

**GAY, LESBIAN AND BISEXUAL STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF HOMOPHOBIA AT
A SELECTED UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL RESIDENCE**

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In Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Education

By
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DECLARATION

IValenshia Jagessar..... declare that

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Dr TP Msibi

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

My late great grandmother: Mariamma Moodley, uncle: Ashwin, cousins: Yadin and Tamesha.

My Grandmother Rathambal Moonsamy Moodley.

My parents Luchmee and Shamlall Jagessar

My brothers Vikesh, Calvin and Shal Jagessar.

My nieces and nephew Ryka, Kelisha and Trisholan Jagessar

My sisters Stephanie and Sharlene Jagessar.

My partner Naveen Ramlal.

And most importantly my baby Tuscan.

You have provided me with the greatest gift possible: you allowed me to follow my dreams. This is as much yours as it is my accomplishment.

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ABSTRACT

Higher education residences are ‘homes away from home’, in which students from different social and cultural backgrounds live together, holding different norms, values and practices. Due to the various diversities often present in higher education institutions, and the distance away from their home communities, many ‘lesbian’, ‘gay’ and ‘bisexual’ (LGB) students find space and freedom to ‘claim’ and negotiate their same-sex identities when they reach these institutions. In this thesis, I sought to showcase the experiences of LGB students living in the University of KwaZulu Natal, Edgewood campus residences. Using Young’s (1990) framework of the Five Faces of Oppression, I sought to explore how LGB students experience homophobia and as well as how the institution responds when homophobic incidents occur. Using a case study methodology, interviews were conducted with ten LGB identifying participants studying to be teachers at the university. Findings reveal a persistent culture of sustained tolerance for homophobia among the general students in the residences, determined fundamentally by the systemic circumstances present in higher education residential spaces. These conditions normalise homophobia, thereby positioning same-sex attraction as abhorrent and unacceptable, especially for students aspiring to be teachers. The analysis also shows that the interviewed students internalise homophobia, evidenced by their strategies of defending homophobic practices, denial and avoidance. While the data demonstrates clear evidence of homophobia in higher education residential spaces, I also show that some students exhibit agentic actions of resistance, but these actions are often constrained by the deeply conservative space that they find themselves in. I conclude by calling for more proactive interventions from university administrators in order to address discrimination and prejudice on the basis of LGB sexual identities.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The South African Constitution is acknowledged globally as one of the most advanced and inclusive documents in the world, demonstrating an unprecedented commitment towards upholding diversity and inclusion of all people, regardless of difference. This commitment includes the protection of the right to sexual orientation, a right affording full citizenship to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. In December 2006, South Africa became the fifth country in the world and the first country in Africa to legalise same-sex marriage (Smith, 2011). However, while the Constitution grants equality to all people, a disjuncture exists between what is specified within constitution and what actually happens in South African society (Ellis, 2009). Same-sex sexuality remains a taboo topic in the South Africa, as many South Africans continue to be homophobic, regardless of race, gender or even class. Homophobia is an issue which must be addressed, particularly as many LGBT South Africans continue to claim their sexual identities in repressive contexts (Matebeni, 2013). The homophobia that is experienced generally in society also often finds direct expression in schools. In certain contexts such as university campuses it seems that subtle, rather than blatant, homophobic behaviours are more likely to be perpetrated by heterosexual students on a daily basis (Jewell & Morrison, 2010). However, the nature of these homophobic practices and the experiences of gay, lesbian and bisexual students are not well understood, particularly as work on these issues is only just emerging (Gay and Lesbian Network, 2011; UNESCO, 2012). In this thesis, I intentionally focus on LGB students staying in the residences; the exclusion from this study of transgendered students is due to the fact that many students do not choose a transgendered identity because of their experiences of homophobia. I discuss this in detail in the methodology section.

While there has certainly been an increase in the work focused on LGB learners and schooling, there exists a limited amount of work exploring the university space, particularly the residences, where homophobia is concerned. I have lived on residences for many years and have noticed the various forms of exclusion and daily experiences of homophobia that LGB students are faced with. I became even more concerned when recently a disturbing incident concerning LGB issues occurred in residences. This incident involved a party which was hosted by LGB students, which triggered complaints by heterosexual students who claimed that the party had disturbed their

studies. This was despite the fact that in the same week another party had been held by heterosexual students, yet no complaints were received. Following these complaints, I found out that many of the students who are LGB were very isolated in the residences and were not able to freely exist like other students. This then triggered an interest in me to embark on this study, which seeks to explore how LGB students experience homophobia in the residences. It is also important to note that all students in this university campus where I am based are future teachers. Given that diversity and inclusion are enshrined in the South African constitution, and that these will be teachers responsible for the education of young people into these values, it became important to explore how students relate to the subject of same-sex sexuality given their chosen profession, which requires that they address the socialisation of young learners.

In this chapter, I will provide the background and rationale for the study. I will further discuss the purpose, objectives and the research questions of the study. I will also explain the significance of the study.

1.1.2. Background and Rationale

Higher education residences are ‘homes away from home’ (Ardnt & Bruin, 2006), in which students from different social and cultural backgrounds live together, holding different norms, values and practices. Due to the various diversities often present in higher education institutions, many LGB students often find space and freedom to ‘claim’ and negotiate their same-sex identities when they reach higher education institutions (Ardnt & Bruin, 2006; Soudien, 2008). However, this does not always mean that LGB students are accepted in these institutions. For instance, Msibi (2009) states that while universities are often perceived as diverse and liberal environments, the opposite often happens in South African higher education institutions. Homophobia is in fact a daily experience of many LGB individuals or others who are perceived to conform to non-normative gender and sexual identities.

It is important to firstly understand what homophobia is as this is a term which I use throughout the thesis and forms the crux of my study. According to Campos (2005) homophobia is a term used to refer to unreasonable hatred, fear and prejudice against, and negative attitudes towards, people who do conform to non-normative gender and sexual identities such as gay, lesbian and bisexual. Many LGB people have been killed, beaten, tormented, tortured, harassed, imprisoned,

raped and ostracized largely due to homophobia enacted by individuals who seek to silence same-sex desire (Longerbeam, Inkelas, Johnson & Lee, 2007; Mkhize, Bennett, Reddy & Moletsane, 2010). In 2006, the rape and murder of Zoliswa Nkonyana (De Waal, Manion & Cameron, 2007), in 2007 the rape and murder of Satome Massoa and the rape and murder of Sizakele Sigasa in Soweto (Msibi, 2009), in 2008 the rape and murder of Eudy Simelane, Banyana Banyana soccer star (Bucher, 2009), these were all clear evidence of homophobia; their murders were due to the fact that they were lesbian. Homophobia therefore draws heavily on irrational fears of those who experience same-sex sexuality. In 2012 a group of heterosexual men received an 18 year prison sentence after murdering and raping a Cape Town woman, also due to the fact that she was lesbian (Bhana, 2012). Homophobic violence in South Africa therefore crosses divisions of race, gender or class, and is driven by the fear of deviation from heteronormativity (Bhana, 2012; Francis & Msibi, 2011; Msibi, 2009). Not only are homophobic acts perpetrated in social spaces, institutions of higher learning, particularly the residences, are no exceptions: in 2012 the University of the Western Cape witnessed a homophobic attack in which a student was beaten in front of the security at the University by fellow students in the residences (De Vos, 2012). In this instant there was no action taken against the perpetrators. In 2008 gay students were escorted out of residences by a group of heterosexual males at the University of Zululand (Msibi, 2009). Recently allegations of discrimination on grounds of sexuality, gender and race at the North-West University, after the dismissal of Ingrid Treveson, Executive Adviser on Transformation (John, 2013), demonstrate the embeddedness of homophobia in institutional cultures. Often, the homophobic incidents are gendered, and largely rooted in patriarchal cultures.

The homophobic acts highlighted above call for urgent scholarly work that seeks to understand the nature and manifestations of homophobia in our higher education institution residences. This is particularly important, as already stated, given the perceived positioning of universities as liberal spaces where diversity is tolerated, if not celebrated. Conducting a study on the experiences of homophobia on residences is also important because of the available evidence of homophobia in higher education spaces. For instance, a report by the 'Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions', led by Soudien (2008), found that in relation to homophobia and sexism there was no university among those audited that was not in need of transformation in these

areas. Francis and Msibi (2011) also note that there is very little being done to address issues related to heterosexism and homophobia in higher education.

In South Africa, there is paucity of research on the experiences of homophobia among higher education students residing in university residences. While there has been an emergence of research focused on the experiences of LGB youth, this work has mostly focused at the basic education (primary and secondary school) level (Butler, Alpaslan, Strumpher & Astbury, 2003; Gay and Lesbian Network, 2011; UNESCO, 2012). Research findings from the existing studies suggest that while the South African constitution has tried to protect the rights of every individual, regardless of sexual orientation, such protections have not been extended to schools and higher education institutions (Ardnt & Bruin, 2006; Butler, Alpaslan, Strumpher & Astbury, 2003; Graham & Kiguwa, 2004; Hames, 2012; Ngcobo, 2007). Soudien (2008) found that many South African institutions are still lacking when it comes to transformation, especially with regard to LGB issues.

The homophobia captured in popular media (mentioned above) has been captured in scholarly work focused on same-sex desire generally as well as in relation to same-sex desire and schooling. Reddy (2002) notes that hate speech is often used against persons involved in same-sex relations, with the intention being to demean, discriminate and ill-treat people identified as gay and lesbian. Such hate speech involves labels like *isitabane*, *ungqingili*, *inkwili*, *uvezubuso*, *danone*, *moffie* and *faggot* (Msibi, 2009; Butler & Astbury, 2008; Graham & Kiguwa, 2004; Francis & Msibi, 2011; Ngcobo, 2007; Butler, Alpaslan, Strumpher & Astbury, 2003). These terms are sometimes used in a frivolous way; however there is always the emotional harm that the victims experience (Francis & Msibi, 2011).

