus is a rejection of an 'authentic' African identity. This implicates the fluidity of race, which cannot be fixed and pegged to the essences of black and white.

In the data presented by Tintswalo, an African female student who I met during observations at the lecture venues, it is revealed that the construction of the "coconut" or "oreo" serves to exacerbate the polarisation of an African identity, as working-class black African students are pitched against middle-class black African students. Tintswalo states how the perceived privileged status of being a coconut on campus is met with contempt, resentment and scorn, which, in turn, negatively affects student relations.

> **Tintswalo:** Even in the black community itself, here at Howard College – yes, we are all black, but you will find students who try to change who they are by, like, literally changing the way they talk and then [they] talk like a white person, like: 'Oh my gosh, guys, did you see that event last night?' [Laughs] So that is really how they talk, just to fit in, and then we, who like act normal, will be like: 'Why is she doing that? Like, please, come on now.' A coconut. Yes, a coconut – so it is just in a lot of cases (II 14, Individual interview with African female).

According to Tintswalo, "the way they talk and then [they] talk like a white person" reaffirms language as a key element in consolidating the construction of a coconut. Competency in English, which is key to student success at UKZN, is linked to class (Bhana, 2014). According to Tintswalo, the perceived investment in the use of English to epitomise a position of power among other black students in this particular context is viewed negatively – "[Laughs] So that is really how they talk, just to fit in …" – and met with ridicule and scorn by fellow African students who resist and contest trying to fit into middle-class values in the university context. Thus, to other African students, the use of English is not necessarily a power investment and serves to accentuate the divide between same-race relations within the context of the

university environment (Singh & Bhana, 2015). The question: "Why is she doing that?" crystallises the disconnection between the African working class and the African middle class, with same-race mixing being disturbed in the campus environment. Other scholars have elucidated how English continues to enjoy a privileged position among second-language speakers (Dalvit & De Klerk, 2005; De Kadt, 2005). Tintswalo's use of the coconut label draws our attention to the value placed on the African language in constructing a racialised identity (McKinney, 2007b).

> **Tintswalo:** Today in class, we had an argument with this girl. She came from nowhere. She has not been attending class and she comes out and says (in a highly coconut voice), I really don't understand why I am paying for field trips (she is black) [pause]. Everyone just switched off and I am, like, they didn't want to hear what she was complaining about, but it was still not valid – the content – because I listened to her … and then there were people just mumbling *aibo indaba eina kulama fane gala mhlungo* ["why is she talking like a white"] and immediately that cut her off from everyone in the class who were calling her a comrade. So immediately, when that sort of thing comes into play, it is like really divisive. It's like changing who you are. You are a black person and you don't need to speak English like to the highest level. Just be yourself, don't impress anyone. As black people, we always try to impress ourselves and make ourselves known as, okay, I am this black girl from the suburbs and I am not like you, so that is how we are as black people. (II 14, Individual interview with African female).

Tinstswalo constructs her authentic African identity by rejecting the use of English as a medium to get by on campus. She strongly expresses her agency by asserting her racial identity, which is held in tension with a white identity through the discourse of language, thus subverting the power relations on campus. Tintswalo's conversation elucidates how the "coconut", whose construction is one of privilege and power, is marginalised and denigrated in this context. Hence, class inequalities are epitomised, as the "coconut" is juxtaposed against African working-class students with negative outcomes. The scholar Keohane (as cited in MacNaughton, 2005) postulates that poststructuralists' views on knowledge compel people to contest static relations of power in the refusal to naturalise such relations, as doing

so would be an attempt to accept these relations as part of the normative existing order. This can also be applied to Tintswalo, who refutes the naturalisation of the use of English on the campus environment. She demonstrates how language and class is used to regulate the construction of racial identities. Weedon (1987, p.21) argues that "language is where actual and possible forms of social organisation and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed". This can be seen as Tintswalo reaffirms her African identity through the use of isiZulu to mediate and negotiate her relationships within the campus environment.

Lorraine and Lungile are second-year black African females who are part of a mixed-race[15] group on campus. I met Lorraine and Lungile at the black cafeteria. The conversation below illuminates how race is policed and given meaning through discourses of language and culture.

> **Lorraine:** I think it is because of judgements like I used to have [of] a white friend. If she had to come to my community, how my black community [would] treat me [was by thinking]: "Oh no, she wants to be white." And especially, let's say if we travelling by taxi and you speak English, then you are judged [and] they call you a coconut: "Why you trying to be white and why you are trying to show that you are more educated than the others?" Now we are afraid of being judged. That is why we group into black and we will sit with black; if I had to sit with you and go with you to class, some people will say: "Oh, she is trying to be white. She doesn't like her culture and race." (FG 18, focus group of mixed race and same gender).

> **Researcher:** So, do the South African black students on campus speak Zulu and what are the difficulties if they choose to speak Zulu and you want to speak English, yet you are both African – are there tensions?

> **Lungile**: You are considered a coconut. You get branded immediately. There are divisions within us too, because the people who speak Zulu really well … [think] you

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[15] Apartheid categorisations of black African, Indian, white and coloured.

don't know how to speak Zulu well if you speak English. The people who speak Zulu are going: "Why don't you know how to speak Zulu?" And immediately they assume that you don't know about your culture. It boils down to you not being black enough and you are [thinking] like: What is black enough? What is black because I speak English well? What is black? What does it take to be black? (FG 18, focus group of mixed race and same gender).

In the case of Lorraine and Lungile, the construction of an authentic African identity is given meaning through the use of isiZulu as a means of communication. Lorraine's attempts at cross-racial mixing is policed and regulated through the discourse of language, elucidating how black African students who choose to speak English are "othered" and marginalised, and the hegemony of English subverted. Both Lungile and Lorraine confirm that being labelled a coconut is due to their competence in the use of English. These findings differ from the scholars Bangeni and Kapp's (2007) whose study explored the shifting language attitudes of black African students at a historically white institution in South Africa. Bangeni and Kapp (2007) findings associated a coconut with class and accent and not about language. Lungile and Lorraine illuminate the negative repercussions that confront students who attempt to use English and engage in cross-racial relationships implicating negative consequences for social cohesion. Rudwick's (2004, 2008) research also illuminated that the use of isiZulu was key to a Zulu identity.

The conversation below, between Mbali, Noluthando and Thokozo, further illustrate how the class and language nexus intersect in how race is given meaning on the campus. All three participants are African females who are part of a larger, homogenous, mixed-gender group of friends on campus. I met this group outside the lecture venue. It is evident from this group's conversation, that the use of isiZulu disrupts the status quo of the hegemony of English on the campus.

Mbali: I think some black people don't acknowledge being black.

Noluthando: I think most black girls have been brought up in a black environment in the same way.

Thokozo: In the townships, we were brought up in a way that you were told that if you spoke English … you are black and you will *never* be white and that's it [author's emphasis].

Mbali: *Ja*, typically they (African students) look at you differently when they come and they speaking township language and you come and you are busy with your English, and then they come and look at you like *ay yay yay, no*.

Thokozo: It is really hard and really uncomfortable to speak English on campus. (FG 8, group of same race, mixed gender).

In the account presented by Mbali, Noluthando and Thokozo, language is utilised to police race in referring to the discourse on township language, which is polarised against English. In this account, rejecting the use of English is a power investment and affirms their African identity. Thus, in these students' lives and within the campus environment, tension exists between township language and English. However, the use of the former subverts power relations and perturbs the binary relationship that exists between white and black, and English and isiZulu.

"It is really hard and really uncomfortable to speak English" is an assertion of this group's African identity and a demonstration of their agency in their choice of language. These students' accounts also signal to the ways in which context and socio-cultural and material realities in their lives have repercussions on the campus. Thus, the rejection of English in this account is also a marker of an authentic African identity. Thus, language is conflated with race and class in maintaining the "coherence" of an "authentic" African identity. A poststructuralist definition of identity views language as central in constructing ourselves and our subjectivity (Weedon, 1987). Thokozo's negative opinion about the use of English on campus is due to the challenges and difficulties that she faces with English. This resonates with the findings of Nkosi's (2014) study, conducted at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Painter's (2006) study, conducted at a public secondary school in an urban area in the Eastern Cape in South Africa, sought to explore learners' accounts of multilingualism and language

diversity at the school, and found that the English language was constructed as universal and accessible to all. However, in these students' accounts, the use of English does not occupy a hegemonic position as a universal language (Painter, 2006), because it is akin to being white: "If you speak English … you are black and you will never be white." This articulation is significant and salient, and demonstrates the making of the African identity through the rejection of English as a universal language – and hence the rejection of a white identity. According to Steyn (2004), whiteness, constructed during the era of colonial domination was key to the processes of power and oppression, continues to shape post-colonial South Africa. The use of township language, juxtaposed against the use of the English language, which is attributed to being white in this context, subverts the power of "whiteness and dislodges it from a position of authority", as discussed by Steyn (2004, p. 143).

However, Robin and Donna discuss how the shifts in language within the campus environment create tensions among students, as the hegemonic status of English becomes displaced and troubled. Robin and Donna are white female students in their second year of their Humanities degrees and I met and spent time with them in the social space of the coffee shop. Below is the conversation that I conducted with them about language, race and student friendships.

> **Robin**: What is odd is that they [black African females] actually think they [black Africans] are better than us, where if we make an effort to talk to them, they will just ditch us or ignore us.

> **Researcher:** What do you mean? Could you please explain?

> **Donna:** They just speak Zulu only and it's, I mean, that is irritating because you will know that they are talking about you. You will know that two black girls are talking about you and they will look and continue to speak Zulu and you will know that they are talking about you.

> **Robin:** They will purposely ignore you. I know it's weird, but Afrikaans, even though they would probably understand it … but I wouldn't do that and use my language as revenge (FG 16, mixed gender and mixed race.)

Robin and Donna illuminate the white-black binary in the deployment of language used within the campus environment. In their account, the use of isiZulu by black African females, which they view as "irritating", occupies a hegemonic position in breaking the hierarchical relations of superiority (white) and inferiority (black) that were established during apartheid. The African females, through the deployment of isiZulu, are able to erode the power naturalised by the construction of a white identity, held by Robin and Donna, thus subverting the power relations of the white female pitched against the African female and exposing the active agency of the African females. According to Rasshokha (2010), acquiring specific linguistic resources can be utilised to position oneself and to manifest or reshape identity. Bhana (2014) notes how language is employed as a strategy to negotiate power and entrench feelings of disempowerment. However, in this account the use of isiZulu is deployed as a tactic to usurp the power that has historically been accorded to whites. Robin and Donna illustrate how the deployment of isiZulu is used to subvert power relations within the campus environment inadvertently troubling racialised power. Weedon (1987, p. 21) points out that "language is the medium through which possible forms of social organisation and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested" and we see how this is portrayed through the use of isiZulu.

However, the use of isiZulu is not only restricted to black and white student relationships but permeates across races, as Sudhika, an Indian female in her first year of a Bachelor of Social Science degree, notes. Sudhika is part of a mixed-race and same gender group on campus. I met her during my observation of the lectures and she approached me (perhaps because I am Indian, like her) and this is how I came to interview her. Yeshin is an Indian male who I met at the Coffee shop. The excerpts below from their interviews explain how language is used on campus.

> **Sudhika:** That's another thing, not only Afrikaners, but I have noticed it with some black students and the different races here on campus … use their language as revenge to get at someone and us Indians will never get why blacks talk in Zulu, like they will be talking normally, and then as soon as you enter a room or place, they will start talking in Zulu so no one … understands why. Then they burst out laughing and they

laughing, but they not looking at you, but you can just feel that they are laughing at you. (FG 18, mixed race same gender.)

Yeshin: Or they will speak in native tongue, Zulu or Xhosa, because they know very well we know [a] little of it, but not in depth [in order] to make sense of what they saying (II 9, Individual interview, Indian male).

At issue here and similar to the accounts presented by Donna and Robin, is the deployment of isiZulu as a strategy to maintain distant relations, with negative implications for cross-racial mixing in the university environment. Sudhika, too, says she feels that the deployment of isiZulu as a means of communication on campus by African students is used as a tool of revenge. Sudhika illustrates how she is marginalised through the discourse of language, as the use of isiZulu serves as a power investment on campus to divide race groups, with negative implications for student friendships and social cohesion. Similarly, Yeshin, who is an Indian male, reaffirms that the ethnic languages, as deployed by African students – in this case, isiZulu and Xhosa – are used as a strategy to distance themselves (African) from any possibility of mixing, as students of other race groups on campus do not understand these ethnic languages. Robin, Donna, Sudhika and Yeshin illustrate how the use of isiZulu and Xhosa occupies a dominant discourse in the lives of the students and how language presents an opportunity to usurp power relations, thus engendering feelings of disempowerment with marginalizing experiences for 'other' students. Language and class is therefore intimately connected and implicated in the ways in which race is given meaning troubling relations for social cohesion in this instance.

A study by the scholars Swartz, Mahali, Moletsane, Arogundade, Khalema, Cooper and Groenewald (2018) examines the struggles of higher education students at eight institutions in South Africa. Swart et al., (2018) argue that language is deeply embedded in the historical and political landscape of South Africa and highlight how students' use of Afrikaans is used as a tool for marginalising and disadvantaging black African students. However, Robin, Donna, Sudhika and Yeshin in their accounts illuminate how the deployment of isiZulu is used as a tool to ostracise and marginalise other races within the campus environment, which is contrary to other studies conducted at other tertiary institutions in the country. This

underscores the lack of support for the employment of African languages at higher education institutions (Bangeni & Kapp, 2007; Verhoef & Venter, 2008; Moodley, 2009).

5.5 Conclusion:

This chapter discussed how racial subjectivities were constructed through the intersection of class and language, and the possible implications for cross-racial mixing and student friendships within the campus environment. It further illuminated the nuanced mediums through which cross-racial mixing and friendship ties were forged in the university environment, drawing upon various discourses invoked by discussions with students. Class is strongly implicated in fracturing student relations, thus reproducing inequalities that exist in tension with attempts to transform institutions of higher education, using the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, as a particular case. According to Chetty (2014), the issue of social class should not be dismissed in structuring racialised experiences of higher education students, which is a position that is also supported by the data I have presented in this chapter. It emerged from discussions held with selected students that class maintains the boundaries of race. It regulates cross-racial mixing, while simultaneously complicating it. The complexity of the construction of racial identities is strongly shaped and influenced by socio-cultural, economic and material realities. Dolby (2000) argues that the construction of racialised identities is situated within the interplay of history, politics, the economy and culture.

Thus apartheid discourses continue to position and polarise wealthy students, who emerge from previously wealthy white suburbs, against poor black African students from poor, working-class urban townships and rural areas. However, class further complicates student mixing within same-race relations, as nuanced versions of blackness are simultaneously resisted and accepted within same-race relations. Further, this chapter elucidated how the racialised power of privileged and economically advantaged students was still a marker of the apartheid discourse fracturing student interactions within the campus environment. Race was also given meaning through language, with negative repercussions for student interactions on campus.

While continuities of old-fashioned racial identities were in evidence, some shifts were also observed. In their accounts, the students revealed that isiZulu was deployed to usurp the hegemony of English on campus. Language was also complicated by the insertion of class as alternate versions of a black African identity, such as the "coconut" or "oreo", were constructed. This resulted in exacerbating student tensions within the campus environment, with negative outcomes for social cohesion.

This chapter also elucidated that the binary between urban and rural contexts troubled and complicated the ways in which racial subjectivities were given meaning, thus illuminating the fluidity and complexity of race and race relations on the campus environment.

CHAPTER 6

SEXUALITY, GENDER AND CULTURE

"Young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex are more likely to hide their sexual orientation until they graduate from high school and leave home to study at university or other institutions. In most African countries, these institutions are invariably located in urban centres. Leaving their homes before "coming out", these young people hope their orientation would be less conspicuous in the urban cities and people will be more tolerant. In this way, they will be able to express their [non-heteronormative identities](#) as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender or intersex (LGBTI). But they find that their tickets to freedom are not as they envisioned.

Is it really freedom at last?

Gay students see universities as spaces of intellectual freedom and believe these institutions are progressive and inclusive spaces – unlike their communities back home. This rural-urban migration of ["going out-before coming out"](#) has benefits and pitfalls. Research shows institutions are often an extension of some of the [general population's](#) homophobic attitudes. Their fellow students are homophobic and discriminate against them in their residences, on the sport fields, during lectures and when they access other support services [on campus](#). Their dormitories are hostile with heterosexual students often violently attacking, ridiculing and forcing them out of [residences](#). University administration[s] dismiss complaints of harassment, prejudice and [discrimination from students,](#) and campus-based health care workers perpetuate discrimination by denying the students services. Health care workers also offer "corrective counselling". In one South African university, the negative attitudes even come from students who attend the anti-stigma and **discrimination campaigns.** *Research shows the homophobic practices are influenced by selective readings of religious scriptures and particular interpretations of African culture".*

(http://theconversation.com/gay-students-still-not-welcome-at-south-african-universities-42778, 2015)

6.1 INTRODUCTION:

I begin this chapter with an online editorial that featured in *The Conversation* in 2015, on experiences and attitudes towards gay and lesbian students that are prevalent at some South African higher education institutions, indicative of a pernicious and endemic hetero-normative patriarchal culture that is deeply steeped in inequalities. Swartz et al., (2018, p. 60) argue that "university environments are proven incubators for patriarchy, and places that allow homophobia and sexism to flourish …". South African researchers have documented the experiences of marginalisation and alienation of higher education students who do not conform to heteronormative identities (Department of Education, 2008; Msibi, 2009, 2012; Harrison & John, 2012; Msibi & Jagessar, 2015; Jagessar & Msibi, 2015; Clowes, Shefer, Fouten, Vergnani & Jacobs, 2009; Collins, Loots, Meyiwa & Mistrey, 2009; Bennet, 2009). However, insufficient attention has been given to homophobic experiences and the impact that these identities have on the learning experiences and outcomes of students (Swart et al., 2018).

In the previous chapter of this thesis, I discussed how race was understood and given meaning in the nexus of class and language within particular discourses rooted to students' socio-cultural, historical and material contexts. I argue that class and language are important constructs through which racialised subjectivities are produced, reproduced, performed and contested troubling issues of social cohesion on campus. In addition, the previous chapter illuminated the nuanced mediums through which cross-racial mixing and friendship ties were invoked and resisted on campus, drawing upon various discourses. The chapter highlighted how class and language were strongly implicated in constructing racial identities and in fracturing and coalescing student friendships and cross-racial mixing. This troubled an essentialist version of the homogenous racialised construction, yet simultaneously challenged, resisted, produced and reproduced discourses that spoke to possibilities of social cohesion on this campus.

In further understanding the issues around gender expression and sexuality, the Soudien Report illuminated that homophobia had been raised as a concern at higher education institutions (Department of Education, 2008). However, insufficient attention was paid to this, as the core mandate of the report was to investigate racism within higher education

(Department of Education, 2008). Raising this as a concern, Msibi (2013) argued that issues around transformation in South African higher education tended to circulate around race and gender, to the neglect and detriment of other forms of discrimination, while there remained a dearth of research investigating the experiences of same sex identifying students. According to Hodes (2017), 2016 witnessed a resurgence of vocal condemnation against homophobia, misogyny and other forms of bigotry related to gender and sexuality that emerged from the national student movements at some South African universities (outlined in chapter one). Studies by Bhana (2012), Francis & Msibi (2011), and Msibi (2009) argue that in South Africa at present, homophobia is, largely driven by the fear of non-conformity to the heterosexual discourse, which pervades across all identity categorisations. Heteronormativity, as elucidated by Jackson (2006), is a concept that is fixed within normal sexual practices, rendering a normal way of life. Emerging research findings within South African higher education institutions have positioned same-sex or gay and lesbian student experiences within higher education negatively and adversely, often due to their deviation from a heteronormative sexual identity (Graziano, 2004; Department of Education, 2008; Msibi, 2013).

In order to understand issues around homophobia and heteronormative discourses which are troubling the transformation mandate of higher education institutions (Department of Education, 2008), in this chapter I give primacy to the ways in which gender and sexual subjectivities are given meaning within particular discourses as a lived reality of student experiences on campus. Hall (1996, p. 17) argues that "identities are constructed within and not outside, discourse we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices". In this chapter, I utilise select accounts of data obtained from male and female, local and international students to illuminate the ways in which gender and sexual subjectivities are given meaning and the possible implications for social cohesion. I deploy an eclectic approach to the theories that inform this chapter. In particular, I deploy Connell's (1987, 1995) theories of masculinity and Judith Butler's (1990, 1993) performance theories to assist me in understanding how the participants' genders and sexual subjectivities are constructed and enacted within particular discourses. The data will be read in a variety of poststructuralist ways as I deploy Foucault's (1980) notion of the subject as continuously created, recreated, resisted and produced within

networks of power. Thus, I seek to understand how power is enacted, reproduced, contested and negotiated as students give meaning to their sexual and gender identity as they are positioned through discourses (McHoul & Grace, 1993; Burr, 2003; McNaughton, 2005, Hall & Du Gay, 1996).

This chapter elaborates on the following themes:

- Expressions of homophobia: Culture, Religion and Tradition
- Normative gender ordering: Masculinity Regulated
- Narratives of change: Disruptions and Regulations

6.2 Expressions of homophobia: Culture, Religion and Tradition

I begin this section of the chapter by attempting to understand the particular discourses that students draw upon to give meaning to their gender and sexual subjectivities. I also attempt to understand the social, cultural and historical contexts within which this meaning is constructed and how power is simultaneously re-inscribed and contested within these constructions. In the discussions that feature in this chapter, the term homosexuality, gay and lesbian was used by my participants as a marker of identity and therefore the use of queer or LGBTQI that features prominently in western research is rejected (Bhana, 2015). Bhana (2015) purports that the term "homosexual" is utilised within South Africa's political and intellectual discourse.

The discussion below features the individual interviews that I conducted with Khula (African female), Jocelyn (coloured female) and Varsha (Indian female). All three women are from different racial and socio-economic backgrounds. In their statements, the pervasiveness of religious and cultural discourses features strongly, fuelling homophobic attitudes that weave through the lives of students on campus. I met all three females at different spaces on the campus environment. Jocelyn is part of a larger mixed racial and gender group on campus. Below is an extract from Khula, a 19-year-old heterosexual African female in her first year of an Engineering degree. Khula lives on campus in the student residence and indicated that it is her first time away from her home in the rural part of KwaZulu-Natal.

Khula: From where I come … among our culture, it [homosexuality] is viewed as satanic and will never be accepted …

Researcher: So, are you saying that you do not accept students who are gay and lesbian on campus?

Khula: Yes, because culturally it is not accepted. (II 2 Individual Interview with black African female).

In Khula's discussion, she draws upon her cultural beliefs as an African female to give meaning to her sexual and gender identity, and in so doing, she rejects the manifestation of homosexuality on campus. Khula elucidates how race, gender and culture are intimately connected in regulating sexuality that is legitimised through a cultural discourse. Khula deploys a cultural trope to construct homosexuality as evil and sinful, thus valorising heterosexuality while repudiating and subordinating homosexual relations. Khula's sentiments are similar to those of Sandfort & Reddy (2013), who purport that the low social acceptance of homosexuality in Africa is reinforced through religion, while Dlamini (2006) concurs that many South Africans are not cognisant of the fact that same-sex practices have always existed in Africa and are hence seemingly not incompatible with African cultural tropes. Other scholars have indicated the ways in which African sexual and gendered cultures are fluid, malleable and not monolithic (Arnfred, 2004; Hunter, 2010b).

Khula also implicates her socio-cultural and historical context, which shapes her identity as an African female whilst simultaneously regulating homosexuality through a cultural discourse. Khula's testimony highlights the particular and deeply constraining cultural discourses that present-day students like herself draw upon to limit and constrain same-sex relations, which result in negative outcomes for students identifying as gay and lesbian on campus. Khula's legitimisation of the rejection of homosexuality, undergirded by a cultural discourse, signals to the ways in which sexual identities are culturally and discursively produced to construct an idealised African identity (Bhana, 2015). This penetrates the lives of students, as homophobic attitudes are played out on campus, with possible negative implications for social cohesion.

Below is the narrative of 21-year-old Varsha, an Indian female who identifies as bisexual on campus. Varsha is in her third year of a Bachelor of Arts degree. I met Varsha during my visits to the lecture venue.

> **Varsha:** … there is still this perception on campus that homosexuality is "unAfrican" (author's emphasis) … I know it is this idea that has been perpetuated in the media and stuff … in Zulu culture, I know a lot of young men on campus will say that it is wrong … so I am sure that black gay men do experience a lot of homophobia in their own communities. (II 8, Individual Interview with two Indian females.)

According to Varsha, the premise of homosexuality being "unAfrican" is prevalent and holds sway on campus. Sigamoney and Epprecht (2013) argue that the claim that homosexuality is "unAfrican" manifests as an articulation of homophobic prejudice throughout the continent, as 38 out of 55 African countries criminalise same-sex relationships. It is evident that this notion is perpetuated and prevalent within the campus environment and in student interactions, as elucidated by Varsha. The scholars Jagessar and Msibi (2015) purport that the higher education environment is a microcosm of society and therefore complicit in replicating and reproducing the social tensions that exist within society at large. The scholar Gevisser (1995) argues that a prevalent notion on the continent is that homosexuality is a western import that manifested through colonialism Thus, the ideology that homosexuality is "unAfrican" (Reddy, 2001, 2002; Van Zyl, 2008; Matebeni, 2009) holds sway, despite evidence that the manifestation of homosexuality is pre-colonial in Africa (Epprecht, 2008; Murray & Roscoe, 1998). Itabohary (2012) elucidates that Africa continues to remain a continent that has the highest number of countries in which homosexuality has been declared illegal. This is supported by Inglehart and Welzel (2005), who claim that even in recent times, African countries seem to be the least accepting of same-sex sexuality and sexual relations. Varsha further declares that the claim of homosexuality being unAfrican is also perpetuated by the media. This is supported by Wells and Polders (2006, p.21), who argue that the notion of homosexuality being "unAfrican" and a western import is reinforced by "the media, religion, legal discourses, education and health care".