Graham and Kiguwa (2004) note, writing about homophobia generally, that black gay men in the peri-urban communities in the Benoni area of Johannesburg reported being verbally and physically abused with some participants being raped and sexually assaulted. Furthermore, most lesbian participants reported verbal violence and physical violence, rape as well as attempted rape, and other forms of sexual assault, including quite commonly gang rape (Graham & Kiguwa, 2004). An important issue that also emerges in national literature is the use of extreme physical violence. Gay and lesbian students at secondary schools have reported being sexually harassed, being raped (including gang rape), and being tortured and tormented by fellow

heterosexual students at least once through the duration of their studies (Butler & Astbury, 2008; Graham & Kiguwa, 2004; Arndt & Bruin, 2006; Butler, Alpaslan, Strumpher & Astbury, 2003). Using the school toilets was also noted as a frequent problem. Gay learners feared going to the toilet due to harassment for using the male toilets (Graham & Kiguwa, 2004).

These studies consistently show the negatives experiences of individuals who engage in same-sex relations. Several scholars note that many people in South Africa still regard same-sex desire as un-African (Reddy, 2002; Msibi, 2011; Tati, 2009). Reddy (2002) notes that same-sex desire is considered un-African, which suggests that it is alien and foreign. This is confirmed by Msibi (2011), who notes that present-day African society often falsely believes that, before the colonization of Africa, same-sex identities did not exist and that it had been introduced to African society by westerners. This belief is also present in many educational contexts across the country. Francis and Msibi (2011) suggest that negative attitudes often silence any teaching supportive of gay and lesbian issues, thereby limiting the possibility of teaching about sexuality. This in turn sets the standard belief that heterosexuality is a norm, leaving gay and lesbian people powerless and prone to discrimination and abuse. Francis and Msibi (2011) also note that the negative attitudes often facilitate a witch hunt involving the identification of these perceived to be 'deviant'.

While all this work has been commendable, to my knowledge no recent study exists which explores how homophobia is experienced in South African higher education residences. Work that attempts to understand homophobia generally in higher education institutions exists (see Graziano, 2004). However, studies specifically focused on the residential spaces are in short supply. This is why I am conducting this study. Apart from the paucity of research in the area, my motivations for pursuing this study are personal, as already pointed to above. I am currently a Masters student in education who has resided in the residences for several years. I have noted, with concern, incidents of homophobia in the residences and therefore wish to understand whether these incidents are isolated cases or whether they represent a daily experience for most gay, lesbian and bisexual students. Essentially, I wish to understand how gay, lesbian and bisexual students experience homophobia in residences and also how these students negotiate their sexual identities in contexts which may be repressive. More especially, I focus on students residing in the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Edgewood campus residences. This is a campus

where teachers are trained. Teachers are meant to be promoters of non-discrimination as they will confront diverse learners in schools, and have a constitutional responsibility to protect all learners. By conducting a study exploring the experiences of homophobia among gay, lesbian and bisexual student-teachers, I wish to gauge whether student teachers, who will be teaching in schools, are in a position to understand the effects of homophobia and whether they can offer the type of inclusion enshrined in the Constitution.

1.1.4. Focus and purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of homophobia among gay, lesbian and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Edgewood campus residences. The focus of this study is on gay, lesbian and bisexual students and their experiences of homophobia as well as the ways in which they negotiate their sexual identity in a place that may be repressive: the residential space. An important point to note is that I do not focus in this study on transgender students. This is mainly because very few individuals in South Africa adopt this categorisation, as people in South Africa often conflate sexuality with gender. Further, due to the pervading homophobia, many individuals who may wish to identify as transgender do not do so. I therefore intentionally focus on lesbian, gay and bisexual students, knowing very well that working within such categories imposes some limitations, as they may inadequately represent the experience of any specific individual. Additionally, the categories are mainly Western in their origin, therefore their applicability and use may not be consistent with non-Western practices (see Sigamoney & Epprecht, 2013). Due to these challenges in naming, it is important therefore to point out that in the findings section, only the categories that the participants used to name themselves are used.

1.1.5. Objectives

The objectives of this study are four-fold: Firstly, I wish to gain insight on how gay, lesbian and bisexual students experience homophobia in the residences. Secondly, through these experiences, the study will seek to understand the ways in which gay, lesbian and bisexual students in residences negotiate their sexual identities in a context where their sexual identities may not be accepted. Thirdly, in so doing, the study will also attempt to understand the reasons for the types of negotiation strategies used by gay, lesbian and bisexual students while claiming their identities

in the residences. Lastly, due to the fact that the study was undertaken at a teacher training campus, this study also aims to understand how the experiences of homophobia by gay, lesbian and bisexual students relate to their identities as teachers.

1.1.6. Research Questions

Essentially, in line with the objectives of the study, there are four research questions in the study. These are:

1. What are the experiences of homophobia that lesbian, gay and bisexual students staying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences encounter?
2. How do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in contexts which maybe repressive?
3. Why do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in the ways they do?
4. How do the experiences of homophobia by lesbian, gay and bisexual students relate to these students' identities as student teachers?

By engaging with the first question, I wish to explore the various ways in which homophobia is experienced by LGB students in the residences. Here, I also wish to uncover and understand the homophobic practices that occur and why they occur in a space which is perceived as liberal. In the second question, I then consider the ways in which the homophobic practices are negotiated by LGB students in the residences. And through the third question, I wish to unpack the reasons for the type of negotiation strategies adopted. By understanding the ways in which homophobia is negotiated by LGB students, I wish to obtain a better sense of the things that LGB students have to do on campus in order to feel more included. I also wish to explore the type of assistance that may be required for LGB students in residences to become safer and less prone to homophobic violence. In the final question, I wish to explore how the student-teacher identity shapes the experiences of homophobia and whether their professional training has any effect on the homophobia that they experience.

1.1.3. Significance of the study

Throughout history lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) individuals had to endure discrimination and harassment, and have also been severely stigmatised (Ellis, 2009). For this reason, South Africa has afforded legal rights on the basis of sexuality and gender to citizens of the country. However, as already established, research in relation to LGB youth in South Africa has suggested high levels of homophobia in many South African communities (see Matebeni, 2013; Mkhize, Bennett, Reddy & Moletsane, 2010; Mufweba, 2003; Reddy, 2002; Reid & Dirsuweit, 2002) as well as schools (see Graham & Kiguwa, 2004; Msibi, 2012) and higher education institutions (see Francis & Msibi, 2011; Graziano, 2004; Hames, 2012; Ngcobo, 2007; Tati, 2009). Higher education residences are spaces where students live and spend most of their time (Taulke-Johnson, 2010). It is therefore of utmost importance that a study exploring the experiences of LGB students in residential spaces is undertaken so as to understand the ways in which transformation is understood by our society, and also to gauge the level and change since the collapse of apartheid. It is important to point out that it is now 21 years after the collapse of apartheid. It is therefore important that we understand the progress we have made as a country, and as educational institutions, particularly as these are institutions perceived to be the most liberal institutions in the country, where freedom is practiced. The study therefore aims to enhance the scholarship on transformation in South Africa.

This study therefore sheds light on the experiences of LGB students staying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Edgewood Campus residences, a campus for the training of teachers. If the project for social justice espoused in the South African Schools Act (Act 108 of 1996) is to be taken seriously, it is important that we also explore whether those who go into the field as teachers go into the field with changed minds about sexual orientation, or whether their attitudes remain the same. This work will therefore contribute also in the field of teacher education

Additionally, this study is important due to the recent focus placed by Dr Blade Nzimande, the Minister of Higher Education and Training, on the residences in the country. In the report released by the Ministerial Committee for Review of Provision of Student Housing at South African Universities, it becomes clear that residential spaces in South African universities are in crisis due to the deplorable living conditions that students live in, and even in some cases the starvation that occurs. This crisis is exacerbated by the thin scholarship focussed on residential

spaces. The study will also contribute towards this scholarship, while also offering knowledge that can be used by policy writers as well as university administrators themselves. This therefore is an important study, with far reaching impact.

1.1.7. Organisation of chapters

In the chapters that follow I attempt to frame this research into existing scholarly work and demonstrate the gap that exists in the SA context. There exists a strong body of work in Western countries such as the US and the UK, with limited studies in South Africa. In the next chapter, Chapter 2, I present the review of literature. Here, I firstly explore the theoretical underpinnings of the study, by discussing Young's (1990) theory on the Five Faces of Oppression. This is the theory that frames this study. The discussion on the theoretical framework is followed by a review of literature. Due to the scarcity of literature in South Africa, I begin by reviewing the literature internationally, and thereafter focus on the South African literature. At the end of the review, I show clearly why this study was needed, and the gap it sought to close.

Chapter 2 is followed by a chapter on methodology, Chapter 3. Here I present the methodology and methods used in this study. I firstly discuss the philosophical underpinnings of the study and details related to the context of the study. In the second section, I discuss the data generation process and the case study methodology used in the study, details about participants and how data was generated. The third part focuses on reflexivity and I discuss the analytical framework and matters pertaining to ethics. I also discuss the reliability of the study. At the end of the chapter, I show how I went about conducting this study.

Chapter 3 is followed by a chapter on data analysis and findings, Chapter 4. Here I present the findings of the study. I used thematic analysis during the analysis of data and found four themes which I discuss in detail in this chapter. In the first theme I demonstrate how, through the experiences of LGB students in residences, as related in the interviews, homophobia in the residences was shown to be rife and prevalent. However, homophobia in residences was also often excused and tolerated by the lesbian, gay and bisexual students interviewed. I go further into detail in the second theme where I discuss the colonization of residential spaces. I then discuss how lesbian, gay and bisexual students both conform to the ingrained heterosexualisation of the residential space and demonstrate resistance. I demonstrate how these experiences and

negotiations used by lesbian, gay and bisexual students then shape students' identities as future teachers and student teachers.

Chapter 4 is followed by the final chapter of this thesis, Chapter 5. Here I will conclude the thesis. I do this by discussing the findings and data analysis in relation to the four research questions. Then I discuss the implications of the study in relation to policy, practice and research. At the end of this chapter, I draw on the all four chapters and answer the main research questions.

1.1.8. Conclusion

In the above chapter, I have provided the background and rationale for the study. I have also clearly stated the goal of the study by declaring the purpose of the study, the research questions and objectives for the study. I then outlined a short summary of the methodology adopted in the study. This was followed by a discussion on the significance of the study. Finally, a discussion on the significance of the study was presented. The next chapter discusses the theoretical framework and literature review.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical framework

2.1.1. Introduction

A study which seeks to highlight the experiences of homophobia among a particular group of people is inevitably concerned with issues of power and oppression. Young's (1990) critical framework on the Five Faces of Oppression has therefore been chosen as a theoretical framework for this study. Young (1990) argues that oppression can be identified through the existence of the following elements or 'faces' in a particular given system or context: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. The use of this framework will assist in understanding the nature of homophobia that students experience in the selected context of this study. In this section, I will elaborate further on the Five Faces of Oppression and why I will be using this framework for this study. I will also highlight the limitations of the framework and will show clearly why, with all the limitations to be discussed, I still opted to use the framework. Once the framework has been discussed, I will present a review of literature, which will show clearly the gap that this study sought to fill in the existing body of knowledge.

According to Young (1990, p. 42) "Oppression refers to structural phenomena that immobilize or diminish a group". Here, Young (1990) claims that oppression is structural and part of existing systems in society. She describes the "systematic reproduction of structural oppression through the ways society defines and treats social groups" (p. 42). Similarly, McIntosh (1990) defines oppression as the systematic abuse of a particular group of people by other groups of people, who serve as agents in society reinforcing and encouraging oppressive behaviour by society and its culture. Heldke and O'Connor (2004) propose that these societal rules can become a restrictive structure of forces and barriers that immobilize a group of people. In the same way, Young (1990) suggests that oppression is based on injustices faced by particular groups of people which serve to privilege the oppressor or oppressors. She suggests that there is no clear individual oppressor. Alternatively the relationship which groups have with each other is rooted in oppression, whether the oppression is conscious or not. Gender, race, sexuality, class and religion outline the identities, experiences and relationships that are reinforced and shaped by

systematic conditions of oppression. These identities, experiences and relationships are also sources of courage, faith and resistance. Gewirtz (2006) suggests that Young's Five Faces of Oppression acknowledges and incorporates a complex and multi-dimensional approach to oppression. Young (1990) uses the Five Faces of Oppression to describe oppression imposed on any group. She argues that oppression manifests through exploitation, powerlessness, marginalization, cultural imperialism and violence (the Five Faces).

Gewirtz (2006) suggests that by using exploitation as a form of oppression, Young addresses the limitations of post-modern and liberal conceptualizations. Through exploitation, societies that define every person as free sustain their hierarchical system. This essentially means the establishment of a class (or differentiating) system. Class systems are used to either classify people and/or separate people; this then leads to those who have greater power exploiting those people without power (Heldke & O'Connor, 2004). While one concedes that power is fluid and that individuals have agency (Foucault, 2012), such fluidity is often restricted by social structure. This suggests that there is a process that uses exploitation of one social group to benefit another social group; therefore no oppressing groups can claim moral primacy (Young, 1990, p. 42). Gewirtz (2006) suggests that Young's conceptualizations challenge education policies and actors to interrupt and subvert exploitative relationships such as heterosexist actions or patriarchal relationships and views within and beyond educational institutions. For example, Butler, Aspaslan, Strumpher & Astbury (2003) state that there are homophobic incidents experienced by LGB minority learners that relate to exploitation: namely harassment which is enacted by school teachers, school administrators, peer harassment, ineffective school guidance counsellors, isolation, rejection and even avoidance, and an absence of proper information and appropriate curriculum in high schools and higher education institution for gay, lesbian and bisexual youth. Social or educational institutions therefore enable a few to accumulate power while they constrain many more.

For Young (1990) marginalization is perhaps one of the most dangerous forms of oppression. Here, groups of people are expelled from participating in social life and they are therefore subjected to material deprivation and even extinction. Marginalization is the process of making a certain categories of people (e.g. gay, lesbian and bisexual groups/communities) unimportant and invisible as individuals, while maintaining stereotypical characteristics of these groups.

These characteristics usually are not flattering and often depict people as violent, low class, unintelligent, or lazy. Gewirtz (2006) claims that Young's Five Faces of Oppression gives consideration to the extent to which the education system supports processes of marginalization within the institution and beyond it. For instance, Taulke-Johnson (2010) suggests that students are fearful of being identified as gay and therefore they re-inscribe and maintain the heterosexual matrix. This marginalizes and limits gay, lesbian and bisexual communities' possibilities and power due to the stereotyping of these individuals. Similarly, Kimmel (2004) suggests that gay men often become often attempt to conform to hegemonic masculinity in order to collude with their oppressor, therefore avoiding marginalization. By expelling any group of people from useful participation in any aspect of society, that group can endure "severe material deprivation and other non-material effects, such as boredom or lack of self-respect" (Young, 1990, p. 49). While marginalization has serious individual effects, it also includes the removal of practical, intuitional and cultural conditions for exercising one's capacity in a context which recognises freedom, tolerance and respect, therefore making the marginalized groups powerless.

Powerlessness, according to Young (1990), represents the lack of individual power a person can exercise. "The powerless are those who lack authority or power those over whom power is exercised without their exercising it; the powerless are situated so that they must take orders and rarely have the right to give them" (Young, 1990, p. 56). This suggests that without power to voice one's opinions and experiences, it is very hard to receive respect and status in society. People in power use it over those who are positioned as powerless; this is done by commanding them to do things and instructing them on what they need to do and must do, and even dictating and policing actions deemed inappropriate within that particular society. Acting beyond the socially accepted norms often comes with punishment. For example, often traditional areas of support in the form of friends, family and school teachers are not available to LGB youth in the ways they are to heterosexual youth (Young, 1990). Gewirts (2006) claims that education policies do not support the promotion of relationships based on recognition, respect, care and mutuality, thereby promoting powerlessness. Powerlessness can also be connected to exploitation because people of some specific social groups have power over others, imposing a form of powerlessness on the exploited. "In modern society, domination is enacted through the widely dispersed powers of many agents mediating the decisions of others" (Young, 1990, p. 65). To that extent some people do not possess the same amount of power in relation to others.

For example some people may have power to give others instructions; however, they lack the power to decide policies or results. For instance, Kimmel (2004) states that the definition of hegemonic masculinity is constructed through power: the domination over other men and also the domination over women. This suggests that the powerless are those over whom power is exercised; in such instances individual agency is constrained by the structural conditions that exist.

Exploitation, marginalization and powerlessness demonstrate the importance of power in oppressive relations. However, cultural imperialism relates to experience of having the dominant meanings of a society being rendered as the only legitimate means and ways, while subordinated groups are constructed as invisible and the 'other'. Fraser (1997) claims that Young's idea of cultural imperialism is implicit because there are some cultural practices that are deeply rooted in culture and others that are politically rooted. She goes on to argue that deep culturally rooted imperialism affirms cultural difference which could cause oppression. This suggests that, through cultural difference, oppression could possibly occur. Cultural imperialism represents the universalization of the experiences and cultures of the dominant group, and how it is established as the norm (Young, 1990); culture in this instance refers to practices and acts commonly shared by a group of people. In the case of sexuality, heteronormativity, which is the normalization of heterosexuality and consequent practices, is one form of cultural imperialism (Young, 1990).

Gewirtz (2006) asserts that the extent to which and why educational institutions support cultural imperialist practices, and that educational institutions need to acknowledge that some cultural differences should be affirmed and universalized and some rejected. For example, anti-gay sentiments are compounded in South African schools and higher education institution by strong patriarchal, religious views that same-sex desire/encounters are sinful and wrong (Butler et al., 2003; MacCaffery & Hammond, 2001; Reddy, 2002). This suggests that the achievements, experiences, goals and values of the dominant group in society are constructed as the social norm. Groups which may have any differences to this norm are deemed unacceptable, marking the second group as the 'other' (Heldke & O'Connor, 2004). Being defined as the 'other' means that their experiences are different from the dominant group, thus reinforcing the social differences. As Kimmel writes, "Women and gay men become the other against which heterosexual men project their identities, against whom they stack the decks so as to compete in

a situation in which they will always win, so that by suppressing them, men can stake a claim for their own manhood” (2004, p. 37). This shows that dominant group oppress groups that do not share their culture, when they are in power. The way the dominant group experiences cultural expressions and history becomes a prescription for all other groups’ experiences and histories. “It is not necessary for anyone to say: my group’s culture is superior; it simply has to be treated as universal representing the best in all of humanity and it is considered ‘normal,’ which means that all others are either ‘strange,’ or ‘invisible’ or both” (Gewirtz, 2006, p. 74). A further example of cultural imperialism is the idea that the western ideal is normal and everything else is the ‘other’.