Varsha simultaneously connects Zulu culture, black men and the rejection of homosexuality, signalling to the ways in which sexuality, gender and race coalesce on campus to uphold heterosexuality. She highlights how the rejection of homosexuality is legitimised through cultural discourses and the Zulu culture is specifically invoked as a manifestation of homophobia within the campus and home environment. According to Sanger (2010, p. 115), the prevalence of homophobia in South Africa "signals to the fact that societal attitudes towards homosexuality are rooted in damaging and limiting heteronormative ideas about gender, gender presentation and sexual orientation". Articulations of similar findings within higher education institutions have been confirmed (Msibi 2013; Hames, 2007; Graziano, 2004). Thus, in Varsha's experience and interaction with young Zulu men on campus, homosexuality is rejected and repudiated, and manifests as homophobic sentiments on campus, as heteronormativity is upheld through the normalisation of heterosexual relations while deviance from heterosexuality is repudiated. Varsha therefore alludes to the ways in which sexual identities are given meaning on the campus environment. Varsha highlights the role that culture plays in reinforcing hetero-patriarchal understandings of gender and sexuality with her statement that within the "Zulu culture I know a lot of young men on campus will say that it is wrong". Van Zyl (2011) asserts that wider homophobic notions tied to homosexuality being perceived as unAfrican is rooted to discourses of hegemonic power polarising authentic African identities against perceived colonial constructions.

Jocelyn is a 21-year-old heterosexual coloured female in her third year of a Bachelor of Arts degree. She commutes between campus and home, and would not consider staying on campus because her parents cannot afford it. I met Jocelyn in the black cafeteria.

> **Jocelyn:** South Africa is a very culturally bound country. We base a lot of our outlooks on life on our culture, being "black" culture, which says that man-and-man is taboo, woman-and-woman is taboo. It is that kind of stuff, so it is very difficult functioning in a country that says that you are wrong and you are other, and you are devil and you bad ... So, yes, I won't accept gays and lesbians. (FG 8, focus group of mixed race and gender)

Jocelyn illuminates the regulation of sexuality as limited to a cultural discourse that rejects homosexuality. According to Jocelyn, cultural discourses and race regulates conformity and adherence to a heterosexual identity, with her utterance that in "black culture … man-and-man is taboo, woman-and-woman is taboo". Thus, Jocelyn draws upon wider hegemonic heterosexual discourses undergirded by her cultural practices to give meaning to her sexual subjectivity. This also implies that Jocelyn's cultural identity ensures strict adherence to heterosexuality and gender role conformity. According to Traeen and Martinussen (2008), culture shapes sexual beings, as sexuality is normalised and naturalised if it is embedded within culture-specific norms, values and expectancies. According to Bhana (2015), culture is deployed as a discursive strategy to claim an African identity that is exclusively heterosexual and thus complicit in reproducing gender hierarchies and inequalities. Similarly, Jocelyn deploys a cultural logic to uphold the power of heterosexuality in place, with possible negative implications for social cohesion on campus. According to Herek (1990), gender conformity holds sway and is maintained, as those who transgress normative gender roles remain at the bottom end of the hierarchy of acceptability. Jocelyn therefore deploys her cultural identity to remain within the hierarchy of acceptability, thus reproducing the power of heterosexuality on campus.

My discussions with Loyiso (coloured male) and Yaqshaan (Indian male) further describe how the discourse of religion is implicated in the rejection of homosexual identities fuelling homophobic attitudes. Loyiso is in his second year of his undergraduate degree. I met him in the student male residence on campus. Yaqshaan is Indian male and in the second year of his law degree. I met Yaqshaan at the coffee shop.

> **Loyiso:** My dislike for not appreciating gays or lesbians … is because I am a Christian … it doesn't matter whether I like a person as long as they are gay it just means that it is not something that is supposed to be it is not natural … when it comes to an indictment on my religion, I take it seriously. (FG 12, focus group of same race and gender.)

> **Yaqshaan:** Like some religions are very like hostile towards gay people and lesbian people … I know mine is too. (FG 15, focus group of mixed race including international and same gender).

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Loyiso invokes a religious discourse to regulate, police and normalise heterosexuality on campus and disparages any form of deviance. Loyiso's claim to a Christian identity upholds heteronormativity, thus protecting heterosexuality while simultaneously reinforcing the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1990). According to Yep (2002, p.168) "for heterosexuality to exist, it must maintain its 'natural', 'normal', 'universal', 'it-goes-without-saying' character". Loyiso, too, is able to maintain the hegemonic status of heterosexuality through naturalising discourses which is also the way in which he gives meaning to his sexual subjectivity. His statement signals to how religious discourses perpetuate and reproduce the hegemony of heterosexuality on campus and catalyse homophobic sentiments with negative implications for social cohesion. Altman, Aggleton, Williams, Kong, Reddy, Harrad, Reis and Parker (2012) assert that in Africa religious discourses are employed to reinforce subordination to justify attitudes towards homophobia. It is evident that Loyiso's Christian background shapes his attitude towards homosexual students. Within the context of the US, research studies has also confirmed that negative attitudes towards gay, lesbian and bisexual people and homophobia towards young males can be attributed to high levels of Christian religious beliefs (Marsiglio as cited in Cragun & Sumerau, 2015).

Yaqshaan also draws upon religious discourses to give meaning to his sexual identity while simultaneously drawing upon these discourses to regulate and normalise heterosexuality within the campus environment, elucidating the hegemonic position and value that religious discourse places on students' lives. Loyiso and Yaqshaan, who are of different racial backgrounds, show how homophobia, through penetrating discourses of religion, is impervious to race as both students uphold heterosexuality on campus.

The narrative below explores a conversation that I had with a group of international students from Zimbabwe, namely, Brian, Roland, Leevinya, Gabriel, Perpetua and Ignatius. Brian, Roland, Ignatius and Gabriel are male students in their third year of an Engineering degree and they live together in the student residence. Leevinya and Perpetua are the two females in the group, who are registered for a Bachelor of Social Science degree and live on campus.

All of these students came to study at the institution on a Presidential scholarship[16] from Zimbabwe.

> **Brian:** … the mainstream Christians, 99% of the people do not accept the gay people or the lesbian community of which there is maybe 1% of people trying to accept and integrate these (gay and lesbian) people into Christianity … it has been embedded in our culture and society that this homosexuality is wrong … if culture is telling me that this is wrong, religion is saying it is wrong, then it becomes difficult for me to integrate with them (gay and lesbian) and try and accept new things.

> **Roland:** Personally, I don't socialise with them [homosexuals]. I don't want to because maybe my culture and my background makes me not accept. And moreover, I am a Christian so it is not biblical in my religion.

> **Leevinya**: I think the problem with being gay and lesbian goes back to social findings and maybe religion. If you are gay or lesbian, then trying to find a common ground and trying to relate it to a type of religion like Christianity, then automatically I will say that person is not being Christian. I will go back to that person and say that in the Bible that thing [homosexuality] is not tolerated.

> **Researcher**: Interesting. So are you saying that you cannot be a true Christian if you are gay?

> **Gabriel**: For me that is impossible.

> **Perpetua**: The thing with being gay, not that I dislike them, like she [Leevinya] said, it is some sort of culture. And back in Zim, it is an unacceptable culture so even if you are gay and you are Zim and you know your norms, you would never expose that you are gay. I could have an interest in a girl, but I could never say that because I am Zimbabwean and it is true, it is totally unacceptable. The only friends I have met so far

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[16] A scholarship offered from the Zimbabwean Government for top performing students from Zimbabwe to pursue degrees at UKZN.

here are the Zimbabweans and if I manage to expose that I am gay, that would mean that I am pushing away those people who are in my life. I would be risking a lot if I expose that I am gay, so people will rather stay in the closet until they are on [their] deathbed than to reveal that they are gay.

Ignatius: They could be there, but we wouldn't know … we could never know. So we generally say there are no gay and lesbian Zim students on campus because you don't see them. (FG 11, focus group with international students (from Africa) mixed gender.)

In Brian's narrative, he implicates his Zimbabwean Christian upbringing as regulating and upholding the hegemony of heterosexuality. According to Madzivire (2015), the heteronormative status quo in Zimbabwe is implicated in heterosexuality being accepted as "right" and "natural". By implication, therefore, Brian's cultural upbringing reinforces a heteronormative belief system in the repudiation of homosexuality on the campus environment. Gunda (as cited in Madzivire, 2015), asserts that within the Zimbabwean context, religions such as Christianity play an important role in solidifying political and traditional sexual values premised upon Biblical beliefs that homosexuality and premarital sex are sinful. Brian's testimony elucidates how culture, religion and upbringing intimately connect to construct sexual identities that present culture and religion in monolithic ways that coalesce to consolidate his rejection of homosexual students on campus. Brian elucidates how his sexual identity has been shaped by his socio-cultural context, rooted to dominant heterosexual discourses that are legitimised and constrained within a cultural and religious discourse. He rejects homosexuality and in so doing perpetuates homophobia on campus.

Roland's narrative elucidates a binary between the heterosexual (I) and the homosexual (them) that he has created to distance himself from the "other". According to Hall (1996), identity is constructed and intertwined within the dynamics of power and it is this process that serves to "exclude through its power to promote difference." Hall (1996) further states that identities are constructed through "difference" and not "outside difference". Hall (1996) asserts that "difference" is an integral part of defining one's identity. Roland therefore constructs his heterosexual identity by marking the homosexual other. Woodward (1997) asserts that "difference" can be interpreted negatively as excluding and marginalising people

who fall into the realm of the "outsider" and the "other". Roland deploys a cultural logic that evokes the discourse of culture and religion to reject homosexuality, so as to ensure the hegemony of heterosexuality and render power to heterosexuality and conformance to the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1990).

In Perpetua's narrative, she elucidates how Zimbabwean societal attitudes and legislation regarding homosexuality have shaped and reinforced her heteronormative gender and sexual identity, which is patriarchal in nature. Gunda (cited in Madzivire, 2015, p. 6), asserts that Shona-speaking Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa projects the government as being the "protector of society's moral values". It is evident, according to Perpetua's statements, how Zimbabwe's heteronormative status quo has shaped her and led to her rejection of homosexual students on campus. According to Butler (1999, p. xii), by deploying the "grid of cultural intelligibility", the "policing of gender is sometimes used as way of securing heterosexuality". In this way, Perpetua's regulation of her gender and sexuality is used as a means to uphold dominant notions of heterosexuality. In the case of Leevinya, she deploys a cultural discourse rooted in Christianity to legitimise heterosexuality. Bhana (2015) purports that Christianity continues to influence and shape public discourse and we witness how these values pervade the campus environment through the negative attitudes of students towards homosexual students.

Brian, Roland, Leevinya and Perpetua are active agents in the conflation of culture and religion to police and prevent transgression, thus upholding heterosexuality and disparaging homosexuality on campus. Christianity is evoked through a rights discourse in legitimising normative sexuality. According to Bhana (2015), the widespread rejection of sexual diversity in South Africa is frequently supported by invocations of culture, tradition and religion, all three of which are used to position homosexuality as something foreign or unnatural. Finlay and Walther's (2003) international research in the US noted that college students who were members of a conservative Protestant denomination displayed the highest levels of homophobia. Similarly, Brian, Roland, Leevinya, Gabriel, Perpetua and Ignatius invoke culture and religion to reject homosexuality and inadvertently fuel homophobic attitudes and sentiments on campus. Culture and religion is invoked to uphold the dominant discourse of heterosexuality, thus maintaining and reinforcing power relations on campus, with negative

implications for social cohesion. Roland, Leevinya, Gabriel, Perpetua and Ignatius elucidate how they are shaped by patriarchal Zimbabwean societal attitudes and norms, undergirded by tradition and culture (Vincent, 2009; Makoni, 2011; Chingono, 2015; Madzivire, 2015), and how this manifests and is enacted on campus.

However, heteronormative patriarchal discourses were not only upheld by the group of Zimbabwean students, but also manifested in the discussion below that I had with Samuel and Annin from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Both are male students studying law and live in private accommodation that is off-campus. I met Samuel and Annin at the black cafeteria.

> **Samuel**: I don't know anyone in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) who has actually come out and said that they are gay or lesbian.

> **Researcher**: So, is that a general feeling among the international students from DRC on campus?

> **Annin**: Believe me, as I know; let's say from the perspective of people coming from there, no one no one will allow it whatever the region. The person from DRC would never accept that he is fine with homosexuality.

> **Researcher**: And you don't know why it is not accepted?

> **Samuel:** *Ya*, you know the way we were raised is a factor. I grew up in a family where I can see my father as the head, my mom as second and then my sister … you know, we have certain norms and certain values. (II 10, Individual interview with two international students from Africa.)

In the narrative above, Samuel and Annin invoke a patriarchal discourse, to give meaning to their sexual identities, in which heterosexuality functions as a key mechanism in upholding masculine power and maintaining the gender order of a patriarchal family structure. According to Mills (as cited in Wickens and Sandlin , 2010, p. 655), "the construction of gender

and sexual orientation is embedded within discursive systems of power and knowledge that structure our understanding of gendered and sexual identities and construct a society where the male/female binary and heterosexuality are considered normal and natural, and any gender or sexual orientation expression outside of these 'natural' norms is denied, considered abnormal, or resisted". Further, it can be seen how the normative understanding of family and relationships weaves through the campus environment to structure and order gender and sexual identities, with negative implications for student interactions with gay and lesbian students. Samuel and Annin, like the group from Zimbabwe, highlight how their socio-cultural and historical contexts reproduce heteropatriarchal norms, which are enacted in their daily lives on campus.

According to Butler (1990), to be considered as "real" and "normal", one must perform a heterosexual identity (adapted from Wickens & Sandlin, 2010). Thus, Samuel and Annin invoke a patriarchal discourse of normative gender ordering, rooted to their socio-cultural context in the DRC, to legitimise the performance of a heterosexual identity. In all of the narratives above, a cultural, religious and patriarchal discourse was invoked to maintain a heteronormative campus environment that regulates conformity to a heterosexual identity, thus fuelling homophobic sentiments on campus. Msibi (2013) argues for research to explore the role of culture and religion towards shaping beliefs around gender, sexuality and same sex relations.

However, anti-gay sentiments and homophobic discourse were not only rooted and shaped by students' socio-cultural and historical backgrounds, but were also pervasive in the classroom and academic spaces on campus, as discussed below by Mara, Jeuke and Fibby. All three females are part of a larger group on campus comprising of international students from the US. Mara, Jeuke and Fibby are exchange students who only spent one semester on campus. I met them in the university residence. The discussion below highlighted how homophobic discourse was pervasive in lecture halls and learning spaces.

> **Mara:** We had a discussion on homophobia in my Anthropology class and the lecturer was asking: "Are gays men?" We are three international students in the class and we

were, like, very shocked that the lecturer was really asking us this and challenging us to respond.

Jeuke: This homophobia is linked to patriarchy, but I also feel it is linked to religious things like the holy spirit; like, I keep hearing a lot about that and how there shouldn't be any gays and lesbians because for them [religious people], they can't accept it. Maybe it's the culture like the Zulu culture or even Xhosa culture and the religion. Maybe it's culture and religion?

Researcher: So, tell me more about the Zulu and Xhosa culture not accepting gays and lesbians. Why do you say this?

Fibby: Because in our class there were only Zulu and Xhosa-speaking students. We were the only internationals. And I was, like, very offended because they [Zulu and Xhosa] don't accept any gays and lesbians. We didn't talk a lot about it in class, but they were, like, no, the gays are not men because they were explaining in class, like, to be a man you have to be and act strong and brave and aggressive. And they need to be able to treat a woman well, then it means that they are real men. But then no one else in the class said anything to challenge them. I was wondering, like, why are you saying this and then I talked to someone else from the class outside the lecture and she said that in the Bible it says that you can't be gay. (FG 10, focus group of international students (USA and Germany) same gender).

The narrative above, as expressed by Mara, Jeuke and Fibby, highlights how homophobic discourses pervade learning spaces within the campus environment. Scholars in the country have argued that, in South African schools, teachers are often complicit in victimising students who engage in same-sex relationships (Msibi, 2012). Thus, universities, which are a reflection of society, perpetuate the "victimisation discourse", as evidenced by the lecturer's insinuation that manhood is linked to homosexuality. Jeuke highlights how homophobic sentiments are fuelled by patriarchal and religious discourses that implicate race and normative gender orderings in the construction of sexual identities. In their research, the scholars Epprecht (2008) and Hunter (2010b) highlight how normative African heterosexual identities hinge on

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gendered and cultural constructions of sexuality. Mara, Jeuke and Fibby simultaneously connect hegemonic masculinities to constructions of an African identity within normative discourses of heterosexuality. Bhana (2016b) argues that the deployment of a cultural logic in the regulation of heterosexuality is a discursive strategy to claim an African identity that reproduces gender hierarchies and inequalities. Mara highlights how homophobia in the classroom is implicated in the construction of masculinity (Connell, 1987; Kimmel, 2001) as gay men's masculinity is questioned. Connell (1995) argues that hegemonic masculinities are produced through compulsory heterosexuality to regulate and police other forms of masculinity. Kimmel (1994, p. 128) purports: "Men are under the constant scrutiny of other men. Other men watch us; grant our acceptance into the realm of manhood. Manhood is demonstrated for other men's approval". It is evident from the narrative that the homophobic attitude of the male academic in questioning the masculinities of gays influenced the discussions during Mara's lecture. Fibby highlights how the classroom discussion of the construction of "real men" as strong, brave and aggressive is interwoven with dominant constructions of masculinity. Connell (1995) argues that homosexuality is a repudiation of masculinity, and associated with being feminine. Power is therefore central to the hierarchical construction of masculinities (Connell, 2000; Hearn, 2004). Fibby highlights how the regulation of sexuality is produced within intersecting threads of culture, masculinity and gender.

The narrative below features a discussion that I conducted with Christina and Cassandra, international exchange students from Germany who registered for one semester on campus. The conversation elucidates how discourses of homophobia penetrate learning spaces on campus. Christina and Cassandra are part of Jeuke, Mara and Fibby's group discussed in the narrative above.

> **Christina:** You mean homosexuality … I had a very interesting conversation with my professor. Well, it was more like an argument because apparently, in my opinion, he has a very limited understanding of homosexuality and as such, in class, he was asking questions, like, he really doesn't understand how you can be a man and be homosexual, and that was interesting. I understand that probably because of the traditional culture, people have difficulty understanding.

Researcher: When you say traditional culture, what do you mean?

Cassandra: I would say in Zulu culture, homosexuality would be difficult to conceptualise. I think Zulu culture is a very patriarchal culture; well, it comes across as very patriarchal to me. But for a university lecturer who is Zulu himself, I expect him to have basic notions, even if he personally doesn't agree with gay marriages or anything. He had trouble understanding basic notions, so we got into an argument because he was bringing this framework into the classroom discussion. (FG 10, focus group of international students (USA and Germany) same gender).

In the discussion above, Christina and Cassandra elucidate how discourses of homophobia are perpetuated by some lecturers in the classroom discussions on campus Christina highlights the discursive construction of being gay hinging on a fragile and questionable masculinity. Kimmel (1994) and Connell (1995) assert that identifying as homosexual undermines masculinity, which is undergirded by the performance and practices of a heterosexual identity. It is evident that this notion continues to dominate discussions in the classroom that contravene and undermine the constitutional policies of the country, thus also highlighting the pervasive disjuncture between policy and practice on campus.

Cassandra elucidates how the academic in her classroom associates patriarchy, Zulu culture and hegemonic masculinity as crucial to the discursive construction of an African identity, while simultaneously refuting the possibility of "other" masculinities in the making of an African identity. According to Wickens and Sandlin (2010, p. 655), "Foucault's notion of governmentality refers to the naturalization of discursive statements, based on positions of authority and institutional force, into 'truths'. These 'truths' produce regulatory processes that demarcate social and behavioural norms". We see how these norms are perpetuated and reproduced by the academic in Cassandra and Christina's class, who draws on dominant discourses of heterosexuality to regulate acceptable forms of masculinity as "truths", while castigating "other" forms of masculinity. The homophobic discourses perpetuated in class have possible negative implications for social cohesion on campus.

In the narratives above, the data illuminated the ways in which culture and religion reproduced and reinforced the regulation of a heteronormative sexual identity through the privileging of heterosexuality and the repudiation of homosexuality. Power relations were thus reinforced within the campus environment, reproducing the hegemony of heterosexuality while castigating and repudiating homosexuality to the margins. The above narratives depict how the meanings that students attach to sexual identities embedded within heteronormative gender ordering undermine social cohesion efforts on campus.

6.3 Normative gender ordering and the regulation of masculinity

In this section of the chapter, I attempt to understand the intersection between culture, race and masculinity. I met with Octavia, Londeka and Precious, a group of African female students, in the female student residence. All of them are final-year students registered in the College of Humanities. Through their narratives below, they highlight how homophobia is enacted in the living spaces within the campus environment, with negative outcomes for male students who identify as being gay.

> **Octavia:** Yes, in residence, there was this gay guy who used to come and stay on a floor for girls only because he couldn't stay on the floor with the African guys, so he was the only boy with all the girls.

> **Londeka:** … being a boy, physically, for him to stay with the girls, I think it was a point of saying that the guys [African] will hate you.

> **Precious:** They [African men] won't even talk to him; they just made him an outcast because he was gay, men are just so *harsh*! [Author's emphasis.] They even went to the point of being violent with him.

> **Researcher:** Why do you think that there is such hatred among the males towards gay students?

Londeka: Because I think that they don't believe that it really exists. There are so many questions surrounding the issue of homosexuals and everything; they [hetero-sexual students] just don't understand them [homosexual students].

Researcher: But why do you think this is so?

Octavia: It emasculates them, erodes their manhood. That's why for them being gay is not real.

Precious: Yes, that was my point that socially or in their own frame of reference –now I am thinking for them – now in their own frame of reference is that superior person who is in control of everything; now if you converting from a man and being a woman, you know it just annoys them. (FG 4, focus group of African females).

Octavia, Londeka and Precious position the university campus and the male student residence in particular as a heteronormative space for the preserve of ideal masculinity. They highlight how students who do not conform to acceptable versions of masculinity are ostracised and marginalised in this space. Londeka elucidates that homosexuality is punished because it is not considered real. According to Butler (1990), a heterosexual identity must be enacted through daily performances of heterosexuality in order for it to be considered normal and real. The performance of a homosexual identity is therefore not considered real and therefore marginalised. Butler (1990) asserts that the male/female binary and heterosexuality is normalised through the intersection of gender and sexuality, while homosexuality is deemed culturally unintelligible and out of the norm. The expulsion of the gay student by his male colleagues is explained as purported by Kimmel (1994, p. 126), who argues that, "historically, masculinity has been defined as the flight from women, the repudiation of femininity". Similarly, we see how the gay student is accorded a feminine status by his colleagues and therefore positioned subordinately to the "other" men, thus reinforcing and perpetuating inequalities on the campus environment fuelled by homophobic discourse.

Herek (as cited in Peter, Theodore and Basow, 2000), argues that individuals view homosexuals as a threat to their own constructions of masculinity or femininity. It is evident

that strict regulation and adherence to heterosexuality is enacted by the removal of the gay student from what is constituted as a male space. These enactments fuel homophobic discourses on the campus environment and trouble student interactions and social cohesion. Jagessar and Msibi (2015), in their study of student residences at a higher education institution in KwaZulu-Natal, discover an ingrained culture of homophobia. These findings correlate with the attitudes and homophobic discourse perpetuated in the university residence, as expressed by my participants.

The discussion below features the narratives of Innocence, Siyabonga and Nkayiso, African male students in their third year of study within the College of Humanities. They live in the male residence and come from different rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal. The discussion below attempts to understand why specifically African males have been, to a large extent, complicit in marginalising homosexual students in their claim to an "African identity" as expressed by many participants in this study.

> **Innocence:** It is our backgrounds. There is nothing that we can do … we grew up with our fathers who had three wives or four wives, so if we come here [and] you know there's a gay guy, you are not accepting of them. The problem is in our backgrounds because us here we are Zulus; most of us we don't accept bisexuals or whatever else you call it, we just know there is a guy and a lady … most of the people here are not accepting of them [gays and lesbians]. (FG 12, focus group of same race and same gender).

Innocence gives meaning to his sexual subjectivity through discourses of patriarchy regulated by his Zulu cultural upbringing. He defines his Zulu culture as synonymous with fathers and many wives, thus implicating an entrenched patriarchal culture. It is evident that Innocence's background and experience of growing up with a father who has many wives signals to an entrenched patriarchal order, which valorises polygamy through the enactment of a hegemonic masculinity and the subordination of women into regulatory roles within the normative gender order, thus championing masculine power. Innocence's statement illuminates the imposition of power through culture in sustaining the gender order (Connell, 1987), as Innocence invokes his Zulu culture in legitimising the regulation of heterosexuality

as rooted to his cultural background. According to Rudwick (2011), Zulu culture is not easily reconciled with a homosexual lifestyle. Innocence invokes his cultural identity in maintaining the gender order through his performance of a heterosexual identity, which renders deviance from heteronormativity as being unacceptable: "We are Zulus … we don't accept bisexuals or whatever else you call it." According to Msibi (2012), in a country such as South Africa, identifying as Zulu is associated with conformity to a strict cultural and heterosexual identity. By implication, Innocence's background and his socio-cultural context plays out within the campus environment, legitimising his rejection of homosexuality through a heteropatriarchal cultural discourse. Jackson (2006, p. 105) purports that "institutionalised normative heterosexuality regulates those kept within its boundaries as well as marginalising and sanctioning those outside them". Innocence deploys his cultural identity embedded within a patriarchal discourse to regulate and maintain hegemonic heterosexuality (Butler, 1993), thus fuelling homophobic sentiments on campus and upholding masculine power that is fixed to heterosexuality.

> **Siyabonga:** *Eish*. It is hard because of our backgrounds … if you go back to the deep rural areas or the township and all of a sudden you say you are gay … *ay,* trust me, you won't have any friends there … they will beat you up. (FG 12, focus group of same race and same gender).

In Siyabonga's narrative, he implicates his socio-cultural and historical legacy of his upbringing in the deep rural area in regulating heterosexuality. According to Rudwick (2011), the KwaZulu-Natal province is distinctly characterised into urban and rural lifestyles, with emphasis of a more static and traditionalist understanding of what it means to be Zulu placed upon the rural emergent. Hence, Siyabonga's testimony insinuates that the embodiment of a gay identity in the rural areas is subject to isolation and acts of violence: "Trust me, you won't have any friends there … they will beat you up." According to Connell (1995), gay men embody subordinate masculinities, thus rendering hegemonic masculinity as the ideal and subordinate masculinity embodied by the homosexual as the inferior "other" position. Hegemonic masculinities are upheld through compulsory heterosexuality and thus remain powerful and dominant. Msibi (2011) purports that patriarchy is upheld through the practice of compulsory heteronormativity.