The last face that Young describes is that of violence. “Members of some groups live with the knowledge that they must fear random, unprovoked attacks on their persons or property, which have no motive but to damage, humiliate, or destroy the person” (1990, p. 61). Some examples often included within definitions of violence are beatings, murders, rape, bullying, and harassment. This encompasses violence that is socially and systematically acceptable or tolerated by the people holding power upon the ‘other’ (Young, 1990). A good example is gay students being harassed and beaten outside of higher educational institutions (De Vos, 2012). This is an example of the brutality of everyday life for so many gay, lesbian and bisexual students and learners. Additionally, strategies used to deal with these violent crimes are often socially and culturally biased (Young, 1990). In the case of same-sex sexuality, police have for instance been found to be unwilling to deal with crimes, such as rapes and beatings, perpetrated against lesbian women and gay men (Mufweba, 2003; Muholi, 2004; Reid & Dirsuweit, 2002). “Violence is also used to oppress people through damage, humiliation or physical harm to a person” (Young, 1990, p. 63). The consequence of this is that group members live in fear of being attacked. Young (1990) argues that individuals who are members of a certain group are deprived of freedom and dignity, and often subjected to violence for simply being in that particular group. Also, Young (1990) argues that group-directed violence is systemic because cultural imperialism affects how groups are viewed. This instils a hatred and fear towards the group resulting in irrational violent acts. Our country contains several examples where violence has been used to keep a group ‘in its place.’ For instance, many leaders in South Africa have demonstrated their bias through hate speech about gay, lesbian and bisexual people (Reddy, 2002). In so doing, they have asserted that it is wrong to be anything other than heterosexual. In Africa, we have witnessed increased violence in countries such as Uganda and Nigeria, where laws have been

passed discriminating against those who engage in same-sex relations (Ajayi 2011; Atoi & Ojedokum, 2013). In the context of patriarchy, Kimmel (2004) reasserts that violence is one of the main forms of how men demonstrate their manhood. Everyday violence serves as a reminder to social groups of what happens when they demonstrate resistance towards oppressive conditions; an example of this is Russia, where again homophobic laws have been enacted (Mezzofiore, 2013).

The discussions that I have provided have attempted to show how the Five Faces of Oppression manifest both in a micro and macro system of oppression. In this study, I will show how exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence shape the experiences of gay, lesbian and bisexual students in university residences, focusing on individual, institutional and societal manifestations of homophobia in the experiences cited.

2.1.2. Criticism of the Five Faces of Oppression

In all five of the above categories, the dominant group who oppresses people is the one constructed as having power. Young's (1990) explanation of oppression shows us how dominant groups possess the power and, can control, marginalise and exploit those who do not possess the same power. Dominant groups also gain power through their ascribed status. Clearly, there are some limitations with this type of theorizing, not least the construction of those in the 'othered' groups as powerless. In fact one of the main criticisms of Young's work pertains to the structural construction of oppression, where people are viewed collectively, without the acknowledgement of their individual agency, and also to Foucault's notion of power as fluid (Gerrie, 2003; Seymour, 2012). It is through these post-structuralist approaches to construction that theoretical positions such as queer theory have emerged. While indeed one accepts the fluidity and agency offered by post-modernist and post-structuralist theoretical positions, such as queer theory, it is important to highlight that in communal contexts such as South Africa, individuals are heavily constrained by the collective organizational systems which exist in such contexts (see Msibi, 2012). Simply arguing on the basis of individual agency fails to highlight how acts of violence, marginalization, cultural imperialism, powerlessness and exploitation as heavily caught up in social structural relations. Such a view forgets that identities are often viewed as collective and shared. Of course, I concede that identities can be performed variously by members belonging to particular social groups. However, society often does not have this

view, as identities are often essentialised. In order to acknowledge this therefore, a framework which captures the above complexities is required, thus my use of Young's Five Faces of Oppression.

In this thesis, it is accepted that each of these five forms of oppression overlaps with the other. Each form of oppression is related to, shaped by and reinforced by the many ideological '-isms' and '-phobias' that occurs in present day society such as homophobia and heterosexism. These five ways of looking at oppression help us see how social systems work to include some people while also excluding others. "A structural analysis of oppression that looks at the intersections of race, gender, religion and class allows us to unmask the ways in which these social, sexual and economic divisions reflect and reinforce existing power relations in society" (Young, 1990, p. 44). Although Young's Five Faces of Oppression does have limitations, I do not wish to reproduce this theoretical framework but rather to use it to assist in understanding the nature of homophobia in the residences. As I have stated previously, these five faces – exploitation, marginalisation, victimisation, cultural imperialism and violence – overlap and therefore provide a good framework in understanding the oppression faced by students staying in the residences. As evidenced by the above discussion, the theoretical framework will assist in demonstrating clearly how gay, lesbian and bisexual students experience homophobia in the residence.

2.1.3. Conclusion

In the next section, I present the review of literature. Here I engage with international literature on homophobia in higher education institutions generally and also specifically in higher education residential spaces. I will also present a review of the national literature on homophobia in communities, schools and higher education institutions. The literature review section has been divided into 3 main sections. The *first* is the 'Introduction' in which I discuss homophobia, how is it manifested, how understandings of homophobia have evolved through time, what are the various contestations are, and why I have chosen to use homophobia as a concept. The *second* will review the international literature; here I will discuss how homophobia is perpetuated in residences, how students learn to cope with homophobia and how attitudes change towards LGB students. *Finally*, I will discuss the national literature, exploring the notion that same-sex desire is unAfrican. I then go on to explore how this impacts on schools and then

explore the literature on higher education and the little we know about higher education residences.

2.2. Literature review

2.2.1. Overview

This chapter focuses on reviewing the research conducted both locally and internationally. It will attempt to highlight the gaps that exist within the literature on same-sex relations with reference to the homophobia experienced by gay, lesbian and bisexual (LGB) students residing in the residences of institutions of higher learning. More especially, it will pay attention to the debate around same-sex desire in South Africa and the homophobia experienced by those who engage in same-sex relations.

As noted in Chapter 1, little is known about the experiences of homophobia among LGB students residing in South African higher education accommodation spaces. This lack of research is concerning, especially considering the widespread homophobia in many social and educational South African spaces (see Beyer, 2013; Butler, Alpaslan, Strumpher & Astbury, 2003; Graham & Kiguwa, 2004; Francis & Msibi, 2011; Msibi, 2009; Ngcobo, 2007; Reddy, 2002; Tati, 2009). Internationally, scholars have written on the challenges faced by LGB students in higher education institutions generally (Campos, 2005; Ellis, 2009; Lambert, Ventura, Hall & Cluse-Tolar, 2006; Rankins, 2003; Travers, 2006) and higher education residences specifically (Evans & Broido, 1999; Evans & Broido, 2002; Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002). This scholarship on the experiences of LGB students residing in university accommodation suggests that homophobia in higher education institutions is a major challenge, with students being beaten, tormented, tortured, harassed, raped and ostracized largely by their own peers (Evans & Broido, 1999; Evans & Broido, 2002; Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002). Such victimization often occurs because many heterosexual students are unaccommodating towards LGB students (Evans & Broido, 1999; Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002; Taulke-Johnson, 2010) and same-sex relations are also often viewed as a 'taboo' (Constantine-Simms, 2001). This results in negative attitudes among heterosexual students and influences or reinforces internalised homophobia among LGBTI students in campuses (Ellis, 2009; Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002; Taulke-Johnson, 2010). The lack of support and programmes for LGB students as well as the lack of policy

awareness around the issue of sexuality in university campuses have also been cited among the challenges (Ellis 2009; Evans & Broido, 2002; Lambert et al. 2006; Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002), with the overall effect being the denial of services for LGB students by accommodation officers (Ellis, 2009; Evans & Broido, 2002; Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002).

This chapter will provide an expansion of the literature review in relation to the above aspects found in research on homophobia. In so doing I will, firstly define the term homophobia in the context of my study; secondly, I will synthesis existing scholarship in relation to research done internationally on the phenomenon under exploration, and lastly I will present a discussion on the research which has been done nationally, drawing on research done at schools and higher education institutions. Essentially, this chapter demonstrates the need for this study, especially given the dearth of scholarship that exists in relation to the homophobia experienced by higher education students in South Africa.

2.2.1.1. What is homophobia and how has this concept evolved over time?

Like racism, homophobia is not a new subject in South Africa or internationally (Reddy, 2001). The term homophobia originated in the 1970s by Smith (1971), Wienberg (1972) and Freedman (1975). Weinberg (1972) described homophobia as the fear of being in close contact with LGB people. Freedman (1975) later developed the term and described it as extreme rage and fear as a relation to LGB people. Herek (1984) described homophobia as a term used to demonstrate the actions and attitudes of individuals and their irrational fear towards LGB individuals. Adding to the understanding of homophobia is Lorde's definition (1984) as the fear of having feelings of affection and love for individuals who are the same-sex and the hatred for others who have those feelings. This belief is in the inherent superiority of heteronormativity and, thereby, its right to dominance (Lorde, 1984).

As with the above definitions, homophobia is commonly used today to refer to the unreasonable hatred, fear, and negative attitudes toward people who are LGB or non-heterosexual, choose a same-sex identity, are in same-sex relationships, and part of same-sex communities as well as those perceived to be in any of the above (Campos, 2005; Flood & Hamilton, 2005; Hill, 2013). The word *unreasonable* is used in this definition because there is no particular reason for the hating, fearing or discriminating against LGB people. Robinson and Ross (2013) further suggest

that homophobia is now used by LBGTIQ (i.e. Lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, intersex and questioning) and non-LBGTIQ individuals to describe anti-LBGTIQ policies, practices and behaviour which are both overt and covert. These definitions highlight the negativity around same-sex desire and the reinforcement of homophobic behaviour for any individual choosing a same-sex identity perpetrated by individuals, institutions and society.

Despite the commonality shown in the various definitions provided above there is no uniform definition of homophobia (Bhana, 2012). Herek (2004) suggests that the term heterosexism can be used to establish a better understanding of what constitutes homophobia, e.g. to describe the hostility of gay men or lesbians toward their own homosexuality / heterosexism. Francis and Msibi (2011) note that the word heterosexism “captures the role of heterosexual privilege in acts of prejudice and discrimination and that it enables a perspective on how people who are LGB internalise heterosexist thoughts and actions” (p. 159). Bhana (2012) concedes that although there seems to be merit in using these definitions, the term homophobia continues to be an invaluable tool in addressing sexual inequalities. In this thesis, I use the word homophobia and not heterosexism for the mere fact that while heterosexism may be used to describe heterosexual privilege I wish to understand the experiences of homophobia by LGB students in relation to its oppressive nature. The word homophobia therefore does not trap the experiences of homophobia into the heterosexual matrix and allows one to understand homophobic practices in the context under study.

In addition to the above, the queer theory which emerged in the 1980s (Siedman, 1995), possibly the most visible approach in the field of LGBT sociological theorising (Gamson & Moon, 2004), points to the arbitrary, unstable and exclusionary nature of identity categories and seeks to deconstruct overarching categories contributing to the deconstruction of inequality (Fish, 2008). This is done in a form of resistance, refusal of labels, pathologies and moralities (McIntosh, 1993). According to Green (2007), queer theory brings about two predominant strains: 1. ‘Radical deconstruction’ which interrogates categories of sexual orientation, and which queers and dismantles intelligible renderings and 2. ‘Radical subversion’ which seeks to disrupt the tendency to normalise sexual order on crucial sides of resistance. These two strains are united by ‘deconstruction’, which aims to ‘denaturalise’ dominant social classifications and in turn ‘destabilise’ the social order (Green, 2007). According to Fish (2008) people’s identities do not

fit neatly into single categories. This challenges the ‘natural’ attitude that gender is unchanging, a challenge represented by the growing use of terms such as queerphobia (prejudice, hate and discrimination against LGBTIQ people), MSM (men who have sex with men), WSW (women who have sex with women). Although the term MSM emerges from public health discourse, this reflects the idea that behaviour, not identities, place people at risk for HIV/AIDS (Young & Meyer, 2005).

Theuninck, Hook and Franchi (2002) suggest that “many Black Africans (like queer theorists) believe that sexuality is fluid” (p. 125). Similarly Human Rights Watch (2003) suggests that a person’s sexual identity cannot be defined by their sexual activities regardless of their cultural difference; the authors tend to see the sexual part they play and their gender-based actions as more important than the sex of their desired object. Msibi (2012) notes that people do not see themselves and are not seen by others as fluid; but rather their actions and behaviours may support fluid conceptions of sexuality. In addition, Theuninck, Hook & Franchi (2002) suggests that the experiences of same-sex relations are affected by the axes of gender, age, class, race etc. This can be seen as a criticism of the queer theory.

These definitions highlight the negative experiences that terms such as homophobia and heterosexism represent. The emergence of the queer theory also helps to understand sociological aspects related to homophobia. However, it is also important to understand how this homophobic behaviour manifests in society and institutions as well as the current contestations around homophobia and homophobic behaviour.

2.2.1.2. Manifestations and contestations around homophobia

Given the increased visibility of those who engage in same-sex relations as well as the emergence of gay public figures such as popular TV stars (i.e. actresses and singers), it might be easy to think that homophobia as today been eradicated from society; however, this is not the case (Robinson & Ross, 2013). According to Robinson and Ross (2013) homophobic attacks can be expressed at personal, interpersonal, institutional and societal levels; homophobia can also be expressed by LGB individuals themselves. Reddy (2001) argues that the widespread attention given the homophobic attacks (mentioned below) stems from the media reports of incidents that have occurred nationally and internationally.

For instance, in Russia in 2013, “a 23-year-old man in Volgograd revealed he was gay to some drinking companions; they beat him, shoved beer bottles in his anus, and crushed his head with a stone” (Mezzofiore, 2013, p. 1). In Russia, during the St. Petersburg annual festival in 2012, the pop star Madonna was sued because she spoke out in defence of gay rights; however, the suit was later thrown out (Mezzofiore, 2013). In 2013, “a 20-year-old South African student was bullied, pushed, forced to imitate sex acts, stripped down and even had his head slammed into a watermelon by anti-LGBT activists linked to the Occupy Paedophilia movement in the Russian city of Belgorod, near the border of Ukraine” (Mezzofiore, 2013, p. 1). A student at Shukhov State Technological University, David Smith, was lured into an apartment by a group of homophobic students posing as a gay 15 year old boy on a social network site (Beck, 2013). Incidents of homophobic violence have also occurred in South Africa, for instance, in 2006, the rape and murder of Zoliswa Nkonyana sent shock waves in the country (De Waal, Manion & Cameron, 2007). In 2007 the rape and murder of Sizakele Sigasa and Satome Massoa in Soweto was attributed to the fact that they were lesbian (Msibi, 2009). Currently, homophobia has become a high debate topic in South Africa and internationally due to the discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual individuals (as shown in the incidents above). Unlike South Africa’s ‘equality clause’ which prevents South African’s by law to refrain from any form of discrimination or violence against LGB people, other African countries have laws that prevent any form of same-sex sexuality in their country (Reddy, 2001; Reddy, 2002). For instance in Nigeria, a bill prohibiting same-sex relationships or anti-gay law has been passed which stipulates a punishment of fourteen years in prison for anyone who violates the law (Ajayi, 2011; Atoi & Ojedokun, 2013). Some people consider this law a violation of the human rights, while, others view this as a way of maintaining African traditional cultural values and their religious beliefs (Ajayi 2011; Atoi & Ojedokun, 2013). This type of discrimination is also currently being witnessed in countries such Russia, Uganda, Iran and many other countries, including even those countries where same-sex rights are legally protected.

Much misunderstanding of same-sex relations has come from those historical eras where people were involved in same-sex relationships which were sometimes invisible to the public eye (Herek, 2004). The misunderstanding of the history of same-sex desire has today grown into society and one of the most innate factors is religion. Religion in most cases forms a basis for the manifestation of homophobia. For instance the term ‘sodomy’, used to characterise sinful and

immoral sexual behaviour, comes from The Old Testament of the Bible (Bernecka, Lollite & Karp, 2005). Sodomy is used today to describe same-sex sexual behaviour as a sinful act (Bernecka, Lollite & Karp, 2005).

Kimmel (2004) suggests that homophobia is intimately interwoven in racism and sexism. There has been very little research on the impact of race on attitudes towards LGB people, however, research suggests that the race of a person maybe associated with attitudes towards LGB but if it is related the direction and type of relationship is unclear (Franklin, 2000). According to Durell, Chiong & Battle (2007), even though the term homosexuality is different across racial groups, homophobia is a typical reaction towards those people who chose homosexuality. For example, the notion of same-sex identity may be a construct that makes more sense to Whites than to other racial and ethnic groups (Durell, Chiong & Battle, 2007). Gender construction has also impacted on attitudes of people because of the stereotypes and norms of masculinity and femininity. For example, it often is not only the same-sex sexual act that is condemned, but also the crossing of gender roles within the sexual act (Durell, Chiong & Battle, 2007). Socio economic backgrounds also impact on homophobic behaviour and attitudes, and on the experiences of LGBTQI people. Due to the lack of exposure to knowledge on same-sex identity in different socio-economic societies, some people are unaware that same-sex sexuality actually exists. Heteronormativity (which is the normalisation of heterosexual relationships) introduces children and adults who are LGBTQI and heterosexual to the idea that being in a same-sex relationship is wrong and sinful.

It is important to understand that homophobia is simply not just the irrational act from individuals; it also often comes from the internalisation of negative ideas both from those who engage in same-sex relations and also from heterosexual individuals. Internalised homophobia has been defined as the negative feelings of gay, lesbian and bisexual towards themselves (Ross, Kajubi, Mandel, McFarland & Raymond, 2013). Similarly, Meyer and Dean (1998) define internalised homophobia as “the gay person’s direction of negative social attitudes toward the self, leading to a devaluation of the self and resultant internal conflicts and poor self-regard” (p. 161). Herek (2004) elaborates on these definitions, characterizing internalised homophobia as the conflict between the experiences of affection towards the same-sex and feeling the need to be heterosexual. Adding to these definitions, Nel and Judge (2008) suggest that internalised homophobia is the internalisation of and participation in prevailing negative societal stereotypes,

attitudes and feelings towards being an LGB person. Both heterosexual and LGB individuals may internalise homophobia therefore leading to the perpetuation of homophobic violence towards LGB individuals (Nel & Judge, 2008).

In addition, research suggests that internalised homophobia may lead to oppressive feelings such as anxiety, shame and devaluation and is most likely to overtly manifest in relationships with other LGB individuals (Frost & Meyer, 2009). Internalized homophobia occurs mainly due to ignorance, sometimes because of religion and also because of negative stereotypes and misconception that individuals learn from their society, families and schools (Barnes & Meyer, 2012). However, with gay men, it has been argued that negative attitudes become “internalized” because they are subjected to more prejudices (Ross et al., 2013).

The above demonstrates the clear need to deal with homophobia in society and the negative feelings that have become a threat to the lives of individuals who choose same-sex identities. In the next section I begin to review literature on what is currently known internationally about the experiences of LGB students in university accommodation spaces.

2.2.1.3. International research: homophobia in higher education

This study sought to explore the experiences of homophobia encountered by gay, lesbian and bisexual students residing in higher education residences. In reviewing the literature, I engaged with both South African and international literature on the experiences of LGB students at higher education institutions, and more specifically on these students’ lives in the residential spaces. The review suggested a scarcity of literature where South Africa is concerned, and a growing body of literature internationally, particularly in the developed world (with the USA, UK and Australia taking a lead). In reviewing the international literature, key issues emerged. These include aspects on campus climate, residence staff, religion, race, gender, violence and discrimination. I discuss these aspects in detail below as these shed light on the type of experiences that LGB students encounter in higher education residential spaces.