Siyabonga, like Innocence, is a heterosexual male and identifies with a masculinity that is complicit in regulating, silencing, subverting and policing masculinity that does not conform to normative ways of being a man. Connell (1995) asserts that in order to hold hegemonic masculinities in place, deviance is punished and the power relations regulated, restored and reinforced. Herek (as cited in Peter, Theodore and Basow, 2000) asserts that in contemporary society the performance of heterosexuality is an essential condition of masculinity, which Innocence and Siyabonga enforce strongly in their lives. Innocence and Siyabonga elucidate how males who do not conform to and comply with a hegemonic heterosexual identity are subjected to marginalisation, ostracism and are victims of violence and persecution. According to Kimmel (1994, p.135), men who were subordinated in terms of the gender ordering were also "cast as hypermasculine, as sexually aggressive, violent rapacious beasts". However, Siyabonga and Innocence illuminate how heternomative masculinites are kept in place through the possible threat of violence and are thus complicit in fuelling homophobia and homophobic sentiments undergirded through a cultural and patriarchal discourse. Both Innocence and Siyabonga's narratives point to the ways in which socio-cultural historical contexts intersect to give meaning to race, gender and sexuality as they weave through students' daily lives on campus.

> **Nkayiso:** Firstly, we all came here from different areas and most of the people … like my friends, for instance, they come from rural areas and some of them say that they have never seen a gay guy before so they are, like, there's a sense of … what is the word? Homophobic. I think it is in the way that we are brought up. We are brought up to be a man and to own up; a man needs to be a man. *Ya*, it is in our genes, basically. That is the way our parents brought us up; like, you are a guy and this is what you need to do and if you are like going to try and change that, then you are messing up some theory. (FG 12, focus group of same race and same gender).

In his narrative, Nkayiso implies that in rural areas there are no gay students as he asserts that his friends who are from these areas claim to have never seen a gay person. Nkayiso's narrative is powerful because it elucidates the important association between a university and a society. It also supports the succinct argument of Jagessar and Msibi (2015, p. 65) that "university spaces are microcosms of broader society, reflecting the many tensions that exist

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in society". Homophobia thus continues unabated. Nkayiso's testimony implies that some students, mostly those from rural areas, enter the higher education system with preconceived notions of homophobia and a natural inclination to be homophobic because homosexuality is invisible in rural areas. Research conducted in the US by D'Augelli and Hart (as cited in Yarbrough LMSW, 2004, p. 130), purports that "in most rural areas the gay community is invisible due to the effects of homophobia and heterosexism". A similarity can be observed with Nkayiso's peers in rural KwaZulu Natal, compared to the rural area within the context of the US, who claim to have never seen a gay student before.

Further, Nkayiso's emphasis on "man" and how a "man" should be is legitimised within a biological discourse – "*Ya*, it is in our genes" – that is regulated by his cultural identity as a Zulu man that upholds a heteronormative patriarchal order rooted to a rural socio-cultural context. However Nkayiso's claim stands to be challenged and refuted, as Morrell (1998, p. 607), draws our attention to the ways in which masculinity is made with the statement that "masculinity is a [form of] gender [identification] and not a natural attribute". Nkayiso, however, declares that his masculinity is biological and thus natural. According to Alsop, Fitzsimons and Lennon (2002, p. 143) "hegemonic notions of masculinity demand that to be a 'real man' requires the rejection of all things feminine, in that masculinity is constructed in opposition to femininity". Nkayiso's statement – "we are brought up to be a man and to own up; a man needs to be a man" – upholds his heteronormative status and, in this way, he is complicit in regulating his own masculinity.

Aslop, Fitzsimons and Lennon (2002), assert that to be a real man is to display a heterosexual identity, which implicates that a deviation from heterosexual identity relegates a man to having the subordinated status of a woman. Nkayiso's statement – "if you are … going to try and change that, then you are messing up some theory" – reinforces the notion that his masculinity is upheld through compulsory heterosexuality that is framed to regulate and discipline other forms of masculinity (Connell, 1995), or deviations thereof. Msibi (2009, p. 53) argues, "deviance from normative constructions of masculinity may result in homophobia or homophobic violence directed at those who do not conform". Hence, Nkayiso's testimony upholds hegemonic masculinity legitimised through a cultural and biological discourse and simultaneously evokes homophobic discourse through his talk.

Below are the narratives of Small, Loyiso and Swelva, all African males who self-identify as heterosexual and live on the campus residence. All are part of the same group that Siyabonga, Innocence and Nkanyiso are part of. These participants are in their third year of a law degree and are from different rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal.

Small: The problem is fear …

Loyiso: Most of the guys fear that they also have a feminine side to them, so most of the guys try to isolate themselves from these [gay] guys and just stay away … well, I also stay away.

Louis: *Eish!* So most of these guys are scared, so they just isolate themselves from them [gays]; they are scared, so many of them are feminine, so they choose to stay away …

Swelva: It is mostly fear; that is why we choose to say don't even come near me … they won't actually tell you that they are scared … But when you speak to these guys, they will tell you that most of them – some of them even in this residence – they have had sexual relations with these guys; some of these guys are trapped in the closet. So they hide behind these [gay] guys, but these [gay] guys can tell you stuff that they do to these straight guys … it happens, it happens. (FG 12, focus group of same race and same gender).

In the narrative above, Small, Loyiso, Louis and Swelva elucidate how heterosexuality is regulated on the campus environment by isolating and distancing themselves from the gay students in their residence, due to a pervasive fear of the feminine. Aslop, Fitzsimons and Lennon (2002, p. 143) argue that "for men to conform to dominant ideas of manliness they must distance themselves from all traits and characteristics associated with femininity". In considering Loyiso's statement, his enactment of isolating himself from gay males is, according to Nayak and Kehily (2006, p. 468), part of "the self-convincing rituals of masculinity". The behaviour of Small, Loyiso, Louis and Swelva is an expression of homophobia, which is rooted in the pervasive fear that they may have a feminine side to

them. Swelva's action is, according to Butler (1993, p. 3), an act of "repudiation without which the subject cannot emerge" and remains powerful. Swelva's statement that "it happens … it happens" is an expression of slips that can occur in trying to police transgressions of hegemonic masculinity. Ratele's (2008) research highlighted alternate masculinities that unhinged notions of monolithic heterosexual African male power.

Kimmel (1994, p.131) argues that "Homophobia is more than the irrational fear of gay men, more than the fear that we might be perceived as gay". This is played out in the actions of Small, Loyiso, Swelva and Louis within the campus environment. Their overt display of marginalising homosexual students is indicative of the strategies deployed to regulate and police heterosexuality. These students' performance in reasserting their heterosexual identity through repudiation of homosexuality serves to maintain their hierarchical hegemonic masculinity, thus solidifying their heterosexual position on campus. Kitzinger (2005) purports that heterosexual students, through their conversation, continually produce and position themselves and others as being heterosexual. However, in the case of Small, Louis, Loyisa and Swelva, their actions solidify the enactment of a heterosexual identity that fuels homophobia on campus. Hence, Small, Loyisa, Swelva and Louis are also regulated by gender norms to conform to this ideal masculinity.

6.4 Narratives of change: Disruptions and Regulations

This section of the chapter focuses on alternative narratives that emerge from student discussions, as agency is enacted through the dismantling of heteropatriarchal discourses tied to particular versions of masculinity and femininity, with possible implications for social cohesion on campus. Foucault (1979) purports that no discourses remain closed to contestation. The participants Siphwe, Precious, Ashanda, Ozzy, Vuso, Siyabonga, Fiona and Colleen all elucidate the fluid and dynamic ways in which gender and sexual identities are constructed and penetrate monolithic cultural discourses that are fixed to tradition and religion, but that have the possibility to change.

The narrative below is a conversation that I conducted with Siphwe, who is an African male student in his second year of an Engineering degree. Siphwe resides on campus at an all-male student residence and is friends from a larger same race group. He fragments and distorts the

notion that religion is unreservedly complicit in maintaining heteronormativity and hence disturbs the conflation of culture and religion in the complicity and regulation of homosexuality.

> **Siphwe:** The thing with being a Christian … is controversial; when we want to discuss homosexuality based on religion, people have so many different interpretations of the Bible. I am a staunch Christian, yes, but this tutor of mine, he is gay, and he has gay friends like him who are lecturers and tutors who go to a church that accepts gays and lesbians. So I think that it will be complicated to use Christianity to justify the rejection of gay and lesbian students if you don't know how the Bible goes. (FG 12, same race and gender.)

The campus can be seen to be dominantly positioned as a hegemonic heterosexual space, as elucidated in the section above. Siphwe's narrative highlights how discourses of religion and tradition disturbs a simplistic understanding of heteronormativity legitimised through religion. He challenges the discourse of homophobia tied to religion, specifically Christianity, as he talks about the presence of a church-going gay tutor on campus. This tutor dismantles and ruptures the fixity of homophobia regulated through cultural and traditional discourses.

A study by Clark, Brown and Hochstein (1990), asserts that Christian-based religious institutions in the US have not been supportive of lesbian and gay relationships. Work by Gunda (cited in Madzivire, 2015) in the context of patriarchal Zimbabwean society, cites the church and Christianity as playing an important role in perpetuating political and traditional sexual values undergirded by Biblical beliefs that homosexuality is sinful and wrong. According to Afshar (2006), formalised religious institutions in South Africa speak out against the equal rights discourse to gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual individuals. However Siphwe's narrative is powerful as he elucidates how the church – which is constructed as the bastion of heterosexuality (Afshar, 2006) – and in particular the Bible, can be open to interpretation and welcome gays and lesbians, thus displacing tradition and religion as upholders of heterosexuality within this context. Siphwe's narrative also alludes to the multiple ways in which sexual identity construction that hinges on religious beliefs can be made fragile and

malleable, thus complicating constructions of gender and sexuality tied to cultural and religious discourses.

The narrative below is an extract from a conversation that I had with Tintswalo, an African female student in her first year of law who I met during lectures.

> **Tintswalo:** As an African female, yes, my religion disagrees with it [homosexuality], but at the same time they don't say hate them and despise them. Well, I am not sure what they say, but I say I will love them. We have a lot of homosexuals on campus, so I love them and I am not here to judge them. God himself has not judged them yet, so I have no reason to judge them. (II 14, Individual Interview with African female).

In her narrative, Tintswalo presents versions of her religion that simultaneously reject and accept homosexuality, thus signalling to the fluidity of religious discourses in upholding heterosexuality with her statement that "they don't say hate them and despise them". Tintswalo therefore asserts her agency and qualified acceptance (Bhana, 2015) in embracing homosexual students on campus. In Ngcobo's (2007) study that took place at a tertiary institution in South Africa illuminated how religious beliefs and normative societal values coalesced to shape individual attitudes and behaviours towards discourses of sexuality and sexual relationships. Yet we see in Tintswalo a shift away from rigid notions that castigate homosexuality in her religion, which attempts to enforce these beliefs in her. However, Tintswalo enacts an agency that accepts homosexuals and even declares her love for them. Butler (1990, p. 145) purports that "discourses present themselves in the plural, coexisting within temporal frames". Gowlett (2014, p. 414), in explaining Butler (1990), suggests that "individuals are caught up in a variety of regulatory social norms", which do not make "an individual's life deterministic". In applying this to Tintswalo, she is able to subvert the normative teachings of her religion that regulate sexuality to ensure conformity to the dominant discourse of heterosexuality. However, this regulation does not determine her attitude and therefore her actions. Gowlett (2014, p. 414) draws upon Butler's (1990) version of agency "that maps what I like to refer to as 'manoeuvres' made by individuals to work through and recraft the regulatory norms they find themselves placed within". In applying this to Tintswalo, it can be demonstrated that she is able to "manoeuvre" the imposed

discourse of religion that rejects homosexuals, through her acceptance and love for them on campus. Tintswalo's narrative is powerful, as it explains how students who act with agency are able to shift dominant discourses of heteronormativity that may result in negative consequences towards actions signalling positive attempts for social cohesion on campus.

The narrative below is taken from a discussion that I held with Ashanda, an African female in her second year of a Bachelor of Arts degree. Ashanda lives on campus and is from a rural area in KwaZulu-Natal. I met her at the female residence on campus.

> **Ashanda**: I am a proudly heterosexual, Zulu-speaking woman from the rural area, but I have a friend who is lesbian and her parents are really traditional; they are strict Zulu-speaking. And she told her parents … her dad is a strict Zulu man, Bible wielding and all … but he is okay with her being lesbian. I think now in this modern society and through education, parents are accepting because I think it's okay; it is something that is there and you can't change someone. They just have to accept who they want to be. But I guess her parents will be viewed by other communities as outcasts because it is just not acceptable in our Zulu community and it can be dangerous as well. But I am glad that her parents have accepted her being lesbian; it is a relief. (II 4, Individual Interview with African female).

Ashanda conflates her gender and culture to construct a Zulu identity that is legitimised and regulated through the dominant discourse of heterosexuality. In this way, Ashanda positions herself within "the grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders and desires are naturalized" (Butler, 1990, p. 194). Ashanda constructs her sexuality by invoking normative understandings of femininity. Ashanda's friend, on the other hand, who is also Zulu-speaking, identifies as lesbian, which her Zulu family has accepted. Ashanda highlights how the cultural construction of sexuality is fluid, dynamic and heterogeneous in the case of her lesbian friend. She draws our attention to the risk and dangers associated with being Zulu and gay or lesbian. Rudwick (2011) purported that it was dangerous as a Zulu person in South Africa to openly express a gay and lesbian identity. Bhana (2015), in her study of teenagers in KwaZulu-Natal, noted that culture served as a key marker of Zulu identity, while homosexuality was viewed contradictory to this. Ashanda's narrative elucidates the banality

of fixing culture to sexuality, as culture is not monolithic and can be bent and shaped according to modernity and education.

The narrative below is taken from a discussion that I had with Ozzy, an international, full-time Nigerian student who lives in the student accommodation on campus. She is studying Political Science and is in her third year of studies at the College of Humanities. I met her during my observations at the female residence.

> **Ozzy:** When I go home to Nigeria, when people talk about gays, I don't have that strong feeling of hatred towards gays that I had before I came here, because I have been here for a while. I have had the opportunity of being friends with gay people and lesbian people, and they are just people, just ordinary people. (II 13, Individual Interview with international female from Africa).

Ozzy declares her acceptance of gay and lesbian students on campus, despite the socio-political context of Nigeria, which criminalizes same-sex relations. Ozzy's testimony is powerful, as she has the agency to transform her actions on the campus environment despite the socio-political context in Nigeria, which is highly homophobic. Thus, despite being an international Nigerian student, Ozzy chooses to distance herself from the harsh, homophobic sentiments that have been institutionalised within her country to engage with gay and lesbian students in acts of friendship. This action is indicative of Ozzy's active agency, as she has learned to accept gay and lesbian students within the university, viewing them as no different to her, as "they are just people, just ordinary people". Ozzy's action signals to the possible ways in which students on this campus are able to transcend and transform ingrained normative understandings of sexuality, with possible implications for social cohesion.

I also conversed with Tholani, Patience and Siyabonga, three African students who are from different same race friendship groups on campus. All three are isiZulu first-language speakers. Tholani is female, registered at the College of Humanities, and is in her third year of study. Patience is a female who is pursuing Law and is in her second year of study. Siyabonga is male who is in his third year of a Political Science degree. I met all three students at different spaces of the campus environment.

Tholani: Once you start associating yourself with them [gay], you just get to understand that they are just normal people. (FG 13, focus group of same race and gender.)

Patience: I have seen some Zulu students who are totally homophobic when they arrive here, but gradually, as they talk to them [gay and lesbian students], they get to know them. We sit with them in the lan[17] and lectures; we sit with them in the libraries, we bump into each other … it's so normal. (FG 8, focus group of same race and mixed gender).

Siyabonga: I think that we, as a community like UKZN for instance … are getting used to the idea that we must accept it; we accept that they are here. I think that is happening already. We are accepting that there are gay and lesbian students on campus. (FG 12, focus group of same race and same gender).

In the narrative above, Tholani, Patience and Siyabonga elucidate how their interaction with gay and lesbian students fostered acceptance of them within the campus environment. Tholani and Patience normalise homosexuality on campus and, in so doing, destabilise the hetero/homo binary. Patience's matter-of-fact revelation, "it's so normal", ruptures and troubles the heteronormative campus environment, as a shift can be observed, with a move made towards the acceptance and normalisation of homosexual students. Tholani, Patience and Siyabonga elucidate the shifting and changing attitudes that the campus environment can foster towards acceptance of gay and lesbian students, rendering them visible and part of the normalising discourse on campus.

In my discussion with Fiona and Colleen, who are female students of different race groups. Fiona identifies as coloured, while Colleen identifies as white. I met both students separately on campus. Fiona is part of a larger mixed racial group, while Colleen is also part of a mixed-racial group on campus. Both students are registered at the College of Humanities.

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[17] The lan is a computer room on the campus for students to use for academic purposes.

Fiona: Campus is one of the safest places you can be with your partner… [giggle]. I know from experience … it was okay, you know, to hold hands and kiss and cuddle and whatever else … *Ya*, campus is one of the places you can be safe. It has become normal … it has become normal now. (FG 6, focus group of mixed race and gender).

Colleen: This is the province that is most homophobic … but at UKZN you accept who they are, I have seen gays and lesbians who have heterosexual friends … so you learn to accept them generally. (FG 3, focus group of mixed race and gender).

Fiona identifies herself as a lesbian and illuminates the campus environment as a safe space in which to enact her lesbian identity, thereby directly challenging the notion of the campus as a hegemonic heterosexual space. She is also visibly claiming her sexual identity on the campus with a reprieve from shame or fear of intimidation. Fiona's actions signal to the new ways in which higher education students can find comfort in the educational spaces of institutions (Jagessar & Msibi, 2015). Her narrative is powerful, as scholars such as Rudwick (2011) reveal that homophobia is rife in KwaZulu-Natal. Colleen, however, positions the campus environment as antithetical to the province. Her narrative is important in signalling to the potential for higher education to act as conduits challenging particular embedded discourses of discrimination that have been legitimised and fixed to culture and tradition.

6.5 Conclusion:

This chapter focused on the multiple ways in which gender and sexual identities were expressed and given meaning, drawing upon particular discourses to regulate the expression of sexuality within culturally bounded discourses. The first part of the chapter positioned the campus as a heteronormative space, positioning students who identified as lesbian and gay as marginal and subordinate. The regulation of heterosexuality, undergirded by traditional and religious discourses, featured strongly in the conversations of participants, thus fuelling homophobic discourses in the living and learning spaces within the campus environment. Students promulgated the belief that homosexuality is "unAfrican", tied to particular cultural constructions of their identities that reify and reproduce heteronormative discourses that work against the social cohesiveness on campus. The chapter elucidated the ways in which students invoked their socio-cultural and historical contexts to construct masculinities and

femininities and a heteronormative identity. Gendered constructions of sexuality are regulated through normative understandings of masculinity and femininity, as argued by Foucault (1979), in that no discourse is closed to contestation. The last section of this chapter illuminated alternate discourses, tied to religion and tradition, which challenge and disrupt the notion of a heteronormative campus attenuating homophobic discourses on campus, and signalling to the capacity to resist and transform this troubling discourse, with possible positive implications for social cohesion on campus.

CHAPTER 7:

GENDER, CULTURE AND HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

7.1 INTRODUCTION:

The previous chapter of this thesis focused on the complex, contradictory and contested ways in which higher education students gave meaning to their sexual identities, drawing on discourses of culture and religion to legitimise and regulate a heteronormative identity through the deployment of compulsory hegemonic heterosexuality (Butler, 1993). The chapter further highlighted the importance that students attached to their socio-cultural, historical and material repertoires in understanding their sexual identities within intersecting versions of hegemonic masculinity fuelling homophobia and positioning the campus as a heteronormative space. The issues around homophobia have also been highlighted in the Soudien Report as troubling aspects of social cohesion within South African institutions (Department of Education, 2008). The previous chapter further elucidated how the pervasiveness of hierarchal constructions of masculinity on campus fuelled homophobic sentiments, as the male participants in the study reified and reproduced dominant notions of masculinity, simultaneously castigating subordinate masculinities. However, the chapter also highlighted the shifts beyond material and cultural circumstances, elucidating moves, ruptures and fragmentation within dynamic cultural and religious discourses. These discourses signal to a transforming institution and society, thus nuancing expressions of homophobia through intersecting cultural and religious discourses.

In further understanding issues around social cohesion at higher education institutions, gender power inequalities have been illuminated as the dynamics of "race and gender continue to operate at all levels of the university life …" (Swart et al., 2018, p. 51). In particular are the ways in which females have been positioned within discourses of vulnerability and passivity, subject to rape culture (Dosekun, 2007; Clowes, Shefer, Fouten & Vergani, 2009; Shefer, Strebel, Ngabaza & Clowes, 2018). What holds currency on campus and in university residences are issues of gender and sexual violence (Mackay & Magwaza, 2008; Hames, 2009; Collins, Loots, Meyiwa & Mistrey, 2009; Collins & Gordon, 2013), and the pervasiveness of unsafe spaces for female students (Ngabaza, Bojarczuk, Masuku & Roelfse, 2015). In addition,

the Soudien Report highlighted the existence of structural sexism and patriarchy, which some South African institutions have raised as posing problems for the transformation agenda of higher education (Department of Education, 2008). Emanating from the report, one of the findings revealed that in historically black institutions, the construction of the male identity is expressed through the assertion of authority and power, legitimized through cultural and traditional discourses. According to Sathiparsad, Taylor and Dlamini (2008), South African society is one of many patriarchal societies in which masculinity is valorised and the associated constructions of being a man resonates with being dominant, aggressive and assertive. Other studies have illustrated how hegemonic masculinity intersects to facilitate and encourage violent practices among men, women and children (Ratele, 2008; Clowes, Lazarus & Ratele, 2010). Thus, existing gender relations and male hegemony have been thrust into the spotlight (Ratele, 2015). Since higher education institutions are replicates and microcosms of society, they are complicit in reproducing the social tensions that exist in society (Jagessar & Msibi, 2015).

This chapter seeks to understand how gender is given meaning through heteropatriachal norms and within particular discourses. Scholars have argued that gender identities are complexly positioned, embedded and constrained within hetero-patriarchal cultural norms that have been shaped by societal norms tied to specific socio-historical cultural contexts (Bhana, De Lange & Mitchell, 2009; Bhana, 2010; Bhana, Nzimakwe & Nzimakwe, 2011). This chapter discusses continuities, momentary breakages, resistance and ruptures, as masculinities and femininities are fluid, dynamic, and shifting under differing socio-cultural circumstances. Connell (1987, 1995) and Butler (1990, 1993) argue that gender is a highly fluid concept that does more than simply define what men to do women.

This chapter, by drawing on a Foucauldian notion that links the inextricable aspects of power and resistance, further attempts to gauge the construction of gender identities through discourses of culture and cultural norms, fashion and dress, and heterosexual relationships and desire. These three broad themes are expanded in this chapter through data collected from the accounts of male and female students, both local and international. This chapter also illuminates how gender power relations, weaving through the everyday lives of students, are negotiated, contested, mediated, accommodated and rejected. Theoretically, this chapter

leans towards Connell's (1987, 1995) theories of gender power and Butler's (1990, 1993) theories of gender performativity embedded within a poststructuralist framework.

This chapter discusses the following themes:

- Making gender: Culture and cultural norms.
- Making gender: Fashion and dress:
  - With most Zims you find we don't wear miniskirts;
  - We're not here for Brazilian; and
  - Everyone tries so hard to fit in here.
- Making gender: Heterosexual relationships and challenging female passivity:
  - If I see a guy who is cute, you sit there …
  - You don't have to be boyfriend or girlfriend to hook up.

7.2 MAKING GENDER: CULTURE AND CULTURAL NORMS

This section of the chapter investigates how students give meaning to gender through discourses of culture and cultural norms, as this featured prominently during interview discussions with Phume (African female), Colleen (white female), Muhle (African female) and James (white male). This discussion was important, as cultural discourses around race and gender were highlighted in the Soudien Report as being problematic and troubling the issues of social cohesion (Department of Education, 2008). Clarke (2006) argues that culture continues to play an important role in the way in which race and gender identities are constructed in post-apartheid South Africa.

During my group discussion, the dominance of masculine power embedded within cultural norms featured strongly in the case of Phume and had shaped her interactions in her rural homestead, supported by "emphasised femininity" (Connell, 1987). In the case of Muhle, masculine power, tied to intimate partner relations and undergirded by dominant cultural norms, features strongly in her heterosexual relationship. For Colleen, masculine power occupies dominance in the classroom and learning spaces of the campus environment. James elucidates how masculine power is valorised and reproduced in the campus environment, and upheld by cultural norms and practices that tie hegemonic power to cultural practices in attempts to regulate femininity and keep women in their place. As Connell (1995) argues that

masculine identities are constructed in relation to feminine identities, the key to understanding issues of patriarchy and masculine power lies in understanding the ways in which gender power relations are imbricated and weave through constructions of masculinities and femininities.

I initially met this group of students outside the 'white' coffee shop (explained in detail in chapter four), situated directly above the 'black' cafeteria (ironically, it can be seen here that relations of domination and subordination are carved through spacial alignment on campus). The coffee shop was a hive of activity, as students and academics gathered at different times of the day to take a break and sip coffee or have an "English" meal. I vividly remember a very audible, loud burst of laughter filling the air. I turned around and was immediately confronted by this group of very happy people. Colleen, Phume, Muhle and James were friends of a larger mixed-race (comprised of different races) and mixed-gender group on campus. Their friendship began at university on their first day, during orientation as first years. In my daily observations, as I explained in chapter four, I noted that a racially mixed group of this nature was not a common occurrence on the campus under study, as most large groups were racially homogenous (Pattman, 2007). However, this group did not "comfortably" fit the "racially homogenous" profile and defied racial boundaries that were perhaps complicated by class relations (Bhana, 2013a). In the discussion below, I proposed that the group discuss how culture was interwoven with their lives and relations on campus.

> **Phume:** When I visit my family in the rural homestead, it is very clearly distinct that you are a girl; this is your place. Like, literally, I can't argue; I can't raise my voice for anything, which is quite difficult because I can do all of that when I am on campus. I am in university; I am allowed to have my own opinions, but there is this transition that I have to do … I remember having this particular argument with my mother for food. I was, like, mom don't give all the food away. Split it, so that everybody gets food. And all the ladies in the kitchen turned to me and said you must know your place … [a] woman is merely an object to satisfy the man's need, not … a person who is an intellectual, not a person with agency. Just take care of this and we will do all the thinking. And I was really shocked on hearing this! [Expression of exasperation.]