International scholarship suggests that there is discrimination which occurs in higher education residences (Evans and Broido, 1999; Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002; Evans & Broido, 2002; Smith, 2004; Lambert, Ventura, Hall, Cluse-Tolar, 2006; Taulke-Johnson, 2010). Studies focusing on the experiences of LGB individuals in accommodation spaces report that

accommodation spaces are a dangerous terrain for LGB students. Research also indicates that there are different ways in which students who are LGB learn to cope throughout their years at higher education institutions and whilst living at higher education residences (Evans & Broido, 1999; Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002; Evans & Broido, 2002; Smith, 2004; Lambert, Ventura, Hall, Cluse-Tolar, 2006; Taulke-Johnson, 2010; Iwasaki, Mackay, Mactavish, Rickstock & Barlett, 2006; McDermott, Roen & Scourfield, 2008). However, research in higher education focusing on campus climates and research on higher education residences focusing on the experiences of LGB students suggests that there is some change in the attitudes of students who are either closeted and dealing with their own sexual orientation and heterosexual students (Evans & Broido, 1999; Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002; Evans & Broido, 2002; Smith, 2004; Lambert, Ventura, Hall, Cluse-Tolar, 2006). This suggests that not every experience is bad and there is hope beyond homophobic discrimination. In the discussion that follows, I explore three themes 1. Accommodation spaces: A dangerous terrain for LGB students; 2. Learning to cope and 3. Beyond doom and gloom: hope and possibilities.

2.2.1.3.1. Accommodation spaces: A Dangerous Terrain for LGB Students

A very important aspect in much of the research that I found was the hostility experienced by LGB students in the residences. It is particularly evident in Evans & Broido's (1999) qualitative study at the University Park campus of Pennsylvania State University, examining the coming out experiences of 20 LGB students (six gay men, three bisexual men, five lesbian and five bisexual women, with 18 White, one Latino American and one Asian American) in the residence halls, that students were discouraged from being open in residence halls due to a lack of community in the residence halls, lack of support, and active hostility (Evans & Broido, 1999). In addition to the above, Evans and Broido (1999) report from work with bisexual participants that being bisexual is often met with negativity and discrimination by heterosexual, lesbian and gay students and felt that some people did not want to know if they were bisexual; they did not really care expressing it as a "Don't ask, don't tell attitude" (p. 663). Evans and Broido (2002), focusing on the experiences of ten lesbian and bisexual women (five lesbian and five bisexual women) living in residences, found that many of the women experienced a hostile environment given the indirect and direct harassment they experienced, their homophobic residence assistants, roommates and other residents. In addition, students in residence floors were hostile and

although there was no physical violence, halls lacked a sense of community; however lesbian and bisexual participants in the study noted that large populations like members of sorority groups, members of sport teams and most first year students were much more hostile. This lack of community at higher education institutions can also be found in other studies (see Zapata, 2000).

Similarly, Rivers and Taulke-Johnson's (2002) qualitative study at a British University explored the experiences of LGB students who lived or had recently lived in the residences with 12 volunteer undergraduate students (seven gay men, one bisexual man, three lesbians, and one bisexual woman) from the university's LGB Students' Society, aged 18 to 23 years, using the same semi-structured interview schedule used in Evans & Broido's (2002) qualitative study; they found that participants felt accommodation spaces were oppressive and no longer wanted to live in the residences. Furthermore, Taulke-Johnson's (2010) qualitative study with 17 gay male undergraduates at a UK university focusing on accommodation spaces found that heterosexual males who lived in the same residences "transformed this space from mere living quarters into a site for the production, assertion, enforcement and policing of discourses around sexuality" (p. 413). This was done through flatmates' performative re-inscription of "hyper-hetero-masculinities and verbal expressions of anti-gay sentiment, with incidents of physical homophobia being regulatory means of silencing gayness and maintaining heterosexuality as the dominant sexual discourse within male residence spaces" (Taulke-Johnson, 2010, p. 413).

In addition to the above hostility, it was noted that there were various forms of discrimination that justified participants' feelings in the above studies. For instance, hearing comments such as 'all queers should be shot, or put on a desert island and nuked' (Evans & Broido, 1999, p. 663). In Evan & Broido's (2002) study participants saw defacement of LGB-related posters or signs, and experienced a lack of visible support, a lack of LGB-oriented social activities; residents who demonstrated a lack of awareness of issues were hostile to attempts to discuss issues, and engaged in stereotyping. Rivers and Taulke-Johnson's (2002) participants stated that they had negative experiences when they were out in residence halls and sometimes students who lived in the residences would spray foam and spray paint outside their room doors and on windows saying 'gay boy stays here' and 'hello gay boy', and they also heard derogatory jokes about LGBs. In addition to this, Taulke-Johnson (2010) participants said that male residence

environments were hetero-sexualised. Rivers and Taulke-Johnson (2002) suggest that although some of these acts may not be physically hurtful, they definitely have an emotional impact upon LGB students and raise questions about the security of LGB students living in residences (Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002). Similar findings have been found in other higher education studies (see Eddy & Forney, 2000; Mohr & Sedlacek, 2000).

Another aspect that was visible in the literature was the coming out experiences of students in the residences. Evans and Broido's (1999) participants highlighted that their openness about their sexuality impacted on many other closed LGB students and on the harassment they experienced. For instance, they said that their experiences with being openly LGB caused them to acknowledge others who might be indirectly hurt by them being out (e.g., closeted friends, family), they were also being labelled, harassed and rejected because of involvement in LGB activities, and this impacted negatively on their academic performance (Evans & Broido, 1999). In addition, Evans and Broido's (2002) participants suggested that they had a more negative perception of the residence floor when they were not out to others and less involved in the residence floors. This negativity is also evident in Rivers & Taulke-Johnson's (2002) study which showed that while LGB student's experience of coming out to their flatmates was particularly positive, this, was met with indirect negativity based on conversations, where they were asked about their sexual activities.

Disclosure to roommates has been captured as another important issue. Evans & Broido's (1999) participants who identified as LGB but closeted were in a predicament about disclosing to their roommates, whom they had known personally for some time but did not disclose their sexualities to due to anticipated hostility (Evans & Broido, 1999). For instance, one male participant in the study who disclosed to his roommate was told that 'he will be killed' (Evans & Broido, 1999). Due to the above discrimination experienced by students, they were determined not to reveal their LGB identities to certain people in campus residence (Evans & Broido, 1999). Evans and Broido (2002) suggest that roommates play an important role in the participants' lives because of the close contact they have with their roommates; when participants had unsupportive roommates they had negative perceptions about the residence floors. Furthermore, Taulke-Johnson's (2010) participants described their flatmates' homophobic sentiments as mere banter, being used to undermine gay students and justify these remarks; some participants

maintained the heterosexual atmosphere in the residences by not challenging this heterosexual matrix, and perhaps even caused the subordination of their own gay identity. On the issue of disclosure, other studies suggest that LGB students fear that with disclosure comes social exclusion and homophobic bullying of LGBT students on campus environments (see La Salle & Rhoads, 1992; Mohr, 1992; Rhoads, 1994; Rivers & D'Augelli, 2001; Rivers, 2004).

Residence assistants are employed by residence officials and elected most often by students and the student council; however, this does not mean they are innocent with regard to the homophobia experienced by LGB students. Rivers and Taulke-Johnson's (2002) participants stated that residence assistants were not active in the residence floors and often completely absent, and therefore did not support them. Evans and Broido's (2002) participants, who viewed their halls as non-supportive, often had residence assistants (RA's) who demonstrated an uncaring attitude. They did little to promote an accepting environment, never brought up issues related to sexual orientation, and did no programming on LGB topics (Evans & Broido, 2002). Lambert, Ventura, Hall & Cluse-Tolar's (2006) study, based upon the survey results of 364 students at a Midwestern University, found that the participants felt that these students have the potential to be a guiding influence on the way in which lesbian and gay students were supported, however participants stated that residence assistants in charge of their residences were often absent and did not monitor their residences (Lambert et al., 2006). The role played by residence assistants was not active and suggests that there is a lack of support with regard to lesbian, gay and bisexual students.

In direct contrast to the above, Smith's (2004) quantitative study at a large South Eastern research University in the USA on the attitudes of residence assistants, using 133 participants who were residence assistants, found that the resident assistants as a group had attitudes that were somewhat positive towards lesbians. While still indicating attitudes that were somewhat positive towards gay males, the attitudes towards gay males were slightly less positive than those towards lesbians (Smith, 2004). Male participants were slightly more positive towards lesbians than towards gay males, although the mean scores for both groups, as well as the mean score for the groups combined, were closer to the positive end of the scoring scale (Smith, 2004). Female participants were more positive towards gay males than towards lesbians, though slightly less so than males (Smith, 2004). It is clear from the experiences and attitudes in the above research that

while LGB students may get some support in some institutions, the general experiences are negative. Telford (2001) suggests that when a student fails to list their sexual identity as a factor to be considered by residence staff in universities and colleges, they remove all responsibility of protection and care from the residence staff.

Another key issue is the negative way in which staff in the residences handles LGB students. Evans and Broido's (2002) study found that although many women in the study had negative experiences in the residence floors and held negative perceptions of the residence floors, they never mentioned the residences staff. Rivers and Taulke-Johnson's (2002) participants felt that there was no support given to them by accommodation staff. For instance, if a particular heterosexist incident occurred there would be no acknowledgement of this and nothing would be done; instead, it would be swept under the carpet. They stated that accommodation staff did not address homophobic behaviour with much enthusiasm. Furthermore, Rivers & Taulke-Johnson (2002) found that participants felt that the welfare of lesbian, gay and bisexual students had not been taken into consideration by the university, despite the university having an active equality policy (Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002). The exploration above indicates that there remains a lack of support by accommodation staff in residences towards students who are LGB.

The above demonstrates the indirect and direct acts of harassment that students staying in university residences experience. In line with these experiences are the ways in which these students cope with the different types of harassment. In the section that follows I explain how students learn to cope with the above-mentioned harassment.