Phume's narrative intimately describes her race and gender identity in the rural homestead, regulated through cultural norms and compliance, as being polarised to her identity in the academic environment, which is imbued with freedom and power. Phume draws upon her social, material and historical conditions to give meaning to race and gender, which manifests in the reproduction of inequalities in her personal life. For Phume, the manifestation of culture holds sway, as she must negotiate between modernity and cultural norms – "there is this transition that I have to do" – when she visits her family in the rural homestead. According to Sideris (2004), social and material conditions in rural South Africa are regulated through cultural norms that sustain the subordinate status of women and girls in the family structure. Sideris (2004) notes that in these areas, despite political gains that promote gender equality, tradition and customary practices hold sway to perpetuate gender inequalities and valorise male hegemony. Similarly, as pointed out by Sideris (2004), parallels can be drawn to Phume who is subjected to cultural regulation and compliance in the rural homestead. Hence, her agency in the rural homestead is diminished and sits in tension with the freedom and power that she possesses on campus.

Phume's testimony elucidates the "agency versus tradition debate" (Reygan & Lynette, 2014), as she is cognizant of the transition she must make when she visits family in the rural homestead, set against the competing discourses of a women with agency and power, which she has derived from her academic institution. Phume's identity in the rural homestead is polarised against her identity as a woman with agency and power, elucidating the campus environment as an enabler of freedom, power and agency. Phume is able to exercise her freedom of thought and agency: "I can do all of that when I am on campus. I am in university; I am allowed to have my own opinions." This power is, however, regulated and restricted by the collective effort of the women in the rural homestead. Phume's testimony draws attention to the extent to which other women are complicit in maintaining the hierarchical gender order by invoking a cultural discourse to give meaning to gender.

The scholars Bhana, De Lange and Mitchell (2009, p. 54) assert that "In the attempt to uphold familiar and unequal gender relations, the men collude to put women in their place – expecting the performance of familiar household roles – and in the process reproducing male hierarchical power". However, in the case of Phume, the African women in the rural

homestead are complicit in upholding masculine power to ensure that gender conformity is sustained through cultural norms. According to Connell (1987, p.183), a form of femininity – "emphasised femininity" –"defined around compliance with this subordination and is oriented to accommodating the interests and desires of men". We see this working in the life of Phume, as the older women in the rural homestead utilise masculine power to subordinate younger women and put them in their place. According to Connell (1987), the gender order normalises dominant masculinities and emphasised femininities complement these. Similarly, Bhana (2010) notes that customary practices, as institutionalised mechanisms of social control, remain strong in terms of upholding male hegemony in rural areas. Phume's contestation, negotiation and accommodation of gender power relations that undergird both her rural African identity and her African identity on campus signal to the ways in which gendered identities are socially, culturally and discursively produced – and that these are intimately connected and weave through the lives of students within the campus environment.

A study by Rudwick and Shange (2006), conducted in a rural area of northern KwaZulu-Natal, evinced that many rural Zulu people maintain a patriarchal and primordially perceived cultural system, which, in the context of the tradition of *'isiHlonipha'*, involves the disempowerment of women. Similarly, Phume experiences this when she is confronted by women in her rural homestead: "[A] woman is merely an object to satisfy the man's need, not … a person who is an intellectual, not a person with agency. Just take care of this and I will do all the thinking." This statement is in keeping with *hlonipha,* in sustaining a patriarchal system of privilege by valorising masculine power, while simultaneously eroding Phume's agency as a younger Zulu woman, positioning her at the bottom of the gender hierarchy. Burr (2003) purports that prevailing discourses of femininity uphold power inequalities by the acceptance that men, relative to women, are positioned as more powerful in society. We see this in the life of Phume, as the women in her rural homestead maintain and reproduce masculine power, reinforcing the subordinate status of women. Phume's testimony signals to the complex and contradictory ways in which diverse and multiple femininities are constructed in different social and cultural contexts, in disempowering ways. Colleen alludes to these in our discussion:

> **Colleen:** I think a lot of them (African) are very traditional, *cos* I know, in gender studies, we discussed this a lot and nearly every single one of the guys that have spoken up in class have said we follow this traditional way. In class, we spoke about how culture needs to evolve and how are they going to help it evolve. But they (African) stick with history and the past and … all these different cultural barriers are used to maintain the rules about men and women, and superiority and inferiority.

In the above excerpt, Colleen illuminates the ways in which the discussions in her gender studies lecture reproduce gender inequalities sustained through a cultural discourse. Colleen speaks of experiences similar to those of Phume in the rural homestead, as the men in her class use culture to keep women in their place to "maintain the rules about men and women, and superiority and inferiority". Colleen's narrative weaves race, culture and tradition as intersecting in reproducing, perpetuating and sustaining male hegemony in the lecture room, through a cultural discourse. These men draw upon history and the practices of the past to keep women in their place, thus legitimising women's marginalised position and reproducing gender inequality. Thus, relations of domination (male superiority) and subordination (female inferiority) are evoked through culture, with negative consequences. Further, Colleen conflates the culture and tradition linked to an African identity, which holds sway as the men (African) in her class draw upon socio-historic practices to legitimise their hegemonic status, simultaneously reproducing unequal gender power relations in the classroom setting.

According to Nhlapo (as cited in Sideris, 2004), men's reference and practices of culture, used as a means to shape social life, is reflective of the need to preserve their social identity. Similarly, the men in Colleen's classroom evoke culture and tradition to maintain and solidify their hegemonic status by evoking relations of domination and subordination through culture and tradition. The men in Colleen's lecture room draw on the binary notions of masculinity-femininity and superiority-inferiority, fixed to notions of men (relations of dominance) and women (relations of subordination) reproducing unequal gender power relations. What Colleen highlights is the reproduction and sustenance of unequal gender power relations in the academic space of the campus, which is pervasive and recurrent. Muhle also discusses these notions:

> **Muhle:** My mom has said to me: 'I might have sent you to a white school, but we do things the black way in this family,' and I think my culture and my education has made me a feminist in the sense I feel like I have to fight to be heard, fight to be seen ... the guy (African) that I am with now, I have been with him for 10 years and we starting to talk marriage and stuff. And I feel like we never *gonna* get married because we disagree with a lot of things that he says. Like, he expects respect because it is in his culture and I am, like, respect is earned. I have to be there for his family, because it is in our culture. All of a sudden, he feels he can tell me what to do, like he owns me and I am like in a position where I have to fight him on every single thing. Like, I am not his property!

Here Muhle views her heterosexual relationship with her intimate partner as being tied with Zulu cultural norms, and juxtaposes the construction of her identity against her education and her claim to be a feminist. Cultural practices loom large in Muhle's life and are supported by her mother, who reinforces that Muhle belongs to a "black family", even though Muhle had attended a previously white, middle-class school. Muhle is thus required to comply with this notion of "blackness/Africanness", as implicated by her mother, suggesting cultural compliance and conformity. However, Muhle's assertion – "I think my culture has made me a feminist in the sense I feel like I have to fight to be heard, fight to be seen" – implies that she rejects her culture as essentialist and monolithic. In so doing, she labels herself a feminist, as she challenges the unequal power relations in her relationship. Muhle further implicates her education at a 'white school' as shaping her identity as a feminist who resists the unequal gender power relations that her partner is attempting to entrench through a form of male domination supported by cultural norms. In Muhle's context, her intimate partner relationship is defined by male power and, in the above testimony, we see it working, but not without resistance. According to Alsop et al., (2002, p.152), "dominant discourses of masculinity define maleness as being in control, having power over others and one's environment". Similarly, this is the type of masculinity that Muhle's partner exhibits in trying to control their relationship.

Muhle further explains how culture shapes and dominates her heterosexual relationship with her partner, and is tied to masculine power. Muhle's assertion – "like, he expects respect

because it is in his culture and I am, like respect is earned" – elucidates how her intimate partner attempts to enforce hierarchical and normative gendering through the invocation of the Zulu customary tradition of *hlonipha* (respect), which, according to Hunter (2010b), maintains social hierarchies in terms of gender and age. Muhle's assertion of her agency challenges entrenched cultural norms and the patriarchal order in which cultural compliance is complicit tied to her gender identity as a Zulu women.

Thus, Muhle's assertion of her agency disrupts the traditional and cultural regulation of Zulu customary practices enforced by her intimate partner. In labelling herself a feminist, Muhle presents culture and tradition as fluid and dynamic. Clark (2006) asserts that while culture and tradition bestows Zulu men with independence, modernity is exercised by young black women as a claim to power. Similarly, Muhle invokes her education in labelling herself as a feminist, rupturing the traditional gender role of her African identity, as defined through compliance and conformity. Muhle claims her independence and modernity and hence claims power. Jagger (2008, p.89) contends "Throughout Butler's work…the practices which constituted us as gendered subjects also provide the possibility of agency and resistance". We see the workings of this, as Muhle as an African woman is not constrained by her culture, but rather challenges the unequal power relations embedded in her heterosexual relationship. Colleen also comments on these power relations:

> **Colleen:** I think it [culture] was designed to benefit men. [Long pause.] You see, when equality came in when women were becoming equal to men, it threatened them. So I think, like, on campus and stuff, they are threatened very much because there are a lot of women who want to learn and be equal to them [men], and they want to be treated equal to them [men]. So I think their masculinity and, like, I think the system before, benefited them, so they have to find ways to keep their power, to keep their masculinity, by putting women down, so they [are] still making cultural things very prominent, because they still want to put us down.

Here Colleen draws our attention to the discourse of equality, as constrained and limited by the discourse of culture. This is despite shifts and changes in the socio-economic and political context of South Africa, as enshrined in the constitution, which promotes gender equality.

Colleen elucidates how the gender equality policy of the country, which advocates for women's political autonomy (Bhana et al., 2009) and equality manifest. However, these are constrained within discussions in the classroom environment, as masculine power is threatened and made vulnerable by discourses on gender equality, illuminating the nuanced and complex ways in which gender power is contested and resisted in the classroom. According to Connell (2002), disturbances within the gender system and individuals' beliefs about gender have been prompted by the emergence of the women's liberation movement, which challenges men's dominant position within the gender system and has necessitated a reconsideration of men's dominant status, which had formerly been taken for granted. Similarly, a study by Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (2013) contends that traditional types of masculinity are being challenged.

However, in the case of Colleen it is evident that the males in the lecture reproduce inequalities sustained by a cultural and historical discourse as they resist change made permeable by a discourse of equality. Colleen argues that gender equality in the classroom is subverted by traditional notions of masculinity, fixed to culture and tradition, in an attempt to "reinforce notions of male power and female submission" (Ngabaza, Shefer & Catriona, 2016). Similarly, in a study by Pattman (2001), men at a college in Zimbabwe viewed the education of women and women's aspiration to modernity as a threat to male dominance. Colleen's elucidates how gender equality discourses within the classroom are penetrating and undermining male dominance, as cultural norms are invoked to secure male dominance and hegemony. This highlights "the tension between change and permanence in gender relations … expressed as a debate between rights and culture" (Sideris, 2004, p. 112).

> **James:** I think guys don't want to give it (culture) up because it favours them hugely, like … what kind of guy is going to give up being treated like a king … they don't want to give up the power that they have …. the guys definitely think that they are entitled to stuff. However, I am different. I don't believe in that *kinda* male superiority. [Long pause.] We are all equal. (FG 3, focus group of mixed race and gender.)

Here James talks about the pervasive male power on campus being validated and reinforced by culture. He intimately weaves gender and culture as validating masculine power and

sustaining the hegemony of the gender order. The use of the word "king" implicates notions about the privilege and entitlement of men being sustained by a cultural discourse. James's testimony elucidates and reinforces the unequal gender power relations that are played out on campus. This is also highlighted by Phume, Colleen and Muhle. James elucidates how cultural discourses are utilised in attempts to sustain hegemonic masculinity to maintain a hierarchical gender order of domination and subordination, presenting culture in static and monolithic ways. James thus explains how culture remains strong and fixed as the men, through cultural entitlement, sustain relations of domination and subordination. However, James himself contests this form of hegemonic masculinity, which is pervasive within the campus environment, and asserts that he supports equitable relationships with women on campus. What he clarifies in his testimony is the emergence of a multiplicity of masculinities (Sathiparsad, 2007). This also signals to the fact that men and masculinity are not essentialist, but are simultaneously changing and resistant, which has positive implications for transformation and social cohesion on campus.

This section discussed how Phume, Colleen and Muhle's gender identities – shaped by cultural norms and traditions that have been imposed on them by their social contexts also dominate the learning spaces – weaving through their everyday lives on campus. However, their accounts further elucidate that they are not simply victims shaped by cultural norms, as they resist and challenge unequal gender power relations. This signals to the complexity and plurality of femininities. James asserts and reinforces the pervasiveness of masculine power on the campus environment. However, he is supportive of more equitable relationships on campus, which points to the multiplicity and fluidity of masculinities. According to Kimmel (1994, p. 124): "These tensions suggest that cultural definitions of gender are played out in a contested terrain and are themselves power relations". We further see the workings of this in the narratives, as expressed by Phume, Colleen, Muhle and James.

7.3 MAKING GENDER THROUGH FASHION AND DRESS:

In this section of the chapter, I discuss the ways in which gender is given meaning through fashion and dress (discourse of taste). The first part of this section discusses the conversation I had with a group of students from Zimbabwe. In the accounts of Nyasha, Lee, Gabriel and Patrick, gender identities are regulated through dress, implicating discourses of culture,

viewed in static and monolithic ways. The second part of this section – as discussed by Amanda, Zethu, Nobhule and Zwane – explains the ways in which gender identities are given meaning through a discourse of fashion as an expression of agency and power, thereby subverting the power relations that are fixed to class and material status.

With most Zims you find we don't wear miniskirts:

Nyasha and Lee (both female), and Gabriel and Patrick (both male) are international students from Zimbabwe who are pursuing a postgraduate qualification on the Durban campus. I interacted with them when they started university as undergraduate students and visited the International Office, where I work. These Zimbabwean internationals became friends when they met in their first year of study. They reside in the student residences on campus with local South African students. Of note is that they only have friends from Zimbabwe and find it difficult to integrate with South African students in the residences. One of the reasons that they give for this is the language barrier that they encounter. The local students prefer to speak IsiZulu in the residences, while the Zimbabwean nationals speak Tshwana or Shona and cannot speak IsiZulu fluently. In the narrative below, I discuss how gender identities are constructed through dress and fashion (discourse of taste). Nyasha, below, talks about this in terms of Zimbabwean culture.

> **Nyasha:** In the Zim culture, we are conservative; we come from a conservative background. We come from a background where, for the girls getting pregnant before you are married, is a taboo; it is not allowed. Not that it is a taboo, really. It does happen, but it is something that does not go well at home. We are respectful, we respect one another, we respect each other and we are conservative, both in our language and in the way we dress. With most Zims, you find we don't wear miniskirts; that is how we are different, because people this side are very carefree … with Zimbabweans you hardly find most unmarried girls with babies, pregnant or [wearing] miniskirts, but this side it seems like it's okay. You can be pregnant and not be married, wear miniskirts …

In the narrative above, Nyasha draws upon her Zimbabwean socio-cultural background to affirm her gender identity. She positions herself within dominant discourses of femininity, as

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being conservative and respectful rooted to Zimbabwean culture and upbringing. Chingono (2015) purports that despite the gains of gender equality, women are still culturally bound between expressing themselves freely and maintaining the respect of males. Nyasha's repeated emphasis of "we" as a collective creates a binary of us (Zimbabweans) and them (South Africans), draws attention to the multiple ways in which femininities are constructed and upheld within different socio-cultural contexts. According to Nyasha, the Zimbabwean woman is constructed as conservative and respectful, as juxtaposed against the South African woman, who is constructed as being carefree and disrespectful. Chingono (2015, p.153) argues that in "Western and African contexts, similarities can be drawn between women who were governed in a patriarchal society to adhere to patriarchal rules in terms of dress". We also see how Nyasha's socio-cultural and historical roots play out in terms of her views on dressing linked to South African females on campus. The narrative is reflective of patriarchal Zimbabwean societal attitudes and norms that are undergirded by tradition and culture (Vincent, 2009; Makoni, 2011; Chingono, 2015).

It is evident from the narrative above that Nyasha's construction of her femininity is embedded within heteronormative hegemonic patriarchal discourses, as she inextricably links marriage and pregnancy as fixed factors within her cultural understanding of acceptable femininity. Kesby (as cited in Tinarwo & Pasura, 2014, p. 523), argue that, in Zimbabwean society, the institution of marriage is symbolic of the configuration of "power, space and identity for women". And we see this evidenced in Nyasha's account, when she says: "In the Zim culture, we are conservative; we come from a conservative background. We come from a background where, for the girls getting pregnant before you are married, is a taboo it is not allowed." Thus, Nyasha a student of the 21st century draws upon historical, social and cultural repertoires to regulate her femininity through fixed notions of marriage and babies, thus naturalising heterosexuality and upholding hegemonic masculinity through cultural subordination in maintaining gender conformity. Nyasha accedes to dominant discourses of femininity that position her in traditionally gendered ways. In doing so, she presents the Zimbabwean culture as static, monolithic and homogenous (Vincent, 2009). It can be seen that traditional values, upheld by patriarchal cultural practices, erode her agency as they refute modernity.

Clark (2006) purports that modernity is exercised by young black women as a claim to power and we see this rejected in Nyasha's narrative, which positions her within normative discourses of femininity. Nyasha further alludes to and draws upon the historical legacy of the "miniskirt" to regulate her gender identity. An article by Gaidzanwa (1993) details the miniskirt incident that took place in 1992, in which a black Zimbabwean model was attacked by about 100 male students while visiting the University of Zimbabwe (UZ). The incident was widely reported in local and international media, and sparked anger among female students at UZ, who later embarked on a protest against the incident by wearing miniskirts. In Pattman's (2001) study at Masvingo Primary Teachers' College in Zimbabwe, female students from urban backgrounds were blamed for "prostituting" themselves and emulating white values by wearing trousers and short skirts. Subsequently, female students were cautioned not to wear provocative, modern clothing when undertaking teaching practice in rural areas (Pattman, 2001). While, in South Africa, regulating gender identities through dress is not uncommon in urban and rural townships (Moletsane, Mitchell & Smit, 2012). According to Chingono (2015, p. 153), "… the period in which patriarchy was deemed a dominant social system within the West, women's dress reflected their submissive role to males". This is espoused by Nyasha, who draws on socio-cultural repertoires supported by patriarchal discourses to discuss conservative dress sense, simultaneously regulating her gender identity.

According to Jewkes and Morrell (2012), women who express acquiescent femininities, acceding to male power by choice, make their lives more meaningful in cultural terms. Jewkes and Morrell (2012) contend that being conservative and acquiescent can also lead to women supporting highly oppressive traditional practices. McHoul and Grace (1993, p. 75) on expanding upon Foucault (1986) assert that to "… to historicise power … and relate it to the production of certain types of bodies is to say something about the configuration of our historical conditions- a history that both male and female bodies are enmeshed within". We see the workings of this in Nyasha, who, as a Zimbabwean, is respectful and conservative, and rejects clothing such as miniskirts, which symbolise women who are loose and carefree, and thus not aligned to Zimbabwean culture. Further, it has been observed that Nyasha, through normative dressing, is tied to particular socio-cultural repertoires that grant meaning to her gender identity. Below is Lee's narrative.

> **Lee:** Here on this campus, it is more like cultures and backgrounds that define who we are. We are grounded, so much so when we come here [UKZN], we still have those [Zimbabwean] values, as compared to South Africans. For example, our clothing is conservative, but when you come here, you see the dressing is more like miniskirts and that kind of stuff.

Lee, like Nyasha, affirms that despite being in a South African context and within a campus environment, her belief system is rooted in Zimbabwean values, and she draws upon a cultural discourse to give meaning to her gender identity. According to Foucault (1990), discourses are historically and socially situated, linked to power and subject to resistance and change. However, in Lee's case, she uses a cultural discourse to reinforce and uphold masculine power, undergirded by traditional and cultural notions that are embedded within Zimbabwean values. Both Nyasha and Lee hold tradition and culture as fixed and unchanging, diminishing their agency and refuting modernity. Chingona (2015) purports that despite an era in which democracy and gender equality is embraced and valued, women from traditional cultures are still culturally bounded and dress conservatively. Both Nyasha and Lee's gender identities are bound and regulated by their culture, which is fixed to dress, thus culture is placed as central to the construction of gender identities on campus in this account. Gabriel further discusses this culture in his testimony below:

> **Gabriel:** From my own personal experience, from what I have seen, actually, it all comes back to culture. The culture from where I come … it is like they are *supposed* [author's emphasis] to give that respect. They [Zimbabweans] dress in long skirts and things like that, but when you come here, it is so westernised; it is university and everyone is having   fun, so that factor comes out … This is their style and then there is this other   group who got their own style; even us guys will be choosing our girlfriends from the kind of dress code and definitely not the miniskirts. [Group laughs aloud.] We will never date the South African miniskirts [laughs aloud]. (FG 11, focus group of international students from Africa of mixed gender).

In his narrative, Gabriel alludes to how dress, bodies and heterosexuality are highly gendered and regulated, and construct masculinities and femininities as relational and oppositional**.**

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With his statement: "Even us guys will be choosing our girlfriends from the kind of dress code and definitely not the miniskirts," Gabriel affirms his heteronormative hegemonic masculinity, as he has the agency to choose a girlfriend who conforms to traditional dress codes. His regulation of gender identity through discourses of culture and dress is similar to Nyasha and Lee's cultural self-regulation through dress. Gabriel draws on his social, material and cultural context in normalising femininity regulated through dress, thereby reinforcing and reproducing masculine and patriarchal power within normative heterosexual interactions. He also implicates modernity and westernisation as a negative influence on the dress sense of women on campus. According to Vincent (2009), men in contemporary Africa have taken it upon themselves to police women's dress sense. Gabriel, too, is thus complicit in the regulation of femininity by enforcing a conservative dress sense on campus women. According to Chingona (2015, p. 157), "women from conservative countries such as Zimbabwe are more likely to wear clothing that is not sexually provocative, while those from more 'liberal' nations like South Africa would be more comfortable wearing sexually provocative clothing". Patrick, below, discusses aspects of dress:

> **Patrick:** *Ya*, let us take an example with the ladies. Like, in my culture, ladies have a certain way of wearing, of dressing. And in my culture, we do have some parts of … women that you can't see if she is not your wife. But here it is open to us, they don't care; they just leave themselves open; you see legs. But in my culture, it is not acceptable and we have to cooperate with that, otherwise it is going to affect us in one way or another, you know. But here *we* can look too [author's emphasis; group laughs aloud]. (FG 11, focus group of international students from Africa mixed gender).

Patrick's narrative reaffirms the testimony of Nyasha, Lee and Gabriel, by conflating culture, tradition and clothing as fixed to the regulation and meaning ascribed to gender identities within normative heterosexual discourses. Patrick's testimony reinforces hegemonic masculinities undergirded by patriarchal traditions that regulate the constructions of femininity through clothing (Vincent, 2009; Chingona, 2015). Patrick, too, draws upon his material, social and cultural context as he takes it upon himself to "police female morality" (Vincent, 2009), thus maintaining the status quo of a hegemonic patriarchal discourse. Patrick, however, although he is complicit in reinforcing the hierarchical gender order, also

highlights inequitable power relations between Zimbabwean men and women, upheld by cultural norms. His statement: "But here we can look too," reinforces unequal power relations, as Patrick as a man has the agency to look at other (South African) women as "objects of desire", while simultaneously policing the femininity of Zimbabwean women. In so doing, he reaffirms, reifies and solidifies his hegemonic masculinity through heterosexuality as he, as a man, has the power to look at other women who are not from his culture. He subordinates women from his own culture by drawing on discourses of culture and fashion in regulating gender identity.

We're not here for Brazilian:

The group narratives below are from Amanda, Zethu, Nomzamo, Nobuhle and Nokhawi (all black African), who are first-year female students at the College of Humanities on campus. I met them during my frequent visits to the "black cafeteria". I was particularly interested in getting to know this group because they are an exclusively black African (not racially integrated) group and always very "loud". Amanda always dressed in a very masculine fashion and made a concerted effort to cover up her femininity, or any aspect that identified her as a female. It was only during the interviews that she confessed that she was a lesbian and admonished all feminine aspects of her identity. This group also revealed that they had been friends from school and indicated that their friendship was "unbreakable". The narrative that unfolds below describes a conversation that I had with the group on how the discourse of fashion intersects with gender identities and how this is given meaning on campus.

> **Amanda** : We are used to wearing the same things at school; then, after school, there is that pressure when you see other people wearing name brands and you want to be part of that group yourself.

> **Nokhazi:** *Ya*, you want to be part of that in-group.

> **Amanda:** But we noticed that some of them they can't even afford it; that is what I think … *cos* some of them come from very poor backgrounds, actually, most of them that we know. But they come here and they see other girls and they want to dress up like them.

Nobhule: *Eish!* Those hairstyles [laughs aloud].

Amanda: *Ya*, and to look good to look a certain way.

Researcher: So do all the girls want to do this?

Nobhule: Mostly ... mostly all the girls, but they have sugar daddies.

Researcher: Sugar daddies, what is that?

Zethu: Well, it is like an exchange kind of thing; it's like you give me money to buy my hair, my cellphone and to do this to do that, and I will give you something in return in the form of a sexual favour.

Researcher: Wow, and what do you'll do?

Zethu: We just look and laugh [the group bursts out laughing].

Nobhule: We just sit there, look at them with pity, and laugh.

Researcher: Really! Why is that so?

Zethu: *Ag!* We not here for Brazilian …. like we don't feel that pressure; we all like the same, we are grounded to our culture. [Pause.] We want to be educated and progressive on our *own* [author's emphasis] strength and not because we are dressed by the sugar daddies [whole group laughs]. (FG 1, focus group same race and gender).

In the narrative above, Amanda, Nobhule, Nokhazi and Zethu construct the "other" females through dress, fancy hairstyles and the desire to be part of the in-group as antithetical to the ways in which they (Amanda and friends) construct and give meaning to their gender

identities. Similarly, Amanda asserts that female students who want to be part of the "in group" on campus cannot afford to do so, as their socio-economic status and backgrounds precludes them from such a lifestyle. According to this group, females on campus who choose to be part of the in-group and wear fancy clothes and hairstyles are engaged in sugar-daddy relationships. Weedon (1987, p. 86-87) argues that, "In 'patriarchal' societies we cannot escape the implications of femininity. Everything we do signifies compliance or resistance to dominant norms of what it is to be a woman." Similarly, the "other" female students who engage in sugar-daddy relationships construct their gender identity according to dominant notions of femininity and hegemonic heterosexuality.

Amanda, Nokhazi, Nobhule and Zethu highlight that the engagement in sugar-daddy relationships serves as a conduit for material acquisition and "brand-name clothing". This is similar to Masvawure's research findings (2010) at the University of Zimbabwe, where she discovered that females from the lower economic middle classes utilise these relationships to acquire a modern lifestyle and females from the upper middle-class use them to maintain a privileged economic status. Transactional connections within the higher education environment, better known as sugar-daddy relationships, are also explored in other studies (Selikow & Mbulaheni, 2013; Shefer, Clowes & Vergnani, 2012) and within the community (Kaufman & Stavrou, 2004; Hunter, 2002; Brouard & Crewe, 2012; Shefer & Strebel, 2012; Bhana & Pattman, 2011). Further, the overall key findings of Shefer, Clowes and Vergnani's (2012) study, conducted at another South African higher education institution, discovered that transactional relationships on campus was a common occurrence, where female students mainly engaged in these transactional relationships for the elevation of their social status.