2.2.1.3.2. "Learning to cope"

Learning to cope is an important aspect in the literature reviewed. Evans and Broido (1999) in their study found that their LGB participants used various ways of disclosing their identity to other students and society around them. Most of the participants in the study expressed their use of a pink triangle, the rainbow and freedom rings as a way of expressing their LGB identity to people. These different symbols were worn on their clothing, displayed on their doors or in their rooms or stuck to their bag packs to come out to other students instead of using direct speech due to homophobic attitudes of heterosexual students on campus (Evans & Broido, 1999). On the other hand, Rivers and Taulke-Johnson (2002) suggest that their participants felt the need to fit

in; therefore they did not disclose their sexual orientation. Concealing one's identity also involved changing one's mannerisms like dress, accessories and behaviour. Students believed that by using different mannerisms they would conceal their sexual identities thus becoming less prone to homophobic violence or in most cases fitting into heteronormative ways or behaviour (Rivers & Taulke-Johnson, 2002). Other studies suggest that one of the strategies used by LGB students to cope with homophobia is to remain closeted (see Westefeld, Maples, Buford & Taylor, 2001; Epstein, Flynn & Telford, 2003; Friend, 1993; Kitzinger, 1996).

In addition, a qualitative study by Iwaski, Mackay, Mactavish, Rickstock and Bartlett (2006), which focused on diverse residents of a western Canadian city, including people who self-identified as gay or lesbian, explored how marginalised groups cope with stress. They found that LGB identities are related to different experiences of social power, freedom, and harassment in relation to the dominant culture. Participants suggested that socialising is a stress-coping method. This includes having friends; bars for gay people was a safe environment where gay people were free and felt comfortable to express their identities in any way they chose (i.e. socialising with other gay people) and gain support, this providing them with the opportunity to meet the need for a socially balanced lifestyle (Iwaski et. al, 2006). In another qualitative study by McDermott, Roen and Scourfield (2008) in the UK, exploring the connections between sexual identities and self-destructive behaviours in young people (with 69 participants, 27 of which self-identified as gay, lesbian and bisexual, and between the ages of 16-25 years) the authors found that there is a complex relationship between young LGBT people's sexual identities and self-destructive behaviours. The participants "connected (although not exclusively) the distress arising from homophobia to suicide attempts, self-harm practices, risky sexual practices and excessive drinking and drug-taking" (McDermott, Roen & Scourfield, 2008, p. 821). The findings also suggest that young people may employ individualistic shame-avoidance strategies (i.e. anger, moving schools, avoiding eye contact and fighting) to negotiate homophobia, which closes down the opportunities for taking action beyond the individual level. Other studies suggest that support services and good practice are required at all university campuses (see Biaggio, Orchard, Larson, Petrino & Mihara, 2003; Goodenow, Szalacha & Westheiner, 2006; Messinger, 2002)

The above demonstrates the various ways in which students learn to deal with the harassment that occurs at higher education residences and communities or living spaces. It is evident that the

ways in which students deal with homophobic violence is at times harmful to them and at other times helpful in overcoming the homophobic sentiments. However, although the research above suggests that there is a lot of harassment which is negative, there are also positive aspects to being LGB in the residences. Below I discuss the hopes and possibilities beyond the negativity that has been mentioned.

2.2.1.3.3. Beyond doom and gloom: hopes and possibilities

Even though all the above evidence shows that discrimination and violence towards LGB students has negative impacts on their lives and their academic performance, we must remember that due to the widespread attention that has been given to LGB people internationally there are some changes towards negative attitudes that have occurred. In this section, I will discuss the positive experiences of LGB students in the residences.

Evans and Broido (1999) suggest that the environment that LGB students find themselves in has a strong influence on them to express their identity freely. For instance, one participant suggested that having a roommate who also chose a non-heterosexual identity made them feel much more comfortable in expressing and living with them (Evans & Broido, 1999). Another participant stated that her roommate who identified as heterosexual was ‘cool’ about her being lesbian because of her having a family member who was also lesbian (Evans & Broido, 1999). In addition, other participants suggested that individuals tried to be supportive but did not know enough to be genuinely helpful; however, discomfort at the affective level often conflicted with a cognitive desire to be supportive. But participants appreciated efforts that friends made to learn more (Evans & Broido, 1999). These findings have also been confirmed by other scholars (see King & Mayhew, 2002; Rhoads, 1995; Tierney, 1993; Tysome, 2006; Wotjas, 2006).

Evans and Broido (2002) also suggest that among the negative attitudes, participants also reported supportive factors that helped to make the environment more comfortable. Evans and Broido (2002) found that students in residences had a more positive attitude towards gay and lesbian students when there were residence assistants and staff members who identified as gay and were out about their identity. They also felt that by these residence assistants being open about their sexual identities, heterosexual students became more accepting (Evans & Broido, 2002). This study also found that some residence assistants had awareness programmes in

respect of lesbian and gay students which created a positive environment (Evans & Broido, 2002). A few participants suggested that there was active support in their residences halls. This meant either meant that fellow students were members of an allies' group (i.e. a supportive group determined to improve the climate for LGB students) or that there were fewer derogatory remarks and comments that they had experienced (Evans & Broido, 2002).

Professional residence staff also “contributed to a positive perception of the residence hall by lesbian and bisexual women” (Evans & Broido, 2002, p. 35). Participants who held positive attitudes about their halls mentioned that the staff actively confronted homophobic behaviour, “helped LGB students meet each other, assisted with room changes when students were experiencing difficulty with their roommates, and actively reached out to LGB students” (Evans & Broido, 2002, p. 35). Interactions with other students on their floors influenced perceptions (Evans & Broido, 2002). However, to my knowledge other studies have not suggested the above, (see Herek, 1993; Tierney, 1992).

Lambert, Ventura, Hall and Cluse-Tolar's (2006) study suggests that students in higher levels of education have more positive attitudes towards gay and lesbian students. This means that students in different levels of study, for example, are found to be more accommodating than those in their second year or first year of study. The results also show that among university students, higher education has a positive effect on attitudes towards gays and lesbians (Lambert et al., 2006). Lambert et al. (2006) suggest that the expanded interaction and the level of knowledge on lesbian and gay individuals may be the reason for the positive attitudes adopted towards gay and lesbian students. Evans and Broido (2002) found that halls that were more academically orientated (i.e. post-graduate level) were positive as well. Some of the positive experiences were noted as “hearing people on the floor confront homophobic comments, the presence of programming and other visible signs of support, such as support network symbols or advertising for LGB events” (Evans & Broido, 2002, p. 35). Those students whose perceptions were positive had actively supportive roommates who cared about them, introduced them to other LGB people, and welcomed lesbian students' visiting girlfriends (Evans & Broido, 2002). Some students showed support by “wearing pins, asking questions to learn more, changing homophobic opinions, attending programmes, discussing issues openly, and expressing displeasure at homophobic acts” (Evans & Broido, 2002, p. 36). It is evident from this discussion

that experiences of LGB students in the residences, in such contexts, are not just negative, but that there are also signs of improvement. Similar findings can be seen in other educational institutions (see Lee, 2002; Kiedman, 2002; Sadowski, 2005). This is particularly promising, especially considering the pervasiveness of homophobia.

Now that we have a clear understanding of the research that is available internationally we will now discuss literature in relation to South Africa.

2.2.1.4. South African literature

As already highlighted above, there is a paucity of research exploring homophobia as experienced by gay, lesbian and bisexual university students residing in student residences in South African higher education institutions. While there has been an emergence of research in education focused on the experiences of gay, lesbian and bisexual youth, this work has mostly focused at basic education level. Research findings from the existing studies suggests that while the South African constitution has tried to protect the rights of every individual, regardless of sexual orientation, such protections have not received acceptance in schools and higher educational institutions (Arsdnt & Bruin, 2006; Butler, Alpaslan, Strumpher & Astbury, 2003; Graham & Kiguwa, 2004; Hames, 2012; Ngcobo, 2007). A report by the ‘Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions’, led by Soudien (2008), found that many South African institutions are still lacking when it comes to transformation, especially with regard to LGB issues. The report noted that although the university policies stipulate the equality clause and claim to adhere to it, the implementation of a safer environment for LGB students is not visible. Key to the findings is the idea that homophobia remains normalised in many academic spaces in SA, with those who engage in same-sex relations often marginalised and isolated. In the review that follows I show that the notion of same-sex desire being unAfrican in South Africa has created a culture of discrimination in higher education institutions, schools and in communities for LGB people. I also explore what is known about the nature of homophobia in schools given the paucity of research in higher education spaces. Finally, I explore the limited scholarship on homophobia within higher education spaces.

2.2.1.4.1. Same-sex desire as unAfrican and homophobia in South Africa

Twenty-one years into democracy and constitutionality in South Africa, the experiences of homophobia especially for African Black men and women in many rural areas and townships still exist (Reddy, 2001). Often the homophobia presents itself with the justification of same-sex desire being unAfrican (see Epprecht, 2013). In this section, I seek to problematise the notion that same-sex desire is unAfrican and show through this notion the discrimination and violence manifest in communities and society of South Africa.

Many researchers claim that the notion that same-sex desire is unAfrican forms the basis for the enactment of violence towards those individuals who choose LGB sexuality instead of heterosexuality and that this notion remains the view of many South Africans (Reddy, 2002; Msibi, 2011; Tati, 2009). Gontek (2009) argues that this idea stems from the correlative ideas of morality that were taken on from Western cultures, namely the Bible (Gontek, 2009). It encouraged many South Africans and many Africans across the continent, to this day, to regard homosexuality as ‘unAfrican’ (Gontek, 2009). Epprecht (2013) demonstrates that this thinking is flawed and that same-sex desire as existed in South Africa, and Africa, prior to colonialism, including the days of the San people. He shows pictures of paintings on cave walls that depict men having sex with men and makes acknowledgement to language that exists from indigenous times.