Similarly, Selioliwe's (2005) study reveals that students engage in sugar-daddy relationships for material acquisition such as cellphones, clothes and hairstyles. Other research by Leclerc-Madlala (2003), conducted in an urban township in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), illuminated that young females engage in transactional relationships solely for material gain. In Leier's (2014) study, undertaken in KZN, the findings suggest that peer pressure, popular culture and community expectations regarding appearance and status intersect to construct an environment that pressurises young women into transactional sexual relationships. Further,

Leier's (2014) study elucidated that transactional sex functions as a mechanism for negotiating socio-economic disparities and allows access to fashion and material wealth. Within the campus environment, as noted by this group, the vested interest in pursuing sugar-daddy relationships allows women, who are benefactors in these situations, to insert themselves into middle-class lifestyles. To be "part of the in-group" and "look a certain way" is a power investment, as they are "carving out a niche … as a high status individual" (Masvawure, 2010, p. 862).

However, Amanda, Nokhazi, Zethu and Nobhule contest, challenge and resist the construction of gender identities through the discourse of fashion and dressing-up, and being part of the "in-group" on the campus, with their assertion: "We just sit there and look at them and laugh." Their agency is visible, as they subvert power relations that emerge through the discourse of fashion linked to sugar-daddy relationships. What these students highlight is how some women on campus use sugar-daddy relationships as an investment in power, by acquiring brand-name clothing and hairstyles, as this elevates their social status on the campus. However, this group of women scorns, derides and rejects the procurement of sugar-daddy relationships in order to be admitted to the "in-group". Their decision to "just sit there and look at them and laugh" is an investment in power and an exercise of their agency, as they choose not to succumb to the discourse of fashion in giving meaning to their subjectivities.

Everyone tries so hard to fit in here:

In further discussing how gender identities are constructed through the discourse of fashion, the conversation below with Vuso, Simangele, Nombuso and Sithembile illustrates how fashion is tied to heterosexual relationships on campus. Vuso, Simangele, Nombuso and Sithembile, black African female students from northern KZN, are studying Social Sciences on campus. I noticed that they always congregate together and often watch television in the common room of the residence hall. My first informal conversation with them led me to believe that their friendship began when they arrived on campus. They had also been placed in the same residence. According to the group, this strengthened their friendship, as they also had common lectures and, according to them, moved "within the same circles". Below is their narrative:

Vuso: And another thing I have noticed about Howard College is that most of the people here, *ay*, most of them, especially ladies, they try so hard to fit in to be glamourous by changing the way they look by wearing those expensive clothes.

Simangele: And in the second year, you will see they start transforming.

Nombuso: Yes, by the time they graduate, oh my god, they will be wearing 25 inches of bonding[18] or whatever, changing everything, but when they came here they are just a normal grounded girl from whatever place.

Sithembile: Which is why I refuse to change …

Vuso: Everyone tries so hard to fit in, especially here at Howard College, and you don't want to fall [into] … that group, where they can just identify you, like where you from.

Researcher: So, which group do they want to fit into?

Simangele: … with the high class … the high class [group unanimously chants].

Phumzi: Hey! All the new things all the time being glamourous.

Sithembile: *Hmmm* and not just wearing any fashionable clothes, but the one that is in at the time, for example, if the grey boots are in and everyone is wearing them, you will also go and buy them to fit in.

Phumzi: Which is why I refuse to change …
Researcher: So who are the high class on campus? Can you please explain?[Group laughs aloud.]

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[18] Hair bonding refers to a method of applying hair extensions using an adhesive to "bond" the hair piece to your natural hair.

Simangele: Oh [laughing], the high class are the very rich girls on campus who think they can get any guy and anything they desire.

Vuso: We are not like them [laughs aloud]. (FG 13, focus group of same race and gender.)

In the above excerpt class, fashion and heterosexual desire are conflated to give expression to gender identities within the group discussions of Vuso, Simangele, Phumzi and Sithembile. Vuso draws our attention to how the campus environment enables the performance of hyper-femininities through exaggerated forms of dressing in attempts to fit in. In this narrative, dressing up is a validation of desirable femininity and alludes to the ways in which multiple femininities are constructed through fashion and normalised through heterosexual desire, yet Phumzi resists it at the same time with her statement: "Which is why I refuse to change." Skeggs (2004) purports that glamour enables desirable femininity to be projected and we see how the two concepts are linked in the above narrative. However, with the statement "[women] think they can get any guy and anything they desire", the females in the group do not perceive themselves as 'objects of the male gaze' and are able to subvert the power relations.

Thus women who aspire to high-class dressing and being glamorous are able to insert themselves within dominant performances of heterosexual desire (Aslop et al., 2002), thereby normalising the performance of gender through the discourse of fashion on the campus environment. However, Vuso, Simangele, Phumzi and Sithembile refuse to be positioned in traditionally gendered ways through discourses of desirable femininity that are embedded within dominant notions of heterosexuality. Butler (2004, p. 186) purports: "The regulation of gender has always been part of the work of heterosexist normativity," and we see how women on campus are positioned within normative gender identities produced through the discourse of fashion. The scholars Kehily and Nayak (2008, p.325) also argue "that late modernity unshackles women from their patriarchal past" and this can be seen on campus. According to Skeggs (1997, p.111) "glamour is a way of transcending the banalities of femininity, which render women as passive objects, as signs of appearance without agency, as something which has to be done". However, Sithembile and Phumzi resist "the notion that

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girl's bodies exist only as heterosexual objects of desire...critiquing the ways in which girls dress to impress boys" (Renold & Ringrose, 2008, p. 322). Sithembile and Phumzi challenge the conformity to dominant notions of desirable femininity, embedded and constrained within hegemonic heterosexuality. In understanding their gender subjectivities, they disrupt essentialist constructions of femininity that relate dressing up, being glamorous and fitting in with the high class. Vuso, Sithembile, Phumzi and Simangele choose to remain within their socio-economic standing at university, problematising the multiple ways in which femininities on campus are valorised and marginalised. Skeggs (2004) contends that an important indicator of class is appearance- with less value placed upon working-class constructions of adornment and embodiment.

7.4 MAKING GENDER: HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS AND CHALLENGING FEMALE PASSIVITY

In this section of the chapter, I attempt to understand the construction of gender identities through the intersecting discourses of hegemonic heterosexuality, as this featured strongly in my conversations with students on campus. I aimed to understand how meanings that students attach to these intersections weave through their lives and lived experiences on campus. This section draws the reader's attention to the performativity (Butler, 1990) of identity through select accounts of data. Other scholars globally have also illuminated tertiary institutions as spaces of sexual exploration (Ergene, Cok, Turner & Unal, 2005; Adam & Mutongi, 2007) and sexual risk behavior associated with disease and danger (Abels & Blignaunt, 2011). According to Stevens (2004), undergraduate students who have newly arrived on campus explore and make sense of their sexual identities. Adding impetus to the argument, a South African study conducted at the University of Cape Town by Clowes, Shefer, Fouten, Vergnani and Jacobs (2009) reveals that the university is, indeed, a highly heterosexualised space. According to Hoque (2011), higher education students are at a stage in their lives that is characterised by seeking out opportunities for sexual experimentation. Hoque (2011) maintains that university students who live and socialise with other young adults are encouraged to engage in sexual activity, which may not necessarily be mutually monogamous. This section draws our attention to the multiple ways in which femininity is

enacted through heterosexual desire and disrupts and complicates the ways in which femininities have been positioned within dominant norms of passivity.

If I see a guy who is cute, you sit there and you target:

In the excerpt below, I discuss the conversation that I had with Busi, Lorraine, Lungile (all black African) and Mauria (white). They are all female, second-year Social Sciences undergraduates of different racial, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, who became friends when they arrived on campus. I initially met them outside the "coffee shop" and I recall clearly that this group, like Phume's (discussed in the first section of this chapter), was carefree and their jovialness had attracted me to them. The data extract below is in response to our discussion about their experiences of heterosexual relationships on campus. Below are the narratives of Busi, Lorraine, Lungile and Mauria:

> **Busi:** It is like a game at Howard to get around.

> **Researcher:** Get around meaning?

> **Lungile:** Meaning having many boyfriends and sleeping around all at one time.

> **Researcher:** Really [in a surprised tone]!

> **Mauria:** *Ya*, it's fun … you go up the ranks.

> **Lorraine:** *Ya*, I know you are a piece of meat.

> **Lungile**: And we know …

> **Lorraine**: We know we have allowed it; we have made it seem like it is okay … it is just how it is. And we know the game.

> **Researcher:** You play the game?

Busi: Yes [pause]; it can either make you or break you [group agrees out loud].

Researcher: What do you mean by make you or break you?

Mauria: Well, you can be labelled a slut or whore [giggles excitedly].

Lorraine: You have to play the game smart …. nonetheless, you are pulled into the game whether you like it or not, because you could be a legend or you could be the biggest whore ever …

Lorraine: So, you see, girls can target too and they do target [laughs aloud].

Mauria: Personally, for me, if I see a guy who is cute or whatever, obviously same as you, you sit there and you target and target. (FG 17, focus group of mixed race and same gender).

Busi, Mauria, Lungile and Lorraine highlight their experience of heterosexual dating on campus, expressing their gender tied to "heterosexist normativity" (Butler, 2004). The game that this group indulges in positions them as heterosexually desirable and the statement "you go up the ranks" implicates a position of power and agency if you play it. According to Weedon (1987, p. 118), "Sexuality is seen as a primary locus of power in contemporary society, constituting subjects and governing them by exercising control through their bodies". Hamilton (2007, p.147) further opines "women learn to produce feminine bodies and have desires for men that conform to heterosexual imperatives". We see the workings of this as elucidated by Busi, Lorraine, Lungile and Mauria. Further, Bhana's recent study (2016b) of young females aged 16, who are almost 17, posits that female virginity associates female power and agency, through which status as a Zulu woman is upheld. However, in this narrative, maintaining a virgin status erodes social standing and the students' position on campus. In addition, Lorraine, Busi and Mauria position themselves as "a piece of meat" and are complicit in the objectification of their sexuality in the way in which they construct their bodies and identities. According to Gowlett (2014), the use of "meat" positions these students as "heterosexually desirable objects".

Butler's (1990) theory of performativity requires the constant stylisation and enactment of a heterosexual identity, which is one that is attractive to the opposite sex. Butler (1990) maintains that power is drawn into this enactment. It has been observed that the actions of Lorraine, Busi, Lungile and Mauria are invested in constructions of heterosexuality, as they indulge in the game that positions them as heterosexually desirable and thus bring gender, heterosexuality and power to the centre of identity construction in this narrative. Busi, Mauria and Lorraine's narrative unhinges and destabilises dominant constructions of femininity, in which women are constructed as having docile bodies that are positioned within discourses of passivity and subservience. What we see in the actions of Busi, Mauria, Lungile and Lorraine is the workings of their agency, as they are able to subvert gender power relations held within heterosexual relationships, where power and control of relationships resides within the masculine domain. Their actions also exhibit current femininity, where women actively pursue desirable, heterosexual relationships. Male students are targeted and pursued through a 'desiring female gaze', which implicates the complexity of normative identity constructions regulated by cultural and gender norms on campus. This has the potential to resist and challenge entrenched notions of female passivity. The actions of Busi, Mauria, Lungile and Lorraine also point to the ways in which women on campus enact agency with perhaps, positive implications for social cohesion.

The scholars Aapola, Gonick, and Harris (2005) posits that the experiences of young women can be narrowed to two discourses – the "can do" discourse, which suggests that young women "can get what they want" and "do what they want". This is indicative of a new version of femininity that is assertive and an expression of power. Busi, Lorraine and Mauria elucidate a similar construction of femininity, which places them in a powerful position within the campus environment. They are not afraid of being stigmatised and labelled as they actively engage in the practice of heterosexual targeting. This section highlights "the negotiation of desires and sexuality practices [that] occur in social contexts in which power is embedded" (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Scott, Sharpe & Thomson, 1990, p.339). Burr (2003, p.70) contends that in the Foucauldian framework of thought "the body and especially sexuality is a major site of power relations" and this is enacted by Busi, Lorraine, Mauria and Lungile within the campus environment.

You don't have to be boyfriend/ girlfriend to hook up

The narrative below describes a conversation that I had with a group of female international students – Ashton, Zinga, Maria and Jeuke – who had come from different institutions in the US. They were categorised as study abroad students as they spent just one semester on campus, enrolled for non-degree purposes. I met them at the student residences and I remember quite clearly that my first encounter with them was in the kitchen. The local students initially classified this group as white South Africans when they first arrived on campus, using skin colour as a marker of race. When questioned about why they were cooking at such an odd hour (during lecture time), they indicated that they preferred to cook before the other students came to use the kitchen, as the members of the group were strictly vegetarian, while the others cooked meat and chicken. The narrative below details the conversation that I had with this group about their experience of heterosexual relationships and dating on campus. I was interested in this, due to the very diverse social, cultural and historical contexts of these students. Below is their narrative:

Ashton: Oh yes, the boys (African male) love us …. [squeals excitedly].

Zinga: And they (African males) are, like, all over us, so everyone [the boys] is immediately, like, I want to be your boyfriend. It [the relationship] is very aggressive and, once it starts to be aggressive, then it is very possessive. Like if you make friends with one guy and then you make friends with another guy, strictly friends, then the first guy will be very mad that you are friends with another guy because he *claimed* you [author's emphasis]. I think it is some sort of cultural arrangement.

Maria: Like, we were told by the girls in our residence that in Zulu culture, he [African male] defines the relationship.

Jeuke: They [African males] are so strongly pursuing a commitment from you because we were told that there is this cultural expectation that girls won't sleep with you unless you are dating, so you have to get this arbitrary permission, like, will you be my girlfriend? Like, yes, only then we can sleep together.

Maria: So that might play a part in something because, like, at home [the US], there is no cultural expectation, not that we are *loosies* or whatever [exclaims], [but], like, not a lot of girls are in relationships and it is pretty socially acceptable to sleep with people outside of relationships.

Zinga: Like you don't have to be boyfriend [or] girlfriend to hook up.

Jeuke: Yes, we reject those relationships that bind us [group laughs aloud]. (FG 10, focus group of international students (US and Germany).

According to Ashton, Zinga Jeuke and Maria, their experience of heterosexual relationships on campus is tied to race (African males), culture and hegemonic masculinity. In further describing her experience of relationships with local South African students, Zinga posits that the relationship evolved from aggressiveness to possessiveness, constructing men on campus through dominant discourses of masculinity and masculine power. Bhana (2013b, p.7) asserts that, particularly "In South Africa, ideas of masculinity linked to entitlement legitimate power within relationship dynamics". Similarly, this has been the experience of Zinga and Maria, as the male students within the relationship felt entitled ("he claimed you") and "[defined] the relationship", as an instantiation of male power embedded within their experience of heterosexual relationships. He "claimed you" is a marker of ownership and belonging. In terms of Connell's (1995) theorisation of masculinity, Ashton, Zinga, Maria and Jeuke's male partners display hegemonic masculinity as dominance over other masculine positions and women is achieved. What this group experiences in their relationships with South African partners is congruent with Bhana's (2015, p.7) finding, which asserts that within Connell's (1995) application of masculinity in South Africa, "hegemony is associated with sexual prowess, aggressiveness, strength and control over women". We see the workings of this as Ashton, Maria, Zinga and Jeuke's experience of relationships leans towards commitment, aggressiveness and control.

However, Maria and Zinga have difficulty understanding heterosexual relationship dynamics that are tied to commitment within the campus environment, as they assert that within their context (US) it is socially acceptable and normal to engage in a sexual relationship without the

bondage of commitment. The scholar Bogle (2008), who writes within the US context, asserts that young women's explorations of love are likely to be influenced by the "hook up" culture that emphasises casual sexual encounters and sexual experimentation. Maria and Zinga thus attempt to make sense of South African relationship dynamics through their own cultural repertoires, which destabilises the notion of the fixity of committed heterosexual relationships.

According to Allen (2003), while male power within the context of this narrative is pervasive, it is simultaneously contested, challenged and negotiated by Maria, Zinga, Ashton and Jeuke, thus affording them a measure of agency to challenge gender power relations that are tied to normative understandings of heterosexual relationships. Maria and Zinga therefore resist, contest and challenge the cultural logic deployed in understanding their experiences of heterosexual dating on campus. Maria and Ashton are able to exercise their agency through their own cultural repertoires, when they state that "you don't have to be boyfriend or girlfriend" and rupture the masculine power that is fixed to committed heterosexual relationships. Thus Maria, Zinga, Jeuke and Ashton express their agency by rejecting committed relationships and deploy their cultural repertoire by engaging in behaviour known in the US as the "hook up", which allows individuals to engage in unfettered sexual activity. According to study findings "hook up" culture has become the normative form of intimacy at US Colleges of higher education (Kalish & Kimmel, 2011; Ronen, 2010).

The narrative further highlights the multiple constructions of femininities, as Ashton, Maria, Zinga and Jeuke do not conform to dominant notions of heterosexual dynamics legitimised through their cultural repertoires in understanding relationship dynamics. For South African males on campus, any advancement made in heterosexual relationships requires commitment. However, for Ashton, Maria, Zinga and Jeuke, engaging in a heterosexual relationship does not require commitment, but just a "hook up". This narrative also draws attention to the multiple ways in which femininities are constructed, in its focus on discourses of culture and context. Ashton, Zinga, Jeuke and Maria display a contemporary femininity that challenges the power of heterosexual relationships on the campus, which are tied to expressions of hegemonic masculinity demonstrated by their partners.

7.5 CONCLUSION:

In this chapter I focused on the multiple and complex ways in which men and women on campus gave meaning to their gender identities through culture and cultural norms, heterosexual relationships and the discourse of fashion and desire. In the first section of this chapter, the dominance of masculine power embedded within cultural norms features strongly in the case of Phume, in shaping her interactions in the rural homestead, where 'emphasised femininity' is supported (Connell, 1995). In the case of Muhle, masculine power tied to intimate partner relations, undergirded by dominant cultural norms, feature strongly in her heterosexual relationship. For Colleen, masculine power dominates the classroom and learning spaces of the institution under study. James elucidates how this power is valorised and reproduced on campus and upheld by cultural norms and practices that tie hegemonic power to cultural practices in attempts to regulate femininity and keep women in their place. However, we also see contestation and resistance from Phume, Muhle and Colleen, who challenge normative relations of hegemonic power.

In the second part of this chapter, gender identities are constructed through discourses of fashion and desire. These serve as markers of power and status, positioning some of the women on the campus environment in a hierarchal position and, in the process, also "other" students who do not conform to the dominant discourses of heterosexuality and desire. However, these discourses are also used to subvert power relations on campus, as agency is enacted by some of the participants who resist being positioned in traditionally gendered ways through the discourses of fashion and desire. The last section of this chapter discusses the construction of gender identities through the dialogue of heterosexuality and how power relations that are tied to hegemonic relationships are disrupted and challenged. The participants exercised their agency to subvert the masculine power relations by indulging in heterosexual targeting and heterosexual dating relationships. This chapter therefore elucidates that gender identities are far more complexly positioned and constructed, and highlights how socio-cultural, historical and material contexts and repertoires construct gender identities that weave their way through the lives of students in the campus environment.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY:

In this chapter, I provide an overall summary of the study. This chapter highlights the findings of the study and elaborates upon recommendations for further research. I outline each chapter briefly, provide a conceptual orientation and methodological sketch of the research journey undertaken and explain in detail the main findings of each analysis chapter, framed by the key research questions of this study. In the main, this thesis considers the ways in which higher education students give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality. This study is situated on the Howard College campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, established as the result of the merger between a historically white and historically Indian university during a post-apartheid redressing of the South African higher education landscape. This thesis is set in a current political context that concerns the broader issues of transformation and social cohesion within South African higher education institutions. Issues of social cohesion and transformation, set against the backdrop of the Soudien Report and the 'Reitz incident', highlight how the complex matrix of race, gender and sexuality is being played out with negative repercussions for student and staff relations (Department of Education, 2008).

The 'Reitz incident', the Soudien Report and the #studentmovements that proliferated in 2015 and 2016 point to unjust social inequalities, still evident decades after the demise of apartheid discourses, that continue to hamper the attempts of higher education institutions to be socially cohesive. I argue that it is therefore critical to take cognisance of the significance and meanings that students attach to race, class, gender and sexuality, within the context of the shifting political landscape that concerns the country's transition from an apartheid state to a democratic state of higher education and governance. In this study, I have paid attention to the ways in which higher education students; situated on a particular campus of a transformed university, give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality.

Students at tertiary institutions in contemporary South Africa now have the opportunity to interact and mix with one another as, ostensibly, apartheid discourses ceased in 1994. This,

however, has simply not been the case, as elucidated in the Soudien Report (discussed in detail in chapter one) which reveals that discourses of race, class, gender and sexuality are disrupting the mandate of higher education in terms of transformation and social cohesion (Department of Education, 2008). It is within this nexus that this study attempts to understand how higher education students give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality in their lived daily realities within the higher education environment and the relevance this holds for advancing transformation. This thesis employs a case study design that deploys ethnographic observation principles to gain a richer understanding of the lived daily experiences of the students on campus. The participants in my study are representative of the demographic landscape of the campus environment comprising both local South African and international students (from Africa and abroad). My study is feminist poststructuralist in nature. I find relevance in feminist poststructuralist theorist Chris Weedon (1987, p. 20) who contends that theory within a poststructuralist framework is meaningful if it is "able to address questions of how social power is exercised and how social relations of gender, class and race might be transformed". I deploy an eclectic approach to the concepts I have utilised in order to understand my participants through the data.

8.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY:

In response to the issues of transformation as illuminated in the Soudien Report (Department of Education, 2008), the University of KwaZulu-Natal was the first in the country to launch a Transformation Charter to both affirm its stance on equality and redress, and foster a climate of inclusivity and diversity (Vice-Chancellor's Communique, 2010, p. 4). Prior to the Soudien Report, an audit of UKZN's halls of residence concluded that "gender-based violence was 'rife' … and was supported by cultures of misogyny and homophobia" (Mackay & Magwaza, 2008, p. 21). Further, studies by Pattman (2007, 2010), Bhana (2013a, 2014, 2016a) and Singh and Bhana (2015) provide a springboard for further investigative research into issues of social cohesion and identity at the site of enquiry. In order to understand my research, I utilised a case study design of a single institution, following Stake's (1995, p. xi), definition as "the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances".

Since my study considers the ways in which higher education students give meaning to race, class, gender and sexuality in their lived daily experiences within the campus environment, I have also deployed Yin's (2002, p. 13) insight in terms of defining a case as "a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context". With this in mind, I employed ethnographic principles of observation in the academic, social and living spaces of the campus environment. The following key research questions guided my research journey.

Key Research Question:
- How do higher education students on a specific campus make meaning of race, class, gender and sexuality?

Sub-questions
- What are the discourses that students draw upon to give meaning to their identity?
- Why do students draw upon these specific discourses to give meaning to their identity?
- How is race understood and given meaning in the nexus of class and language?
- How are sexual identities given meaning in relation to heterosexual norms?
- How are gender identities given meaning in relation to hetero-patriarchal norms?

8.3 SUMMARY AND OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one provided the introduction, rationale and background of the study outlining the current issues of transformation and broader political struggles plaguing the South African higher education system. It also contains a "history lesson", as issues of transformation in the country and higher education cannot be understood without a political overview of the South African society under apartheid. More importantly, it was necessary to understand the basic schooling system and the higher education system under apartheid, which provided the foundational background and motivation for the restructuring of higher education, in its transition from apartheid rule to a democratic era. Chapter one further provided a sketch of the shifts experienced in higher education after the rationalisation of the mergers and made a case for situating this study within the chosen context of a merged higher education institution.

Chapter two outlined the concepts utilised to understand the data that emerged from this study. In attempts to situate this research contextually and understand the meaning and constructs of elements of race, class, gender and sexuality experienced by the participants in their lived worlds, I deployed an eclectic approach to the concepts that I have utilised. This study is rooted within a feminist poststructuralist framework. This thesis rejects an essentialist understanding of race, class, gender and sexuality, and therefore advances poststructuralist theorists who view power relations as fluid, changing and manifesting as a net-like relationship, each overlapping the other. Framed around this reality, I argue that the discourses shaping gender, race, class, and sexuality are inextricably linked and entangled within the socio-cultural, material and historical contexts of students lived experiences, embedded within the broader structures of power.

Chapter three provided a review of the literature drawn from local, national and international contexts. On the whole, the literature review broadly sketched the experiences and lived realities of higher education students, placing focus on the South African context, in terms of issues of transformation, as discussed in chapter one. While transformation is particular to South African society, these issues are shared globally, manifesting and cultivating in different forms. Although the primary focus of this thesis lies with higher education students within a South African context, the literature is broad, as students draw upon their socio-cultural, material and historical repertoires to construct their identities/subjectivities materially and discursively within a global space. The literature review chapter discusses both national and international literature of relevance.

Chapter four outlined the methodological roadmap that I utilised to elicit the data in the study, as well as methods deployed to analyse the data. My study is classified as a case study design of a single university campus within a bounded structure. My study is therefore qualitative in design and rooted within the constructionist paradigm of research. In order to extract my data, I employed ethnographic principles of "participant observation, semi-structured and unstructured interviews and document analysis". I spent one month in the field, observing students in the academic spaces of lecture venues, the social spaces of the cafeteria and the living spaces of the residences. Thereafter, I conducted the interviews over a period of eight months. In total, 19 focus group discussions and 23 individual interviews

were conducted in the months following my observations. While the individual interviews took the form of traditional one-on-one sessions, four interviews were conducted comprising of two participants. The individual interviews spanned approximately 60 minutes and the focus group discussions, were approximately 90 minutes each with the exception of one focus group [FG12] which spanned 120 minutes due to the large sample size of the group. All interviews were conducted at the site of enquiry. My research sample comprised both local South African students of all races and international students (Africa and abroad). The process of observing students for a month in the different institutional spaces also enabled me to conduct a purposive sampling of my participants.

Chapter five marked the first analysis chapter and discussed the ways in which race was understood and given meaning in the nexus of class and language within particular discourses rooted to students' socio-cultural, historical and material contexts. The chapter further illuminated the nuanced mediums through which cross-racial mixing and friendship ties are invoked and resisted on campus by drawing upon various discourses. It also highlighted how class and language was strongly implicated in both fracturing and coalescing student friendships, and cross-racial mixing troubling essentialist versions of a homogenous racial and gender identity yet simultaneously challenging, resisting, producing and reproducing discourses that speak to possibilities of transformation on this campus.

Chapter six focused on the complex, contradictory and contested ways in which students made meaning of their sexual subjectivities drawing on discourses of culture and religion to legitimise and regulate a heteronormative identity through the deployment of compulsory hegemonic heterosexuality (Butler, 1993). The chapter also highlighted the importance that students attached to their socio-cultural, historical and material repertoires in understanding their sexual subjectivities within intersecting versions of hegemonic masculinity, tied to homophobia, which positioned the campus as a heteronormative space. However, the chapter also emphasised shifts beyond material and cultural circumstances that led to ruptures and fragmentation within dynamic cultural and religious discourses.

Chapter seven sought to understand the ways in which gender and sexual subjectivities were given meaning, with a particular focus on the ways in which masculinities and femininities

were constructed on the campus environment. The chapter explored gender and sexuality through commonly held notions that are fixed to hetero-patriarchal cultural norms, heterosexual relationships, dress and heterosexual desire.

<div align="center">**8.4 GENERAL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:**</div>

In this section of the chapter, I thematically discuss the findings that have emanated from this study, in order to ensure coherence. Throughout this thesis, I have deployed a feminist poststructuralist lens to understand the multifaceted ways in which power weaves through the lives of students as they make meaning of race, class, gender and sexuality.

8.4.1 RACE, CLASS AND LANGUAGE:

Chapter five of my thesis sought to understand how race was produced and given meaning within the nexus of class and language. Race, class and language was explored through discourses of cross-racial mixing and friendships on campus. Commonly discussed and emergent, in all student interviews, is the manner in which their socio-cultural, historical and material realities manifest in shaping their interactions on the campus environment.

8.4.2 Navigating race and class in student friendship patterns

From the narratives of my participants, it is evident that despite the formal demise of apartheid discourses since 1994, race continues to structure, in significant ways, student engagement within the campus environment (Walker, 2005, 2006; McKinney, 2007; Pattman, 2007, 2010; and Bhana, 2016a). This reality is especially significant in the lives of black African students on campus, with the majority being poor and marginalised from opportunities of cross-racial mixing and friendship. A key reason for some black African students being marginalised from dominant discourses of friendship is material circumstances that relate to access to technology, upbringing, education and socialisation in different geographical locations. All of these factors reinforce the separation of students and reproduce the complexity of apartheid fashioned discourses. Evident in the narratives of students is the ways in which they draw upon their socio-cultural and historical legacies to give meaning to their racial subjectivities, with negative outcomes for social cohesion. Racial subjectivities constructed through class illuminate that poor students who lack the material resources to negotiate cross-racial friendships on campus are mainly identified as black African. Thus, the

historical legacies of apartheid racial subjectivities are current and still pervasive on campus, as white and Indian students are constructed as having access to material resources and better educational opportunities obtained from their middle-class upbringing. In the main, racial identities on campus are constructed in tandem with apartheid racial identities, therefore highlighting the intersection of race and class in the reproduction of inequalities that manifest in the lives of students and lead to negative outcomes for social cohesion, especially for working-class African students.

However, in the context of the reproduction of racialised relations of power, the intersection of racialised identities with class is complex and cannot merely be analysed in terms of black and white essences. The participants expressed how black African students on campus who had attended former ex Model C schools could negotiate cross-racial friendships. This, however, resulted in marginalising experiences for other black African students. Class, therefore, disturbs a homogenous construction of racial subjectivities, thus elucidating how race as a construct can be challenged and made permeable, within the context of this study. My participants expressed how lack of friendships among same-race students on campus were marked and stained by the polarisation of the urban/rural discourse. Black African students from urban areas drew on the discourse of materiality to position themselves as superior to black African students from rural areas, by naturalising relations of domination and subordination within same-race relations through class. The position of superiority and inferiority, naturalised through the urban-rural binary, signals to the complex ways in which class intersects with race and plays out in racializing experiences for students, with negative consequences for social cohesion and mixing on campus. The participants elucidated how race was shaped and given meaning when it intersected with class, with racialised relations of power being perpetuated and reproduced, while simultaneously troubling essentialist constructions of racial subjectivities that are punctuated by the urban-rural discourse. This signals to the ways in which race as a construct is fluid and can be open to many expressions and articulations intersecting with class.

8.4.3 Racial identities constructed through a discourse of taste: Fashion, the rural-urban divide and food choices

Race, expressed through taste in particular types of clothing and food choices, informs the discussion of this section of the chapter. The student interviews illuminated how race and class on campus intersected and were intimately connected and constructed through brand-name clothing, which determined relations of domination and subordination, and simultaneously produced nuanced versions of racialised subjectivities. White and Indian students, who were constructed through brand-name clothing, were polarised against black African, working-class students, constructed through outfits that were standard or bought from Mr Price. However, black African students from rural areas were positioned subordinately to black African students from urban areas, in terms of choice of clothing that refracted racial identity through class. The discourse on the rural-urban binary fracturing ideas of race featured strongly in student discussions and offered polarised versions of the black African identity. This narrative, emanating from student discussions, points to the complexity of race with the insertion of class and illuminates how inequalities persist with negative outcomes for cross-racial mixing and social cohesion.

Racial identity construction within the campus environment was also intimately connected to food choices made by students, with relative associations linked to their socio-economic position and material status. The coffee shop (discussed in detail in chapter four) was positioned as a campus space where race intersected with class, and relations between the middle-class student elite and the rest of the students were compromised through the discourse of materiality. It was evident that the coffee shop was a racialised and classed space and was complicit in the perpetuation of racialised power and inequality, as supported by previous research (Pattman, 2007, 2010; Bhana, 2013a, 2014; and Singh & Bhana, 2015). However, food choice that was tied to racial identity construction also had the potential to disrupt and perturb racialised relations of domination and subordination on campus. This was enacted by students with agency who were able to transform their subordinate positions through food choices. In the student narratives, the expression of Ubuntu, which is the communal act of sharing and which derives from the indigenous Nguni language and culture, was practised by poor students, who, through the act of sharing food, shifted their marginalised position on campus to one of emancipation and power. The student narratives

in this section point to the visible ways in which race as a construct, intersecting and hinging on class, can become permeable. Dominant apartheid discourses are subverted as poor black African students deploy their agency by utilising local knowledge systems to transform their subordinated position on campus. Bhana (2014, p. 356) argues for the significance "of problematising narrow and fixed understandings of race and … consideration of the social forces and the social conditions which are intimately tied to exclusion and marginalisation".

8.4.4 Navigating language and class in student interactions:

Student discussions positioned the campus environment as a key site for the reinforcement and perpetuation of English with negative outcomes for cross-racial mixing, especially for isiZulu first-language speakers. The student narratives elucidated how race intersected with class, was related to English competency and academic success (Bhana, 2014; Swart et al., 2018). The students clarified how English use within the campus environment reproduced racialised power. English served as a marker that enabled cross-racial mixing, while lack of proficiency in English had negative outcomes for students who were not positioned within this language hierarchy. Power relations were maintained through the discourse of language, as English occupied a hegemonic position. However, student discussions also revolved around the conditions in which race, class and language intersected and coalesced on campus to promote and foster cross-racial mixing. Black African students who were competent English speakers on campus drew upon their urban upbringing and middle-class schooling to naturalise their competence in English, thus enabling cross-racial friendships.

However, student accounts also illustrated the potential of language to disrupt power relations, in particular the use of English on campus. While students drew upon the urban-rural discourse in terms of their competence in English, black African students who claimed their identity as "a coconut" (perceived black identification with white) were denigrated by fellow black African students for not performing authentic African identities. Thus, it was evident that the use of English by isiZulu speaking students was not necessarily a power investment on campus, as it was viewed negatively by fellow black African students. Vincent (2008) asserts that the stigmatisation of those deviating from peer-defined norms contributes to a type of policing that results in a continued lack of real integration between race groups,

whereby the group experiencing a greater degree of integration is criticised as being "too white".

However, my participants also revealed how the shifts in language on campus created tensions among students, as the hegemonic status of English was displaced and troubled by the use of isiZulu. Power relations hinging on the use of English to foster cross-racial mixing on campus also had the potential to disrupt and trouble narrow understandings of racial mixing and student relations. Black African students' use of isiZulu as a means of communication was viewed negatively by some white and Indian students in the study, who viewed the use of isiZulu as a tool of revenge, with negative consequences for social cohesion. Rudwick (2015), in her article reflecting on the new language policy that introduced the mandatory isiZulu requirement at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, cautioned against a political motivation behind this policy implementation.

8.5 SEXUALITY, GENDER AND CULTURE

8.5.1 Expressions of homophobia: Culture, religion and tradition

Chapter six elaborates on the ways in which sexual and gender subjectivities are given meaning within dominant heteronormative and cultural norms. In various students' accounts, a cultural trope was employed to construct homosexuality as evil, rooted in sin and "unAfrican" (Altman, Aggleton, Williams, Kong, Reddy, Harrad, Reis & Parker, 2012; Sigamoney & Epprecht, 2013) thus valorising heterosexuality and simultaneously repudiating homosexual students as subordinates. Race, gender and sexuality intersected to uphold heterosexuality on campus. It can be noted that black African students on the whole used a cultural discourse to give meaning to sexuality, signalling to the ways in which sexual subjectivities on campus were culturally and discursively produced to construct an idealised African identity (Bhana, 2015). This, however, had negative repercussions for black African students on campus who identified as homosexual. Students from all races, while simultaneously invoking Zulu culture and black men, in repudiation of homosexuality, thus illuminated the ways in which race, gender and sexuality coalesced on campus to uphold heterosexuality. Students propagated religious discourses to reproduce the hegemony of heterosexuality on campus, thus fuelling homophobic sentiments with negative implications for social cohesion. My participants further revealed that homophobic discourses, legitimised

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through culture and religion, were impervious to race. They disrupted the notion of homophobia being tied solely to Zulu identity, as Indian and coloured students also rejected homosexuality on the grounds of their traditional and religious backgrounds.

The narratives presented by the international students from Africa illuminated how patriarchal discourses, rooted to cultural upbringing underset by masculine power, reinforced conformity to the gender order of the patriarchal African system. This was perpetuated on campus by the group of students from Africa, as they upheld heterosexuality, while vehemently repudiating homosexuality. Similarly, the accounts from two international students from Africa illuminated how their culturally accepted, normative understandings of patriarchal family systems and relationships shaped their interactions on campus with gay and lesbian students, with negative implications for social cohesion. The participants revealed that, as masculine power was strongly reinforced mostly by African male students, homophobic discourses were pervasive on campus and were reinforced and perpetuated in academic and living spaces, with punitive consequences for students who identified as gay or lesbian.

However, the participants also highlighted how homophobic discourse and anti-gay sentiments were also perpetuated by some of the academic teaching staff on the campus. Anti-gay sentiments expressed by academic staff, the "supposed" custodians of knowledge, signal to the fragmentation between policy and practice that is pervasive on the campus. The study also discovered that students who grew up in rural areas enacted homophobic attitudes to uphold masculine power and the patriarchal gender order that has been entrenched and rooted to their cultural and social upbringing. I therefore argue that notions of race, sexuality and gender intersect and are intimately connected and socially constructed, undergirded by cultural and traditional upbringing.

8.5.2 Narratives of change: Disruptions and Regulations

Student narratives in this section remained powerful, as they elucidated the shifting notions of heteronormativity, tied to religion and culture. The participants in my study challenged the discourse of homophobia legitimised through religion – especially Christianity – when they argued about the many ways that the Bible could be open to interpretation. Students

illuminated the multiple ways in which heterosexuality, hinging on religious and traditional beliefs, was made fragile and malleable, and complicated constructions of gender and sexuality that were tied to cultural and religious discourses. Student accounts presented versions of religion that simultaneously rejected and accepted homosexuality, signalling to the fluidity of religious discourses in upholding heterosexuality within the campus environment. Further, the shift from negative to more open attitudes towards homosexual students on campus was embraced by the international student from Nigeria who, as discussed in chapter six, had previously displayed fixed notions of patriarchy owing to her Nigerian upbringing, with negative attitudes towards homosexual students. In addition, the campus environment was positioned as a safe space in which to enact a lesbian identity, thereby directly challenging the notion of the campus as a hegemonic heterosexual space. These student accounts signal to the possibilities of challenging the dominant discourses of heterosexuality, with possibilities for achieving social cohesion on campus. Thus this chapter elucidates how students, acting with agency, are able to shift and deflect the dominant discourses of heterosexuality that result in negative consequences, and make positive attempts towards social cohesion on campus.

8.6 GENDER, CULTURE AND HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

8.6.1 Making gender: culture and cultural norms

Chapter seven sought to understand how students gave meaning to gender and sexuality, against the dominant discourses of hetero-patriarchy, cultural norms, vulnerability and passivity. It became evident that participants in my study drew heavily upon their social, material, cultural and historical circumstances to give meaning to their gender and sexual identities. They revealed how the manifestations of their culture, entrenched through their social and cultural upbringing, was perpetuated through their behaviour in a university environment that challenged them to negotiate between modernity and cultural norms. The participants highlighted the ways in which race and gender intersected in the reproduction of inequalities, both at home and within their lives on campus.

In particular, my participants illuminated how black African females on campus were subjected to normative cultural gender ordering, signalling to how race intersecting with gender was socially, culturally and discursively produced. The participants positioned the

campus environment as a place of empowerment, freedom and an enabler of agency. According to my participants, race, culture and tradition were invoked to reproduce and perpetuate male hegemony in the classroom, thus sustaining the subordination of women in both the classroom and the campus environment. Male students drew upon the historical legacies of the past to keep women subordinate, legitimising their marginalised positions and reproducing gender inequalities. Student narratives further elucidated how female students resisted, contested and challenged male domination, undergirded by hetero-patriarchal norms in heterosexual relationships, to destabilise gender norms fixed to culture and tradition. Further, one male participant illuminated how the concept of masculinity was not essentialist but was simultaneously changing and resistant. These changing attitudes had positive implications for transformation and social cohesion on campus.

8.6.2 Making gender through fashion and dress

Gender and sexual identities, constructed through fashion and dress, indicated the diverse and multiple ways in which femininities were enacted within the campus environment. Of relevance in the conversation with the international students from Africa was the ways in which they were shaped and entrenched in their traditional beliefs and upbringing. The international female students from Africa positioned themselves, within dominant discourses of femininity, as conservative and respectful in giving meaning to their gender identities. The international females from Zimbabwe were firmly rooted to their African culture and expressed how constructions of femininity were embedded within heteronormative hegemonic patriarchal discourses, as the students fixed the performance of normative gender roles – such as marriage, pregnancy and decent dressing (no miniskirts) – to cultural understandings of compliant femininity. For the international females from Africa, their gender identities were constrained and regulated through dress, while the male students from Africa had the agency to choose girlfriends who conformed to traditional dress in compliance with acceptable femininity. However, gender identities constructed through fashion and dress also had the potential to subvert the dominant discourses of femininity – conservative and passive – and we see how dressing up and trying to fit into the "in group" on campus had the potential to disrupt and resist dominant norms of how women should be constructed (Weedon, 1987). Student narratives revealed the multiple ways in which

femininities were constructed on campus, to inadvertently challenge gender identities constructed through the discourse of fashion and dress and desirable femininity, and power relations within the campus environment.

8.6.3 Making gender: heterosexual relationships and challenging female passivity

The participants in my study rejected conformity to dominant discourses of femininity that positioned them as docile and passive, by enacting a hyper-sexualised femininity that positioned them as a "a piece of meat" complicit in the objectification of their sexuality on campus. According to one study (Gowlett, 2014, p. 406), the use of the word "meat" positions these students as "heterosexually desirable objects". The student narratives destabilised the dominant constructions of femininity, which view women as having docile bodies and being passive and subservient. Personal agency was enacted to subvert gender power relations within heterosexual relationships, where power and control of the relationship resided within the masculine domain. The action of my participants was an exhibition of modern-day femininity in the pursuit of desirable heterosexual relationships. Male students on campus were targeted and pursued through a desiring female gaze, indicating the multiple ways in which femininities on campus were constructed. The "can do" discourse that emanated from student conversations suggested a new version of femininity that was assertive, in control and expressive of power.

The findings of the discussion with Ashton, Zinga, Maria and Jeuke illuminated how particular cultural and social repertoires from their international context and upbringing played out in their heterosexual relationships within the campus environment. This group invoked race, culture and hegemonic masculinity to describe heterosexual relationships on campus that hinged on male power and possessiveness tied to a Zulu identity. However, Ashton's group, in enacting their agency, aligned their heterosexual relationships with the "hook-up culture", challenging normative gender roles entrenched through heterosexual relationships on campus. This group highlighted the multiple ways in which femininities that do not conform to dominant heterosexual dynamics and gender ordering have been constructed through the deployment of their own cultural repertoires, which displaced the concept of masculine power tied to heterosexuality.

8.7 CONTRIBUTION AND MAIN FINDINGS

This thesis comes at a time when identity categories such as race, gender, class and sexuality in South Africa are deeply embedded within political undertones that possess a rich historical context. South Africa as a country and society is still suffering from the ills of decades of indoctrination and subordination, institutionalised by the apartheid system. Thus, in the South African context, these identity categorisations are located within the matrices of power (Kiguwa, 2014) and we see how these matrices of power play out at all levels of society including the formal schooling and higher education system. I argue that within the South African context, issues of race, class, gender and sexuality cannot be understood and dismissed without a clear understanding of the larger socio-economic, cultural and historical complexities.

It was evident that the Reitz incident at the University of Free State met with huge condemnation and outrage, both nationally and internationally. In response to this incident, the Soudien Report illuminated and confirmed a higher education system that was replete with racism, sexism, homophobia and xenophobia (Department of Education, 2008). It is within this nexus that my thesis explored, using a case study approach, issues of race, class, gender and sexuality. The case study was well suited to my research, since I investigated a single racially diverse campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal with the highest number of students. The case study also allowed for the use of multiple methods, such as observations, semi-structured and unstructured interviews that were both with individuals and groups, and document analysis. These multiple methods allowed a rich narrative to emerge, which I have documented in chapter four.

In terms of how I am positioned, my status as both an insider and an outsider during my fieldwork allowed me to navigate between different roles at my research site. As an outsider, I am employed at the institution, but not in a senior leadership position. As such, I am not considered a bastion of authority, so this facilitated easier relationships with students. Nevertheless, I was aware of power differentials that were evident between the researcher and researched. In order to address this, I strongly asserted my identity as a research student, rather than an employee of the institution, by dressing casually and initially engaging in conversations with the participants (detailed in chapter four). In terms of insider status, as an

employee of the institution prior to and after the merger of the institution, I had obtained historical knowledge of my research site since 2000. I was already familiar with the international students that participated in my study, having met them previously when they had entered the institution to study. My insider status also helped me to understand some of the institutional issues that the students were grappling with.

In terms of key contributions to knowledge, this study determines that the nuances of race, class, gender and sexuality are troubled by essentialist discourses of language, culture, tradition and religion, which complicate issues of social cohesion and transformation on this campus which is purported to be the most transformed institution in the country. My study explains that students who enter the higher education system are products of and are shaped by their particular socio-cultural and material circumstances, which play out on the campus environment, with ramifications for social cohesion. My study further highlights the specific discourses that students draw upon to attach significance to race, class, gender and sexuality, while simultaneously positioning these within locally embedded constructs. In addition, my study includes the voices of international students, as they also form part of the complex university environment. South Africa has a limited amount of research that explores student experiences at transformed institutions. Recent studies by Swartz et al., (2018) examined eight higher education institutions with an overall focus on issues of black African students linked to student access and participation in higher education. Another study conducted by Pattman and Carollisen (2018) provided an overview of the issues of transformation drawing upon the experiences of different institutions in terms of institutional culture, race, gender, language and sexuality. Further studies conducted by Matthews and Tabensky (2015) investigated the institutional culture of Rhodes University, with a focus on race and transformation, while other studies in the country have focused merely on specific aspects of identity.

My study examines the overall issues of race, class, gender and sexuality, and how these categorisations have been given meaning in the present context of the campus in students' lived daily experiences. My study also highlights the extreme complexity, multi-dimensionality and fluidity of student realities that have been shaped by their own specific contexts, in terms of the socio-cultural and material realities that they draw upon to ascribe

meaning to their subjectivities. This study illuminates how race, class, gender and sexuality coalesce and are constructed within matrices of power that have been made or unmade within specific discourses and context. Race, class, gender and sexuality, as elucidated by the participants in this study, are not ahistorical or apolitical, but are rather engendered within a cultural and historical capsule. It is within this context-specific body of knowledge where students' understandings of race, class, gender and sexuality contribute to the larger body of knowledge with respect to identity, social cohesion and transformation within higher education.

This study illuminates the extent to which students' are moulded and shaped by cultural and social backgrounds, as they enter the campus with specific notions of themselves and others even within the space of a transformed institution. In chapter five, the urban-rural binary discourse presented variegated versions of an African identity, with marginalising experiences for black African students from rural areas in terms of material resources, language proficiency, dress sense and inferior levels of education obtained from the basic schooling system. I argue for further research and the prudent need to be paid to these nuances, in terms of the rural-urban discourse that emerged from my participants narratives, as perpetuation of these (urban-rural) notions can impinge on efforts towards social cohesion and transformation. Food choices on campus are intimately connected to race and class, with most black African students being poor and unable to afford proper meals. However, they also have the potential to deploy locally relevant indigenous systems such as Ubuntu in the communal sharing of their meals. The issue of language is provocative and complex on this campus. It has been observed that the use of English presents alienating experiences for students who are first-language isiZulu speakers, while Zulu students who choose to speak English are labelled negatively, marginalised and censored by other African students. However, language in the deployment of isiZulu can also be used as a tool of revenge marginalising students who are only proficient in English, further complicating language, class and race.

Chapter six demonstrates that homophobic discourses are not impervious to race, as homosexuality is legitimised through a cultural logic, intersecting with race, by both Indian and coloured students, speaking within their social and traditional contexts. This disproves

that homosexuality is "unAfrican". International students from Africa, however, display homophobic attitudes that are strongly linked to their hetero-patriarchal backgrounds. Those from rural areas display a strong patriarchal and homophobic attitude towards the homosexual students on campus. However, essentialist attitudes that link race, religion and tradition with the legitimisation of homophobia on campus have been challenged, thereby pointing to the possibilities for social cohesion in the areas of gender and sexuality.

Chapter seven elucidates how women, in the case of Phume and Muhle – who are positioned within the dominant discourses of femininity and are forced by their socio-cultural backgrounds to comply with the compulsory gender order – are nevertheless able to resist cultural compliance and domination by positioning the campus environment as a source of empowerment and freedom. By implication, we can see how the campus environment and education in particular troubles essentialist gender identities that are underset by dominant notions of masculinity. The inclusion of international students in the study highlights the multiple discourses that they draw upon to give meaning to their gender identities. The multiple discourses can be attributed to their different traditional and cultural contexts. I argue that it is critical to understand these different nuances, in order to be able to create an inclusive institutional culture that fosters diversity towards social cohesion.

8.8 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

Arguably, one of the limitations of this study is the vast areas such as race, class, gender and sexuality that this thesis undertook to investigate. However, the rationale for undertaking this study and looking at all of these constructs was to provide contextually relevant, locally embedded knowledge that will enhance and advance social cohesion at a transformed institution. While there is a burgeoning of research that speaks to race thinking and action on matters of transformation there is limited research on class, language, gender and sexuality and how these constructions come to bear on the transformation agenda of higher education. I undertook this study with a notion to advancing research around social cohesion that is context specific to a transformed institution. One of the challenges, which I would like to pronounce as a limitation to the study, is some of the rich ethnographic data I obtained especially around the issues of homosexuality on the campus were informed largely by black African heterosexual students rather than first hand accounts from black African students

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who identified as gay or lesbian. It was a challenge to identify any black African students who openly identified as gay or lesbian and who were willing to be interviewed around these issues. Likewise, in the section on sugar daddy relationships the accounts where presented by participants who did not engage in sugar daddy relationships, as it was difficult to find students who did engage in these relationships. However, I have noted these limitations as lessons for future research.

8.9 RECOMMENDATIONS EMANATING FROM FINDINGS

In this section of the chapter, I offer some recommendations to approach the issues that have been raised in this study towards advancing social cohesion on the campus.

- The cafeterias on the Howard College campus, which my participants named as the "white cafeteria/coffee shop" and the "black cafeteria", are structurally and spatially hierarchical, with the former located on the upper level and the latter on the lower level. My participants strongly expressed how these outlets continued to perpetuate and reinforce racialised and classed binaries on campus. This has been highlighted by other research findings conducted on the campus (Pattman, 2010; Bhana, 2014; Singh & Bhana, 2015). I recommend that these designated eating spaces be reconstructed, so as to be situated on one level, in similar fashion to the eating spaces found on the Westville campus of the same university. In addition, new food choices need to be introduced to cater for the students' varied socio-economic positions on campus. Creating one common eating area for all students on campus will perhaps create the idea of a more equitable and inclusive environment that addresses the intersections of race and class, or rather, the marginalising effects that have been produced by race and class. This could be a possible indicator and step towards creating an inclusive and socially cohesive campus. This notion of creating a common eating area on the Howard College campus also speaks to the commitment that the institution identified in the Soudien Report with regards to the "Creation and utilisation of social spaces" (Department of Education, 2008, p.17 – 18) towards promoting transformation and social cohesion.

- An emerging issue that warrants further investigative research is that of language on at UKZN, as highlighted by my participants. Language plays a divisive role in student relationships on campus, whether through isiZulu-speaking students who communicate in English, or isiZulu-speaking students who communicate in Zulu. The results are the same – alienating, racialised experiences on campus. Rudwick (2015) argues that the choice to implement Zulu as a compulsory African language at the institution was intended to promote social cohesion and nation building in the province and beyond. In light of the overall mandate that the language policy set out to achieve, I recommend that further research be conducted to assess whether the language policy at the institution has progressed towards promoting social cohesion at an institutional level. Other scholars in the field have debated the language issues at the institution (Ndimande-Hlongwa, Balfour, Mkhize & Engelbrecht, 2010; Rudwick & Parmegiani, 2013; Parmegiani, 2014; Kamwendo, Hlongwa & Mkhize, 2014; Ndebele & Zulu, 2017; Rudwick, 2018).

- A common thread emanating from the findings of this study has been the binary between the urban-rural discourse and its fragmentation, linked specifically to the construction of a Zulu identity. Students who grew up in rural areas are marginalised on campus by students who live in urban areas, in terms of language, dress and intellectual capability. This institution has a considerable number of students from rural areas, thus it is imperative that we find ways to bridge the chasm between rural and urban students, in order to promote true and meaningful attempts at social cohesion. I recommend that in order to employ the concept of diversity in a true and meaningful way it is prudent upon UKZN to create the portfolio of a Director of Transformation who will spearhead such initiatives and interrogate ways in which the university can take charge of the transformation imperatives in its true sense.

- Students on campus need to be exposed to events that celebrate the history and diversity of our country, in order to slowly break down cultural ignorance or misperceptions that narrowly define students as they give meaning to race, gender and sexual subjectivities. Such projects should be spearheaded by the Executive Director of Student Services and form an integral component of the student culture

and student life at this institution. This project must be given impetus as a necessary component of co-curricular activities that are presently missing from student life on campus. This suggestion also speaks to the commitment that UKZN identified in the Soudien Report "Diversity, i.e. bringing different programmes on diversity together and setting goals " (Department of Education, 2008, p.17 - 18).

▪ The participants of my study have also highlighted their agency in constructing femininities in terms of heterosexual relationships. These include sugar daddy relationships and hook up engagements. Such acts of 'sexual exploration' in higher education is prevalent not only on this campus but has been illuminated by research globally (Ergene, Cok, Turner & Unal, 2005; Adam & Mutongi, 2007; Bogle, 2008; Masvawure, 2010; Ronen, 2010; Hoque, 2011, Kalish & Kimmel, 2011). As this is a critical time in the lives of students to possibly engage in 'sexual exploration' there is a need for the university to have regular events and intervention programmes that speak to relationship dynamics and to risky behaviour especially in a context where HIV/AIDS and gender violence put women at risk. While policies are in place to address issues of gender violence and HIV/AIDS, such policies will be meaningless if they do not translate to practice via regular intervention programmes and events. I recommend that these visible campaigns on campus should be introduced as a key feature of 'student life culture' and this intervention will inadvertently address attempts at creating a more socially cohesive university.

▪ Homophobia and homophobic attitudes are prevalent on the campus as elucidated by the participants in my study and globally (Rankin, 2003, 2005; Finlay & Walther, 2003; Graziano, 2004; Ellis, 2009; Madzivire, 2015; Jaggessar & Msibi, 2015). I recommend that dialogues, events and awareness campaigns that speak to issues of gender expression and homosexuality should form an essential component in the extra curricula activity or 'student life culture' on campus. This component must be made mandatory and recognised on a co-curricular certificate that the student will receive on completion of their graduation. This component to the student life not only creates awareness but also forces students to recognise issues of sexual diversity and gender

expression towards promoting a more integrative and socially cohesive campus and perhaps society.

- International students need to be properly integrated into the university's social system once they arrive, in order to allow for the occurrence of real integration with the local students, especially, but not limited to, isiZulu and French language speakers from Africa. I would like to recommend that a well-structured, week-long orientation programme be organised by the institution as a start to an integration project that runs continually, all year round. This is especially relevant and should also be fostered in the living spaces of the university campus.

- Residence life on campus needs attention, in terms of an inclusive environment being created to welcome all students, with the intention of reducing discrimination in all its forms. In this regard, well-structured, culturally diverse programmes, including human rights projects, should focus on issues of sexual orientation and gender rights at student residences. Such programmes should be driven by student committees managed by the Executive Director of Student Services.

- In terms of the physical environment on campus, the university management needs to create more open, social spaces, in order to encourage the integration and intermingling of students. In this way, students will have a greater opportunity to interact with one another and thus cultivate a more cohesive environment. It is especially important that the university looks into creating dining halls in the student residences to enable students to at least mingle together in their shared living space as a possible move towards promoting social cohesion.

- As a higher education institution, UKZN needs to recommend to the Department of Basic Education, as a dire and critical need, to revisit the life orientation curriculum with the intention of teaching young learners to value and respect diversity, appreciate difference and see beyond the borders of race, class, gender and sexuality. This project must start at Grade R to have any real effect and impact. As a higher

education institution, we need to emphasise, through research, that it is only through *education* and *knowledge* that the barriers of apartheid discourses can be broken. Unfortunately, these discourses still inhabit our lives as discursive shackles as these featured strongly in the lives of my participants.

8.10. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This thesis seeks to understand the significance and meaning that higher education students, engaged in study at a particular campus of a South African university, attach to race, class, gender and sexuality. This thesis is situated against the larger political backdrop of emergent issues around social cohesion and transformation, as illuminated in the Soudien Report (Department of Education, 2008). The institution at which this study is located was the first in the country to launch the Transformation charter, thus affirming its commitment to transformation in all respects of university life (Vice Chancellor's Communique, 2010). The explicit findings of this research reveal that the nuances of race, class, gender and sexuality have been disturbed and troubled by essentialist discourses of culture, religion, tradition and language legitimised and regulated by students' socio-cultural, material and historical circumstances. I argue that students entering the higher education environment are products of their socio-cultural, historical and material circumstances and it is these tropes that shape student interactions on campus to discursively give meaning to their identities/subjectivities.

While the thesis elucidates moments of tension between students, in terms of race, class, gender and sexuality issues determined by historical and material legacies, there were also moments of breakages, fractures and ruptures that could invite possibilities towards social cohesion on campus. As this study is uniquely positioned at an institution in the KwaZulu-Natal province, which has a rich history of cultural diversity and the inherited legacies of a merged transformed institution (as discussed in chapter one), students who enter UKZN become part of its "complex", "complicated" and sometimes messy "togetherness". I would like to conclude this profound journey by arguing that at least one core value at this institution of higher education be aimed at challenging its staff and students to think differently in order to understand the "other side" and bridge the chasms that both our institution and the South African society is grappling with. This is, and remains, my most fervent *hope*.

"We are what our world invites us to be, and the basic features of our soul

are impressed upon it by the form of its surroundings as in a mould.

Naturally, for our life is no other than our relations with the world around."

(Ortega 1932, p. 43)

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Appendice 1

10 June 2011

Ms. TR Singh (202520286)
School of Gender

Dear Ms. Singh

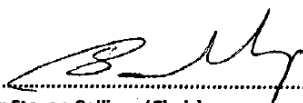**PROTOCOL REFERENCE NUMBER: HSS/0301/011D**
PROJECT TITLE: Investigating constructions' of student identities and its' impact on social cohesion at a South African University.

In response to your application dated 7 June 2011, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL.**

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.
PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steven Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

cc. Supervisor – Prof. D Bhana
cc. Mr N Memela/Ms T Mnisi

1910 - 2010
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UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Motivation for Change of Dissertation/ Thesis Title

NAME OF STUDENT: Tasmeera Rajcoomar Singh

STUDENT NUMBER: 202520286

CAMPUS: Edgewood ☐   Pietermaritzburg ☐

DEGREE (e.g. MED(Educational Psychology) : Doctor of Philosophy

SCHOOL: School of Education

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Professor Deevia Bhana

NAME OF CO-SUPERVISOR: _____

CURRENT TITLE: Investigating constructions of student identities' and its impact on social cohesion at a South African University.

NEW TITLE: Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality: A case of a South African University Campus

MOTIVATION FOR CHANGE/ALTERATION OF DISSERTATION/THESIS TITLE:

The motivation for the change of title is based on the fact that when I had first written my proposal I was very keen on investigating identity and higher education students and situating this within issues of transformation as it was unfolding in higher education. As I collected my data and started the writing process it became clearer to me what the issues at hand were as this is part of the PhD journey. I feel that the new title is a more accurate summation of my study than the one I initially proposed at the beginning of the study. This is the basis for the change of title.

(If the motivation exceeds the space allowed, please attached the written motivation to this form)

DATE: 6/09/18   STUDENT SIGNATURE: _Singh_

DATE: 06/09/18   SUPERVISOR: _D Bhana_

DATE: _____   CO-SUPERVISOR: _____

Supported 07/09/2018

Appendice 3

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

To whom it may concern

<u>RE: **LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT FROM STUDENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH STUDY**</u>

I, Tasmeera Singh – Student Number 202520286 am currently undertaking a research study entitled Investigating constructions' of student identities and its' impact on social cohesion at a South African University. I am presently registered for my Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

The underlying purpose of this study is to investigate student identity construction and its implication for social cohesion since in South African higher education institutions the dynamics of identity construction play out in dramatic ways that have implications for social cohesion; however this form of research is less examined locally and internationally. This thesis will therefore make a contribution to understanding the construction of student identities in the nexus of social transformation and social tensions in the higher education terrain highlighting the complex matrix of gender, race and sexuality and how the importance and meanings that students' attach to these different constructions have implications for social cohesion. This thesis is important and imperative as recent reports both in the media and the state report (Soudien Report, 2008) show the calamitous effects of social inequalities that have troubled higher education institutions in the country. In the recent years the South African Higher Education terrain has been plagued by incidents of racism, sexism, homophobic violence, gender-based violence and xenophobia (Soudien Report, 2008, Agenda, 2009). Hence my study will attempt to investigate the construction of student identities and how these constructions impact on the social cohesiveness of the institution. For purposes of this study 'other' would be how students construct themselves as 'different' to another individual in respect of their race, gender and/or sexuality.

The reason I wish to embark on this study is because I am a higher education practitioner who has interacted and engaged with students for the past ten years. I believe that I am ideally positioned to conduct this research since this research is student focused. Following on the 'alleged' rape of an international student in one of the University of KwaZulu-Natal's residences in 2007 where I was directly involved with the case because the victim was an exchange student from the US, brings to light that racism, sexism and gender-based violence are visible and intrusive elements that plague university life. A review of UKZN's safety and

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security was conducted by internal and external researchers and the findings reported that "gender-based violence was 'rife' in the Halls of Residence and was supported by cultures of misogyny and homophobia" (Mackay and Magwaza, 2008, p. 21).

Yet again, in 2007 at the University of Free State (UFS) in South Africa, a racist incident catapulted the institution into disarray and chaos. The huge institutional and public outcry arose when some white students at UFS made a video showing black middle aged cleaners being subjected to forms of degradation in a mock initiation ceremony (which included being given food mixed with urine). This video was made as an attack on the university's attempt (after years of inaction) to introduce a few black students into what had been all white residences (Pattman, 2010). But more than a 'racial' issue it was also about the assertion of 'male power'. Central to any understanding of culture and tradition in residences, is the issue of the formation of a male identity in the sense of manhood, and its associated relations of domination and subordination. This is important to emphasize because sexism like racism is pernicious and must be rooted out if higher education institutions are to be true to the values of the constitution" (Soudien Report, 2008, p. 85). When this was discovered questions were raised about "why young people with no memories of living under apartheid could act in such blatantly racist ways" (Pattman, 2010, p. 950).

Hence, an investigation on 'social cohesion' in universities, authorized by the Minister of Education in light of the University of Free State incident was commissioned. The findings of the report noted that racism and sexism were pervasive features of university life (Soudien Report, 2008). In view of this seriousness of the discrimination as noted in the Soudien Report Higher Education institutions were recommended to develop a Transformation Charter to address these issues. On the 13 December 2010 the Vice-Chancellor of UKZN released a Communique on the Transformation Charter citing that " Processes will be devised in such a way as to break a 'code of silence' around instances of discrimination in any form " (Vice-Chancellors Communique, 2010, p.4). My interrogation of 'code of silence' is that we first need to understand how students construct 'their' identities in relation to 'other' and how this positioning impacts on social cohesion. By framing the research in this way I believe that we can break the 'code of silence'… and thus gain a deeper understanding of how students construct their identities and whether this has implications for social cohesion.

As a participant in this research study you are will be interviewed either as a focus group or on an individual basis. The focus interview is expected to last about an hour max.
The interviews will be tape recorded for the purposes of the data being transcribed later on. You are welcome to come and read the transcribed interviews once completed. The tapes will be kept in a secure place under lock and key and I will dispose of the tapes once my thesis is handed in and all corrections have been made.

I want to assure you that your identity would remain anonymous and the data that I gather from the interview will remain confidential. It is requested that the contents discussed within the focus group remain strictly confidential and are not be discussed outside the interview context.

However, if you so desire not to participate in this research study then your decision will not be prejudiced. If you decide to voluntarily participate in the research process then you are free to withdraw from the study at any stage of the research process.

If you would like further details pertaining to the validity of the study then you are most welcome to contact Prof Deevia Bhana, my supervisor of the study on bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za or on 031 260 2603.

DECLARATION AND UNDERSTANDING:

I ………………………………………… (full name, surname and student number) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I also acknowledge that the contents discussed in the interviews will remain confidential and will not be discussed outside the context of the interview.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   DATE

_____   _____

Cell no:

Researchers contact details:
Name: Tasmeera Singh
Student Number: 202520286
Email: singht@ukzn.ac.za
Tel: 031 260 3078

Appendice 4

30 September 2011

Dear Dr…

<u>RE: LETTER OF CONSENT FOR PERMISSION TO OBSERVE LECTURES ON THE HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS</u>

I, Tasmeera Singh – Student Number 202520286 am currently undertaking a research study entitled Investigating constructions' of student identities and its' impact on social cohesion at a South African University. I am presently registered for my Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

The underlying purpose of this study is to investigate student identity construction and its implication for social cohesion since in South African higher education institutions the dynamics of identity construction play out in dramatic ways that have implications for social cohesion; however this form of research is less examined locally and internationally. This thesis will therefore make a contribution to understanding the construction of student identities in the nexus of social transformation and social tensions in the higher education terrain highlighting the complex matrix of gender, race and sexuality and how the importance and meanings that students' attach to these different constructions have implications for social cohesion. This thesis is important and imperative as recent reports both in the media and the state report (Soudien Report

, 2008) show the calamitous effects of social inequalities that have troubled higher education institutions in the country. In the recent years the South African Higher Education terrain has been plagued by incidents of racism, sexism, homophobic violence, gender-based violence and xenophobia (Soudien Report, 2008, Agenda, 2009). Hence my study will attempt to investigate the construction of student identities and how these constructions impact on the social cohesiveness of the institution. For purposes of this study 'other' would be how students construct themselves as 'different' to another individual in respect of their race, gender and/or sexuality.

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of degradation in a mock initiation ceremony (which included being given food mixed with urine). This video was made as an attack on the university's attempt (after years of inaction) to introduce a few black students into what had been all white residences (Pattman, 2010). But more than a 'racial' issue it was also about the assertion of 'male power'. Central to any understanding of culture and tradition in residences, is the issue of the formation of a male identity in the sense of manhood, and its associated relations of domination and subordination. This is important to emphasize because sexism like racism is pernicious and must be rooted out if higher education institutions are to be true to the values of the constitution" (Soudien Report, 2008, p. 85). When this was discovered questions were raised about "why young people with no memories of living under apartheid could act in such blatantly racist ways" (Pattman, 2010, p. 950).

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As part of this ethnographic study I would like to engage in non-participant observation in the lecture halls to have a sense of how students interact and engage in formal structures. I will write field notes from these observations.

If you would like further details pertaining to the validity of the study then you are most welcome to contact Prof Deevia Bhana, my supervisor of the study on bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za or on 031 260 2603.

DECLARATION AND UNDERSTANDING:

I …………………………………………… (full name, surname and position) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this letter and the nature of the research project, and I consent to allowing access as an observer in the lecture theatre.

SIGNATURE: DATE:

_____   _____

Researchers contact details:

Name: Tasmeera Singh
Student Number: 202520286
Email: singht@ukzn.ac.za
Tel: 031 260 3078

Appendice 5

Dear Mr Dludla

RE: LETTER OF CONSENT FOR PERMISSION TO OBSERVE THE HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS RESIDENCE

I, Tasmeera Singh – Student Number 202520286 am currently undertaking a research study entitled Investigating constructions' of student identities and its' impact on social cohesion at a South African University. I am presently registered for my Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

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As part of this ethnographic study I would like to engage in participant observation in the residence. I would also video record students' interactions however this will not be used in the research analysis but rather as a source to enrich my field notes.

I want to assure you that the video footage will remain confidential and solely for the purposes of the researcher. If you would like further details pertaining to the validity of the study then you are most welcome to contact Prof Deevia Bhana, my supervisor of the study on bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za or on 031 260 2603.

DECLARATION AND UNDERSTANDING:

I ……………………………………………… (full name, surname and position) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this letter and the nature of the research project, and I consent to allowing access to the residences and video footage to be captured for purposes of participant observation phase of the ethnographic research.

SIGNATURE: DATE:

_____   _____

Researchers contact details:

Name: Tasmeera Singh
Student Number: 202520286
Email: singht@ukzn.ac.za
Tel: 031 260 3078

Appendice 6

To whom it may concern

RE: LETTER OF CONSENT FOR PERMISSION FROM STUDENT TO OBSERVE THE STUDENT RESIDENCES

I, Tasmeera Singh – Student Number 202520286 am currently undertaking a research study entitled Investigating constructions' of student identities and its' impact on social cohesion at a South African University. I am presently registered for my Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

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The reason I wish to embark on this study is because I am a higher education practitioner who has interacted and engaged with students for the past ten years. I believe that I am ideally positioned to conduct this research since this research is student focused. Following on the 'alleged' rape of an international student in one of the University of KwaZulu-Natal's residences in 2007 where I was directly involved with the case because the victim was an exchange student from the US, brings to light that racism, sexism and gender-based violence are visible and intrusive elements that plague university life. A review of UKZN's safety and security was conducted by internal and external researchers and the findings reported that "gender-based violence was 'rife' in the Halls of Residence and was supported by cultures of misogyny and homophobia" (Mackay and Magwaza, 2008, p. 21).

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emphasize because sexism like racism is pernicious and must be rooted out if higher education institutions are to be true to the values of the constitution" (Soudien Report, 2008, p. 85). When this was discovered questions were raised about "why young people with no memories of living under apartheid could act in such blatantly racist ways" (Pattman, 2010, p. 950).

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As part of this ethnographic study I would like to engage in participant observation in the residence. The purpose of this observation is to see how students interact in the non-formal structures of the campus environment. I intend to also video record students' interactions however this will not be used in the research analysis but rather as a source to enrich my field notes. The purpose of recording these interactions is to observe how students' interact in the non-formal structure of the campus environment.

I want to assure you that the video footage will only be used to enrich the participant observation phase of the research. If you would like further details pertaining to the validity of the study then you are most welcome to contact Prof Deevia Bhana, my supervisor of the study on bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za or on 031 260 2603.

DECLARATION AND UNDERSTANDING:

I ……………………………………………… (full name, surname and student number) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this letter and the nature of the research project, and I consent to allowing myself to be observed and video recorded for purposes of the research.

SIGNATURE: DATE:

_____   _____

Researchers contact details:
Name: Tasmeera Singh
Student Number: 202520286
Email: singht@ukzn.ac.za
Tel: 031 260 3078
Appendice 6

Appendice 7

To whom it may concern

RE: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT FROM STUDENT FOR USE OF VISUAL FOOTAGE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

I, Tasmeera Singh – Student Number 202520286 am currently undertaking a research study entitled Investigating constructions' of student identities and its' impact on social cohesion at a South African University. I am presently registered for my Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

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As part of this ethnography I will be observing students in the different social, academic and living spaces of the Howard College Campus. In order for me to create a pictorial documentary as part of the ethnography I will be taking out photographs throughout this observation. I will then use the interesting photographs to prompt a discussion in the focus group interviews that I will be doing. I hereby seek your permission to use the photograph as part of the focus group discussion. I will use the photographs purely and solely to generate discussion and for no other purposes without your consent. I have also included a clause for the students participating in the focus group to ensure that all discussions remain within the room and are not for public knowledge.

The focus group interviews will be tape recorded for the purposes of the data being transcribed later on. You are welcome to come and read the transcribed interviews once completed. The tapes will be kept in a secure place under lock and key and I will dispose of the tapes once my thesis is handed in and all corrections have been made.

However, if you so desire not to participate in this research study then your decision will not be prejudiced. If you decide to voluntarily participate in the research process then you are free to withdraw from the study at any stage of the research process.

If you would like further details pertaining to the validity of the study then you are most welcome to contact Prof Deevia Bhana, my supervisor of the study on bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za or on 031 260 2603.

DECLARATION AND UNDERSTANDING:

I ……………………………………………… (full name and surname) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project and the use of the my photograph for purposes of the focus group interview.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   DATE

_____   _____

Researchers contact details:

Name: Tasmeera Singh
Student Number: 202520286
Email: singht@ukzn.ac.za
Tel: 031 260 3078

Appendice 8: Letter to the Dean

To the Dean/Head of School

<u>RE: LETTER OF CONSENT FOR PERMISSION TO OBSERVE LECTURES FOR MODULE XXX ON THE HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS</u>

I, Tasmeera Singh – Student Number 202520286 am currently undertaking a research study entitled Investigating constructions' of student identities and its' impact on social cohesion at a South African University. I am presently registered for my Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

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If you would like further details pertaining to the validity of the study then you are most welcome to contact Prof Deevia Bhana, my supervisor of the study on bhanad1@ukzn.ac.za or on 031 260 2603.

DECLARATION AND UNDERSTANDING:

I ……………………………………………… (full name, surname and position) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this letter and the nature of the research project, and I consent to allowing access as an observer in the lecture theatre.

SIGNATURE: DATE:

_____   _____

Researchers contact details:

Name: Tasmeera Singh
Student Number: 202520286
Email: singht@ukzn.ac.za
Tel: 031 260 3078

Appendice 9 Interview Questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

SEMI STRUCTURED SCHEDULE

What are the incidents/happenings in the residence that cause tension amongst each other? Why is this so?

1. What relationships are common in residence?
2. What do you understand by a sexual identity?
3. In residence what are the norms of a sexual identity?
4. Are females expected to conform to a female heterosexual identity?
5. What are the feelings or emotions when females/males display the 'other' sexual identity?
6. Is it easily accepted or welcomed? Why or why not?
7. Do you think that UKZN is free of gender bias? Why?
8. What is your interpretation of student residences?
9. Tell me more about the relationships in residence? How common is this type of relationship in the residence?
10. Do you think that this display of identity is appropriate in the residence? Why?
11. Do you think that the residences of UKZN are socially cohesive?
12. What elements/aspects are important in promoting a cohesive social context in the living space of the residence?
13. Why do you believe that these elements are important to foster a sense of integration between different individuals?

FOCUS GROUP (ALTERNATE)

1. Tell me who you are and why you think you are that person?
2. When you identify yourself what is the first thing that comes to mind and why? Is it your race, your gender or your sexuality?
3. What prompts you to create the type of friendships/relationships that you do?
4. Do you think that the types of relationships that you forge are different in the cafeterias to the ones that you form in the lecture halls or any other spaces?
5. Why do you think that certain spaces are more cohesive than others?
6. Why do you think this is so?
7. Do you think that UKZN is free of discrimination? Why?
8. Who or what do we discriminate upon? Why?
9. How accepting or tolerant are we to people who are different from us? Why or why not?
10. What aspects or incidents create tension/antagonism between students on campus? Why?

11. Have you experienced any incident on campus that has really disturbed you or something that you didn't quite agree with that resulted in antagonistic behaviour or feelings towards the other person?
12. Do you believe that UKZN is a socially cohesive institution? Why?
13. What aspects are important in building a cohesive institution? Why do you think so?

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW:

1. So tell me about yourself? How do you define yourself?
2. Can you recall any incident in your life that was the turning point of your identity formation? Something that affirmed who you are?
3. Why do you think so?
4. What would you say are identity markers?
5. Would you engage in cross-racial relationships or same sex relationships?
6. What do you think about people who are different from you eg. Gays and lesbians?
7. Do you feel irritated by their behaviour? Or do you accept them for who they are and why?
8. Do you believe that UKZN students are accepting of each other? Why?

Open discusssions

1. Do you think that the residences at UKZN are socially cohesive?
2. What elements/aspects are important in promoting a cohesive social context in the living space of the residence?
3. Why do you believe that these aspects/elements are important to foster a sense of integration between different individuals?
4. Tell me about relationship dynamics on campus?
   What prompts you to create the type of friendships/relationships that you do?
5. Do you believe that the types of relationships that you forge are different in the cafeterias to the ones that you form in the lecture halls or the residence space?
6. Why do you think this is so?

1. So tell me about yourself…..
2. What life experiences do you think have shaped your identity?
3. Tell me about any experience/incident which occurred on campus that has really disturbed you or something that you didn't quite agree which created antagonistic behavior amongst your colleagues.
4. How have these experiences/incidents shaped you?
5. Why do you think that misunderstandings or antagonistic behavior towards each other manifest itself in the culturally and racially diverse institution of UKZN?

6. Do you believe that race affects students' lives and interactions at UKZN? How?
7. Do you socialize with students of different races? Why, why not?
8. Where are the spaces and places if any on campus where racial integration/mixing occur?

9. Why do you think this happens in these particular spaces?
10. What do you think about Howard College with regard to race?
11. Is it good or bad being a black/white/Indian/Colored student at Howard College? Why?
12. Would you say that Howard College is like a melting pot where everyone mixes despite race? Or where there isn't much mixing and there are racial tensions? Or is it somewhere in between these? Please give reasons for your responses.
13. What would you say are the necessary elements required to have a campus that is free of racism?
14. What actions could be taken, if any, by the university or by students which might help to counter forms of racism at UKZN?

Interview schedule:
1. Can you describe the kind of people that you hang out with on campus? Tell me about some of the common interests that you share with these people?

2. Do you have friends from different races? If no, why do you think this is so?

3. How easy or difficult is it to make friends with people from other races on campus? What factors do you think hinder or encourage this?

4. Are there spaces or places on campus or outside campus where
   a) Students from different races socialize and interact
   b) Where there is no such interaction.

In the lecture halls at UKZN do you think that the race of the lecturer makes a difference in the presentation and focus of lectures or in the ways different students are addressed or treated? If so please give some examples?

5. Between which races are boyfriend/ girlfriend relationships most and least likely to occur? Why?

6. Would you be happy if you were in cross racial relationships on campus? If yes why, and would you have a preference or not for a boyfriend/girlfriend of a particular race if you were to have a mixed relationship? If yes please explain why? If you wouldn't want to be in a racially mixed relationship please give reasons.

7. What do you think of people who engage in cross racial relationships? Is it good or bad or does it not bother you?

8 Do you think that UKZN is free of racism? If yes what makes you think it's free of racism. If no what makes you think it's not free of racism. Please illustrate with examples?

Appendice 10

Turn-It-In Originality Report

Submission Author: Tasmeera Rajcoomar Singh

Submission date: 25-Aug-2019 08:06 PM (UTC + 0200)

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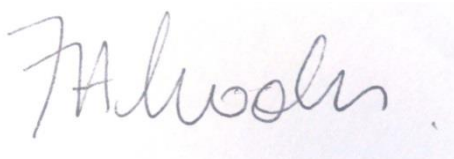
DISSERTATION OF TASMEERA SINGH (STUDENT NUMBER 202520286) EDITED

Dear Professor Deevia Bhana,

I have edited Tasmeera Singh's dissertation,

Tasmeera's writing is well crafted and to the point, and she demonstrates thorough understanding of academic language. However, some sentences needed to be tightened up and synonyms found for words that had been repeated in the same sentence, or that were used too often.

Kind regards,

Fiona Crooks (Editor)

Appendice 12: Journal Paper

Shifting race and class in student construction of identities at a South African university
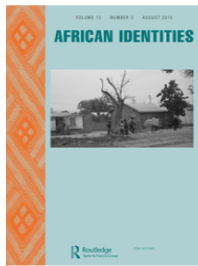
Tasmeera Singh & Deevia Bhana

Routledge
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Shifting race and class in student construction of identities at a South African university

Tasmeera Singh* and Deevia Bhana

School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa

The changing social and economic condition in South Africa has resulted in the rising number of middle-class Africans. These changing class dynamics have also seen the changes in the higher education environment, ensuring the intake of more African students into university. Race and class continues to mark student identity construction which has implications for social cohesion. This paper discusses how class troubles an essentialist construction of student racialised identities. We argue that whilst there are shifts in student relations fuelled by the changing class dynamics in society, there are also continuities – and yet these continuities do not proliferate in homogenous ways. The paper discusses the construction of African student identities and the role that class plays in marginalising same-race relations within the higher education environment. Class is illuminated through the urban/rural divide, the role of language and through a discourse of taste. This paper focuses on the constructions of a select group of African students who come from working-class and middle-class backgrounds at a South African institution situated at the nexus of social transformation. The analysis draws attention to class, and the subversion of power relations and hegemonic practices through the mobilisation of agency in students' talk and action. This paper is important in highlighting changing student relations fuelled by the changing class dynamics and their implications for social cohesion.

Keywords: race; class; South Africa; social cohesion; student identities

Introduction

The demise of apartheid in South Africa has opened a space for higher education students to negotiate and create 'new' ways of relating to each other. Despite such avenues of opportunity for social cohesion, student identity construction continues to be refracted through a 'racialised' lens (Bhana, 2013, 2014; Department of Education, 2008; Durrheim & Mtose, 2006; Durrheim, Mtose, & Brown, 2011; McKinney, 2007; Pattman, 2007, 2010; Soudien, 2008; Walker, 2005, 2006). The construction of racialised identities is situated in the interplay of class, culture, historicity and politics (Dolby, 2000).

Whilst social cohesion in higher education and in South Africa remains a salient feature of policy, race remains problematic. Whilst the old fashioning of apartheid identities continues to maintain its mark, there is also evidence of shifts under changing socio-economic conditions in the country (Seekings and Nattrass, 2005). Such shifts are especially fuelled in the context of changing class relations which privilege and

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foster mixed racial relationships, troubling the hierarchical prism of race relations within South African higher education institutions (Bhana, 2013, 2014; Soudien, 2010). Soudien (2008, p. 663) notes that given the elite character of higher education, social class has come to produce new and interesting racial demographics. Seekings (2008) suggests that the conditions after apartheid have created opportunities for changing the class structures among Africans although this is not the case for all of South Africa's poor Africans. However, in South African higher education, we know little of how race and class are produced in relation to student identities.

In this paper, we argue that whilst there are shifts in student relations fuelled by the changing class dynamics in society, there are also continuities – and yet these continuities do not proliferate in homogenous ways. The paper discusses the construction of the African identity and the role that class plays to marginalise or homogenise same race relations within the higher education environment. Class is illuminated through the urban/rural divide, the role of language and through a discourse of taste, as this paper discusses.

This paper focuses on the construction of a select group of African student identities at a South African institution situated in the nexus of social transformation. It illuminates how class is implicated in fracturing student relations, particularly African student relations. The central argument in this article is that whilst race remains important, class must be considered much more seriously in student racialised identities. This paper draws on interviews with a select group of African students who form part of a larger study that sought to examine how higher education students negotiate race in the context of social transformation (Bhana, 2013, 2014). The focus in this paper is on the racialised and classed experiences of working-class and middle-class African students as they negotiate and contest their identities within the terrain of a contemporary South African institution.

Like Bhana's 2014 study, this present paper highlights class within student relations in the higher education environment, thus troubling a simplistic view of race. The research further highlights how class serves to further marginalise certain categories of students beyond race, and thus implicating class. The changing class dynamics within the African student population entering the higher education environment creates nuanced versions of African identity. This article is particularity concerned with the making of the African student identity in light of the changing class dynamics in contemporary South Africa.

Research methods

The data presented in this article derive from a larger case study involving focus groups and individual interviews at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). UKZN is a racially diverse institution and in 2009 was reported to have 39,247 registered students and in 2014 to have 43,015 students across all five campuses that comprise this university. This research was conducted on the Howard College Campus, which has the largest number of registered students (Institutional Intelligence, 2014). In 2010, the Howard College Campus had 6338 African students and in 2014 it had 9227 registered African students. Posel (2001) suggests that race was produced through hierarchies under apartheid but in post-apartheid South Africa is central for social redress. Bhana (2014) further elucidates that at many higher education institutions presently, increasing the number of African students remains an important arena of social redress. This contributes to diversification of the institution, which is also reflective of the goals of

higher education transformation. The data-set for this article is derived from a qualitative study of selected African accounts of race, class and identity at UKZN. The specific focus is on racialised and class experiences as articulated by African working-class and middle-class students.

The interviews were designed to gather information and explore how the participants gave meaning to race and class and the importance of cross-racial relationships within the nexus of the South African institution, as UKZN claims to be the most socially transformed institution in the country. Sixteen qualitative interviews, both individual ($n = 5$) and focus group ($n = 11$), were conducted with a select group of undergraduate students. The interviews were designed to elicit students' responses in a manner that encouraged them to set the research agenda, thus creating impetus for talk about race and class. This strategy was deployed to invoke students' agency and action in the process, which is an integral aspect of qualitative studies.

The interviews spanned 60–90 min each and the transcripts were transcribed verbatim. The data that were obtained from the interviews were organised and coded into initial descriptions and categories, thus allowing the themes to emerge. Once this process was complete, the relevant themes were selected and further developed; this entailed searching through the data-set in an iterative manner. The inclusion of only African students within this data-set limits the study; however, the focus of this article is not on individual students, but on common themes that emerge from students' talk about race and, more importantly is on how class is given saliency in these students' talk.

Class and the urban/rural divide

Seekings and Nattrass (2005) suggest that the emergence of the African middle class is a central feature of the changing political economy in South Africa. The Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) Policy has given rise to an African middle class and African political and economic elite (Alexander, 2007). Recent studies (see Bhana, 2014; Soudien, 2010) within the South African higher education environment reveal a picture elucidating how the insertion of class within student relations ruptures and fragments the homogeneity of the racial identity, simultaneously rejecting essentialist constructions of racial identities. The data excerpt below reveal the complex ways in which class works to fragment and distort student relations, thus creating nuanced versions of the African identity within the particular context of UKZN:

Nobhule:	… you find that other people are from rural areas the minute you hear that. What immediately comes into your mind, having been born in an urban area, it is like they are stupid they don't know anything, they are just way behind, you know, so like I know everything. Like what is it, I am more 'waked up' than they are …
Cindy:	Uh farm girl, uh farm girl.
Zwane:	It is a term that they use for people from rural areas, people who you assume know nothing … someone who is not clued up on the urban life.
Nobuhle:	[Silence] Eish, you know, I have not been labelled a farm girl.
Zwane:	I have not been labelled a farm girl. (Focus group 11, African females)

Nobhule and Zwane reject the discursive constructions of blackness and locate their African identity within the urban/rural discourse which describes urban black Africans as educated, wealthy, modern and advantaged (Durrheim et al., 2011) and rural black

African as traditional, uneducated, poor and respectful (Durrheim et al., 2011). The discourse of the urban/rural offers polarised versions of the African identity. Nobhule and Zwane position themselves as intelligent, knowing and modern because of their urban upbringing as opposed to the African who hails from a rural area, who is positioned as stupid and 'way behind'. Thus, Nobhule and Zwane locate themselves within this discourse of the urban culture, which perpetuates the hierarchical prism fuelled by class inequalities. These class inequalities thus serve to differentiate between the African who hails from the urban area and the African who hails from the rural area because these constructions are juxtaposed against each other in terms of being wealthy, modern and educated (urban construction) and traditional, uneducated, poor and respectful (rural construction).

Hence, through class, Zwane and Nobhule's identity is fragmented, signalling shifts and changes that move beyond the apartheid constructions. This has implications for present-day African higher education students' construction of their identity, disrupting the apartheid construction of African as power inequalities are reproduced and class inequalities manifest to marginalise and create difference even among same-race relations in the context of UKZN. Similarly, a study conducted by Harris and Khanna (2010) located in the US elucidates how the insertion of class within this community produced nuanced versions of blackness that were resisted and accepted simultaneously within same-race relations. Thus, class complicates and troubles same-race relations. Within the South African higher education context, studies have noted how students construct identities that are in tandem with the apartheid constructions (see McKinney, 2007; Walker, 2005, 2006) as well as how class troubles a simplistic understanding of race, as noted by Seekings (2008) and Bhana (2014).

Race, class and language

Hunter (2010) notes that potential class mobility cannot be separated from marginalisation of other poorer Africans from rural or township areas who do not have the economic means to ensure that their children enter English medium schools. However, contemporary South Africa has been characterised by a class shift, with a greater tendency of the black affluent classes to send their children to the well-resourced English medium schools outside of the African townships. Hence, the children from this affluent class derive benefit from attending these schools, as they gain competency in the English language which allows them to insert and locate themselves within middle-class values (Hunter, 2010).

The data below further elaborate how African students' residential location, as elaborated by Hunter (2010), provides them with the opportunity to insert themselves within middle-class values by accessing the English language as a power investment to negotiate cross-racial friendships in the university environment. KwaMashu, an urban township and a previously designated area for poor African working class people, is polarised against Westville, an urban residential area previously designated as an apartheid space for wealthy white people. Pearl uses her confidence in the use of English as a tool to negotiate friendships with other (white) students within the context of the higher education environment, as she is able to insert herself and identify with the middle-class values which she has embraced because of living in Westville. Thus, race, class and language are entangled, disrupting a homogenous construction of an African identity:

Pearl: … when I arrive and I am just a tad well-spoken than her [African female] and I sound a bit different all of a sudden, they [white students] want to talk to you. So I think language, because if you grew up in KwaMashu, trust me, your English is not going to be like someone who lives in Westville. (Focus group 17, African males and females)

According to Soudien (2004), the emergence of a middle class among the African majority in South Africa has resulted in privilege and power for many, but this has not as yet alleviated the economic crisis that faces the majority who remain poor and black. One of the students expressed this as follows:

Samuel: … there is also an element of those that are rich who always want to say no, we want to maintain a certain status, and they will always tell their children that no matter what you do, make sure you always maintain that high status. So some of the children, even if they are black, they would not accept the fact that I am among my black fellows – they have a different background as mine, so he or she will always see themselves as somebody who is capable of talking to whites, just because they are in the same social status … (Focus group 6, mixed African males and females)

In the above excerpt, class is implicated in fracturing student relations within the higher education environment, as the location of identity within a particular class allows certain students within the context of this study to engage in cross-racial mixing because their class disposition provides them with the necessary tools. They '…. see themselves as somebody who is capable of talking to whites, just because they are in the same social status …'. Historically, the apartheid discourse imbued the whites with socio-economic power, thus identifying with a white student is an alignment with this economic power and an elevated social status, which works to maintain the status quo. Thus, the insertion of class within same-race relations marginalises and fractures the homogeneity of African, as some African students choose to distance themselves from other Africans ('… so some of the children, even if they are black, they would not accept the fact that I am among my black fellows …') in order to align themselves with the white students.

With the changing positions necessitated by the changing class dynamics, a certain identity 'emerged' among the African students who were identified as more affluent and privileged. The construction of the 'coconut' or 'Oreo' presided strongly in students' talk. According to Distiller and Steyn (2004), hybridity seeks to account for what occurs when cultures meet in the context of unequal power relations. The performance of hybrid identities is necessary to retain the advantages gained from 'racial' categorisation. The term coconut was used to refer to the positive identification of blacks with whites so that language, accent, lifestyles for instance resembled that of white middle/rich classes. Thus, the term 'coconut' is used to identify black students who resonate with elements of a white identity. Being labelled a coconut resonates with privilege and power by changing and shifting class positions of a few African students. As Dolby (2000) notes, the assimilation of a white identity works in tandem with the apartheid construction of a white identity, which was historically imbued with power and economic privilege.

According to Erasmus (2010), the use of race, reconfigured by contemporary history, enables young South Africans to name someone a 'coconut' when they experience a contradiction between 'appearance' and 'social habits'. However, construction of the 'coconut' or 'Oreo' in students' talk further serves to exacerbate the polarisation of the

African identity as working-class African students are pitched against middle-class African students. Thus, this privileged position within the institution which is invoked by changing class dynamics is met with contempt, resentment and scorn, as the data extract below elucidate:

Tintswalo: Even in a in the black community itself here at Howard – yes we are all black, but you will find students who try to change who they are by like literally changing the way they talk, and then talk like a white person, like 'Oh my gosh guys, did you see that event last night?' [Laughs] So that is really how they talk, just to fit in, and then we who like act normal will be like 'Why is she doing that? – like please come on now'. A coconut. Yes, a coconut – so it is just a lot of cases. (Individual interview 5, African female)

According to Tintswalo 'the way they talk, and then talk like a white person' language is a key element in consolidation of the bestowed status of a coconut. Competency in English, which is key to student success at UKZN, is linked to class. According to Hunter (2010), with disintegration of the apartheid laws, the schooling system in the country has moved towards the market wherein the former white public schools have enrolled more black African students. African students who are competent in English are part of a growing feature of South African townships, where there is mass movement of learners who can afford to pay the fees at 'multiracial' schools as they access English medium schools in former white, Indian and coloured areas. We argue that the perceived investment in the use of the English language to epitomise a position of power among the other African students in this particular context is viewed negatively ('[Laughs] So that is really how they talk, just to fit in …') and met with ridicule and scorn by fellow African students who resist and contest trying to fit into the university context through the use of the English language. Thus, to other African students within the same university environment, the use of English is not necessarily a power investment and serves to accentuate the divide between same-race relations within the context of UKZN. 'Why is she doing that? …' crystallises the disconnect between the African working-class and the African middle class, and hence ruptures the homogeneity of race:

Tintswalo: Today in class we had an argument with this girl. She came from nowhere, she has not been attending class, and she comes out and says (in a highly coconut voice) I really don't understand why I am paying for field trips (she is black) [pause]. Everyone just switched off, and I am like they didn't want to hear what she was complaining about, but it was still not valid the content because I listened to her, and I'm like and then they were people just mumbling *ayoo indaba eina kulama fane gala mhlungo* [why is she talking like a white] and immediately that cut her off from everyone in the class who were calling her a comrade. So immediately when that sort of thing comes into play, it is like really divisive.It's like changing who you are. You are a black person and you don't need to speak English like to the highest level. Just be yourself, don't impress anyone. As black people we always try to impress ourselves and make ourselves known as, ok, I am this black girl from the suburbs and I am not like you, so that is how we are as black people. (Individual interview 5, African female)

Bhana's (2014) analyses of student identities at UKZN draws attention to the micro-dynamics of class and its relation to broader socio-historical forces which results in marginalisation for working-class African students. Relations of domination and

subordination are reproduced with deployment of language as a powerful tool and through which the disadvantaged African student is marginalised. With virtually no desegregation in African schools and limited access to English, particularly for students outside of the urban contexts, power inequalities are reproduced, with negative academic outcomes (Bhana, 2014, p. 360). However, in the data above, a discourse of 'authenticity of being black' is imposed by the rejection of English in 'You are a black person and you don't need to speak English like to the highest level'. Hence, the power relations are subverted and altered within this discourse. Within this particular context of student interaction, the 'coconut' whose construction is one of privilege and power is marginalised and denigrated. Hence, class inequalities are epitomised as the 'coconut' is juxtaposed against the African working-class students with negative outcomes.

Further to this, the data below illuminate the pivotal role that language plays in disrupting and altering same-race relations within student talk in the context of the higher education environment. In this group's testimonies, the use of the English language within students' accounts serves to disrupt the status quo that the use of English maintains:

Mbali:	… I think some black people don't acknowledge being black.
Noluthando:	… I think I or most black girls have been brought up in a black environment in the same way.
Thokozo:	In the townships we were brought up in a way that you were told that if you speak English, I mean like you are black and you will *never* be white and that's it. [author emphasis]
Mbali:	Ja, typically they look at you differently when they come and they speaking township language and you come and you are busy with your English, and then they come and look at you like ay yay yay No.
Thokozo:	It is really hard and really uncomfortable to speak English. (Focus group 7, mixed African males and females)

Painter's (2006) study conducted at a public secondary school in an urban area in the Eastern Cape in South Africa sought to explore learners' accounts of multilingualism and language diversity in the school, and found that the English language was constructed as universal and accessible to all. However, in these students' accounts, the use of the English language does not occupy a hegemonic position as the universal language (Painter, 2006) because it is akin to being white: '… if you speak English … you are black and you will never be white …'. This articulation is significant and salient and demonstrates the making of the African identity through rejection of conforming to using English as a universal language – and hence the rejection of the white identity.

Steyn (2004) suggests that whiteness was not only important for colonial domination, but its power beyond the colony permeates everyday social life. The use of township language subverts the hegemony associated with English. Thus, African is juxtaposed with white through the discourse of language, but within this context the English language occupies a marginal position and is pitted against township language, which occupies a dominant space within these students' accounts.

Hence, in these students' accounts within the context of UKZN, the power relations rendered through the use of the English language are toppled and subverted by the imposition of township language, which reigns dominant in these students' accounts of their everyday experience. 'It is really hard and really uncomfortable to speak English …' is an assertion of this group's African identity and the mobilisation of their agency

in their choice not to use the English language is an acknowledgement of their African identity. Thus, the rejection of English is a key marker of an authentic African identity. Language is conflated with race in maintaining the 'coherence' of an 'authentic' African identity.

Race and class through a discourse of taste

In narrating further African students' experiences at UKZN, class was illuminated in fostering spaces of disconnection and marginalisation between the African poor and the African elite, particularly within the context of youth culture and fashion. Dolby's (2000) ethnographic research case study, which was conducted at Fernwood High School, an urban multiracial high school in South Africa, illuminated how students within the school setting constructed their racial identity. These racial identities were produced through an engagement with both local material forces and the global space of affect. Racial identity construction through a discourse of taste functioned as a site of conflict and tension, but it is flexible and changing borders also generated a space for instances of border crossing and hybridity. According to Bourdieu (1992), cultural preferences such as choice of clothing, leisure activities, food, entertainment and all matters of taste are the product of upbringing and education, as Mzo reflects on below:

Mzo: So sometimes you kind of scared to approach people of high class because of your social, economic background and of who you are and how you dress. And if you look at how they dress, they have brand names and stuff, and you would have just ordinary clothes, and you see that you can't fit in … (Individual interview 3, African female)

In Mzo's perception, 'high class students' are those who wear brand name clothing. According to Motsemme (2003), it is through performance and representation that the practice of adornment, within this context brand name clothing, becomes implicated in the process of remaking and maintaining social status and distinction. Hence, Mzo's lack of social and economic capital within the higher education environment functions to marginalise her among her peers, creating relations of domination and subordination maintained by a distinction in class.

However, in the data-set below that was derived from a group of African friends, albeit all females, they reject the western idealisation and consumption culture imposed on them by the adornment of brand name clothing, and in doing so construct a collective African identity. This collective experience of the African identity seeks to destabilise and displace the conventional 'white look' which is associated with the adornment of brand name clothing. This rejection of a consumerist culture is an insertion of the African female form (Motsemme, 2003) and the exercising of this group's agency in positioning themselves as subordinate and their ability to dictate and command a dress sense without pressure to conform to any other dress sense (within this context the adornment of "brand name clothing"). Hence, this group worked to distance themselves from these symbols of dress perceived to be white. Thus, these African females assert their identity, which transcends the class boundaries policed through the discourse of taste. Through exercising their agency, this group is able to transcend the stigma of blackness (Durrheim & Mtose, 2006) which is associated with being poor and powerless:

Amanda: Doing all Brazilian and then they want that and they want that.
Nomzamo: They want to fit in.

Zethu:	A certain group ….
Amanda:	We are used to wearing the same things at school, then after school the pressure when you see other people wearing name brands and you want to be part of that group yourself.
Nokhazi:	Ja you want to be part of that *in* group. [author emphasis]
Zethu:	We not here for Brazilian … like we don't feel that pressure cos we all like the same, we are the same. (Focus group 1, African females)

In the data below, much of the talk within this group's interaction circulated around the discourse of taste as explained by Bourdieu (1992), with cultural preferences such as choice of clothing, leisure activities, food and entertainment all being the result of upbringing and education:

| Amanda: | Obviously when you try to fit in it is not you I'm trying to be … we are being ourselves, like you come from home and bring whatever lunch you eat, you don't try to put pressure on your parents. |
| Zethu: | We share it cos like somebody will come with like no money, but we gonna buy fries, we gonna buy bread, we gonna buy cake, we gonna break that among all the eight of us … a packet of chips or you know, no matter how small, no matter how big something, you know, we share it. (Focus group 1, African females) |

In Bhana's (2014) research, the coffee shop was named as an important site for the constitution of class, elucidating the shifts in class and race, which impacted on how students congregated on the campus. The 'Italian coffee shop' epitomised power and social inequality and was supported by the economically advantaged students, who comprised white, Indian and some African students.

The data above illuminate the plight of poor African/working class students who purchase cheaper meals to get by, demonstrating the tenacity of their identity through abject poverty. Despite the depraved social standing of this group within the university context, they flout 'trying to fit in' and in so doing occupy a space within the social setting of the university that allows them to exercise their agency and subvert the relations of domination and subordination that usually accompany a privileged economic status. This act of communal sharing is aligned to the spirit of ubuntu, which is the capacity in African culture to express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity in the interests of building and maintaining community with justice and mutual caring (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 2). Thus, the spirit of ubuntu espouses community strength out of community support (Swanson, 2007). This group act of sharing is an act of solidarity in their plight of poverty. Soudien (2011) argues that the youth are in a complex engagement with a range of structures, which might be formal or informal, to produce identities that are cognisant of the apartheid remnants, but also new forms of identity are emerging in the new South Africa which requires a process of engagement and negotiation. We argue that despite these students' impoverished state, they are able to resist being pushed to the margins in their refusal to fit in and conform.

Similarly, the data below from a group of African males who live in the university residence show how they constructed their identity through a discourse of taste, rejecting the Eurocentric construction of drinking coffee with being civilised:

| Sizwe: | I have never bought coffee in my life because I think it is a waste of money … |
| Joe: | [All laugh aloud] We never buy coffee. |

Jabu:	No, it is because of our backgrounds. Our backgrounds eish …
Sizwe:	No, because when we were growing up we know that we mustn't waste money with unnecessary things.
Jabu:	We just need bread … some things that will just make you full … ja it does not make sense to waste.
Joe:	This background thing has actually traumatised us …
Pete:	Ay we don't want to be civilised no … (Focus group 11, African males)

Jabu, Sizwe, Joe and Pete are vociferous in their line of argument that the troubling reality of being African which has its basis in poverty marks their identity even in present-day interactions: 'This background thing has actually traumatised us …'

According to Durrheim and Mtose (2006, p. 155), there is another cluster of emerging accounts of blackness which understand being African in terms of a struggle with inferiority produced in the contexts of oppression. Within this particular extract, Sizwe is similar to Sipho in Durrheim and Mtose's (2006) study, reinforcing and illuminating the plight of poor African students in general who cannot even afford a cup of coffee in present-day interactions. The fact that they do not buy coffee because it is construed as wastage of money has implications for the extent to which class polices students' interactions within the university environment, even under the shifting racial and class positions. Thus, this group's racial positioning is continuous with the apartheid construction of being African, which has its basis in poverty and is not congruent with the present-day shifting and changing class positions in contemporary South Africa as class emerges in fracturing African student relations.

Conclusion

According to Seekings and Nattrass (2005), the emergence of the African middle class has been the most significant change in contemporary South Africa. The BEE Policy has given rise to an African middle class and African political and economic elite (Alexander, 2007). Taking cognisance of this 'emerging' African middle class entering the higher education environment, this article sought to illuminate and discuss the salience of class in students' interactions and talk within the context of UKZN. UKZN is a racially diverse institution with the majority of students being African (Institutional Intelligence, 2014). Students who emerged from working-class and middle-class backgrounds were the focus of this article.

In the accounts of Zwane and Nobhule, they elucidate how the urban/rural discourse fuelled by class inequalities polarises the African identity by exacerbating the chasm between the urban African within which they locate their identity, as being educated, wealthy, modern and advantaged (Durrheim et al., 2011) and the rural black African from which they chose to distance themselves as being traditional, uneducated, poor and respectful (Durrheim et al., 2011). The urban/rural discourse taken up in students' accounts serves to marginalise the poor working-class student within the context of the higher education environment. Dolby's (2001, p. 115) study situated at a high school in Durban, South Africa, notes that racial identities cannot be 'bounded and framed, for they exceed, engulf, and mock the borders in which we attempt to encase them'.

In Pearl's account, she demonstrates how the use of English as a power tool can access friendships with white students at the institution. However, the use of English is not taken up in the same position in Tintswalo and Mbali's group. Their accounts demonstrate that the use of English does not acquire a hegemonic position in their discussions, hence subverting the hierarchical relations of the English/isiZulu divide.

Language conflated with class has the potential to disrupt and create tension within same-race groups, thus creating nuanced versions of the African identity.

The polarisation of the African identity is also exacerbated through a discourse of taste, where the plight of poor African students is highlighted in their lack of social and economic capital in the higher education environment. Thus, this article has attempted to illuminate how the inequalities of class trouble a homogenous construction of the African identity, which has implications for social cohesion. Rooted within class inequalities is the potential to fracture and disrupt student relations within the higher education environment. As elucidated by the student interviews, the precipitators of the inequalities of power is made visible, 'resonating as they do with the histories/economies of oppression in South Africa, which are deeply material' (Bhana, 2014, p. 365).

According to Bhana (2014, p. 364), an analysis rooted in the inequalities of class has an important role to play in interrogating the simplistic understandings of race and racial transformation. This article takes cognisance of the role that class plays in fracturing or homogenising same-race relations within the context of UKZN.

Disclosure statement

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