Reddy (2002) also notes that the notion that same-sex desire is unAfrican has made same-sex desire alien and foreign to South Africa’s society. This is confirmed by Msibi (2011) who notes that an assumption that Africa, prior to colonization, had no history of homosexuality and that homosexuality was brought into Africa by westerners falsely exists. This false assumption, as Reddy (2001) notes, is often peddled by African leaders who use homophobia for their own political gains. For instance, the current president of South Africa, president Jacob Zuma, before his election into the presidency, stated that same-sex marriages are a disgrace to the nation and to God, and that a “gay man would not have stood in front of him because he would have knocked him down” (Sapa, 2006).

The negativity fuelled by the notion that same-sex desire is unAfrican is often seen in many conservative communities across South Africa. Graham and Kiguwa (2004) in a qualitative study

focusing on the experiences of Black LGBTI youth in townships and semi-urban areas in and around Johannesburg found that an important issue that emerges is the use of extreme physical violence. Graham and Kiguwa (2004) note, although out of the schooling context, that black gay men in the peri-urban communities in the Benoni area of Johannesburg reported being verbally and physically abused with some participants being raped and sexually harassed, all due to their sexual orientation. Furthermore, most lesbian participants reported rape or attempted rape, sexual assault, verbal and physical violence, with gang rape being common (Graham & Kiguwa, 2004). Most of these actions were explained as being because of the perpetrators' thinking that same-sex desire was unacceptable and not African. The issue of rape is confirmed by Muholi (2004) in her qualitative study of 47 LGBTI women aged 16 to 43. She found that 20 lesbians were raped explicitly because of their sexual and gender non-conformity, four experienced attempted rape, 17 were physically assaulted (three with a weapon), eight were verbally abused, and two were abducted. Twenty-nine women knew their attackers and only 16 survivors reported these hate crimes to the police. Many of these women experienced these hate crimes more than once. Many other researcher have also documented similar findings on corrective rape (see Mufweba, 2003; Reid & Dirisuweit, 2002).

In relation to the above violence and discrimination, intersections with other identities such as religious affiliation are also critical in understanding homophobic discrimination. According to Graham and Kiguwa (2004), in their study on the experiences of LGB youth, religion and spirituality are important factors in the lives and the experiences of homophobia among gay and lesbian people. One respondent in their study reported that her family persuaded her that she had a demon within her and that she must pray to God to get rid of it. It was evident in this study, due to the negative impact of religion on gay and lesbian people, that some lesbian and gay people had conflicting relationships with religion. Many of the participants in this study had strong beliefs in faith and chose what to believe and what not to believe. Similarly, negative feelings are found in Butler's (2008) study on lesbian, gay and bisexual youth experiences, where he found that participants felt unaccepted by churches. The participants suggested that the only church-sanctioned alternative to heterosexuality was celibacy and that the judgementalisation of gay and lesbian youth often result in low self-esteem, self-loathing and condemnation (Butler, 2008). In addition, the Head of the African Christian Democratic Party of South Africa, Kenneth Meshoe, stated in the early 1990s that same-sex desire is an unacceptable lifestyle and unchristian and anti

all religions and suggested it is unAfrican, an embarrassment to the African ancestors and that it was a White man's disease from Europe (Spruill, 2000). However, according to Graham and Kiguwa (2004), not all people have negative attitudes towards gay and lesbian people. One participant in the study stated that God is love and if he hated gay and lesbian people, he would not have allowed them to exist (Graham & Kiguwa, 2004). Some parents in the study also used faith as a means to understand their child's sexuality rather than deny it (Graham & Kiguwa, 2004).

As illustrated above, same-sex desire continues to be viewed as unAfrican, with LGB individuals continuing to experience discrimination more than twenty years after constitutional democracy. In the section that follows, I will demonstrate how this discrimination manifests among LGB learners in South African schools.

2.2.1.4.2. The impact of 'unAfrican' belief and homophobia in schools

In 2005, the Department of Education in collaboration with the National Religious Leaders Forum, released a publication 'Building a culture of responsibility and humanity in our schools (UNESCO, 2012). "A guide for teachers, which seeks to educate young people about rights and responsibilities, including the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation, was developed" (UNESCO, 2012, p. 1). However, schools are critical sites for the enforcement of heterosexuality and enactment of homophobia (Bhana, 2012). Butler, Alpaslan, Strumpher and Astbury (2003), in a qualitative study on 18 LGB youth aged 16-21 exploring gay and lesbian youth experiences of homophobia in South African secondary schools, suggest that attacks on gay and lesbian youth are by no means an unfamiliar occurrence. The study found that gay and lesbian students at secondary schools have reported being sexually harassed, raped (including gang rape), tortured and tormented by fellow heterosexual students at least once through the duration of their studies. The participants in the study also suggested that they were insulted and as a result felt humiliated. Similarly, Msibi (2012) in his study on the experiences among 14 "queer" youth in South African township schools aged 16 to 21 found that verbal and physical violence exists in school environments. The participants in Msibi's study suggest that hate speech, such as labels like faggot, isitabane, ungqingili, fag and osis-bhuti, was used on LGB male learners (Msibi, 2012). However, he notes that girls faced similar abuse but not to the same extent as boys. The study found that girls' experiences were more subtle, for instance

teachers told girls to stop behaving like tomboys (Msibi, 2012). His study also found that these small forms of verbal abuse and occasional violent attacks lead to outright violence (Msibi, 2012). In a quantitative study by the Gay and Lesbian Network (2011), in urban (central Pietermaritzburg), residential and semi-urban (periphery of Pietermaritzburg) areas, using grade 10-12 learners aged 14-18, it was found that lesbians and gays report experiencing high levels of verbal, sexual and physical abuse in school, mainly from other learners, but also from teachers and school principals. Evidence from the survey suggests “high levels of discrimination (verbal abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and negative jokes) experienced by lesbians and gays in schools in Pietermaritzburg, with jokes identified as the most common manifestation of homophobia reported by both lesbian/bisexual (63%) and gay/bisexual (76%) learners” (Gay and Lesbian Network, 2011). It is evident that from the above mentioned school learners have negative attitudes in school environments towards LGB identities.

According to Msibi’s (2012) study students who choose LGB identities were often living in fear. Teachers often passed rumours about their sexuality and said that same-sex identities are contagious so as to prevent learners from claiming LGB identities (Msibi, 2012). Among these findings was the fear that lesbian learners could be raped for not conforming to gender norms (Msibi, 2012). Some teachers asserted that there is a high rate of rapes in townships and that girls could be raped if they are lesbian (Msibi, 2012). LGB participants suggested that teachers are misinformed and lack knowledge with regard to same-sex sexuality (Msibi, 2012). Bhana’s (2012) qualitative study exploring how teachers understand and address homophobia in schools, with 25 teachers from Gauteng and KZN, found that teachers have dominant views which contribute to homophobia. The study found three discursive constructions in which homophobia is produced and resisted in schools. These three constructions are silencing homosexuality, denying its existence in the curriculum and religious prohibitions (Bhana, 2012). Teachers used different mechanisms to silence homosexuality; they told learners that coming out and being homosexual are inappropriate behaviours for school (Bhana, 2012). They also said that it was something that you do out of school. Teachers also denied that homosexuality exists (Bhana, 2012). Religious beliefs played an important role in the denial of homosexuality. In addition, to the above studies Francis and DePalma’s (2014) study on 25 Life Orientation teachers from Free State schools, using in-depth interviews, explored how teachers construct their responsibilities when teaching sexual identities, more especially LGBTI identities. In this chapter the authors

focus on four aspects: scientific, religious, legislative and policy. The study found that teachers practise little diversity regarding sexual diversity. In addition, it is noted that teachers used methods that drew on religious, scientific and legal discourses to teach about sexuality. The authors concluded that the legislation based on sexual identities is excellent, however it is not being used within South African schools to teach about sexual diversity.

Clearly, from the above review, the educational experiences of LGB youth in school remain largely bleak. I have decided to present this discussion given the dearth of research on homophobia in higher education spaces. While indeed university settings are different to school settings, obtaining information about how youth experience homophobia in schools may be helpful in understanding how such experiences may shape their experiences at a higher education level, and indeed in university accommodation spaces. In the next section, I review literature on the few studies on higher education and higher education residences.

2.2.1.4.3. Homophobia in higher education and higher education residences

Higher education and higher education residences are often viewed as spaces where students are able to experience new aspects of life and explore their sexuality freely with no discrimination (Soudien, 2008). However, this is not the case in South African higher education institutions and residences. Experiences in the residences and higher education spaces are negative with many students being ill-treated at universities; these negative experiences have been experienced in universities like the University of Stellenbosch, the University of the Western Cape, University of Free State and the University of Zululand. The few in-depth studies on higher education environments have found that hostility, misogyny and patriarchal attitudes about sexuality differ according to religion and religious beliefs (Tati, 2009; Soudien, 2008; Ardnt & Bruin, 2006); the violation of traditional gender roles more especially by men presents a threat to male power and privilege (Graziano, 2004; Ardnt & Bruin, 2006); lack of knowledge and contact with students who are LGB also relates to a negative attitude and homophobia by heterosexual students and academic and administrative staff (Tati, 2009); it is also suggested that socio-cultural norms and values may influence the idea that LGB students should remain closeted (i.e. not disclose their identity) (Ardnt & Bruin, 2006; Graziano, 2004; Ngcobo, 2007). Many LGB students' perception of the campus environment was that 'discrimination was alive' (Tati, 2009; Ngcobo, 2007). LGBTI society on campus were used for support by some LGB students however some

students suggested that the LGBTI society could also have a highly negative impact on their lives (Graziano, 2004) and most students coped with loneliness and depression by visiting the campus counselling centre (Graziano, 2004). On campus residences, “victimization involved verbal harassment, graffiti on dormitory doors, death threats, physical abuse, lack of support for gay men in male residential dorms; thugs have beaten up gay men, including black gay men, beaten up and raped female students, raped lesbian women to ‘cure’ them, ridiculed and denigrated all homosexual people” (Graziano, 2004).

Tati (2009), in a qualitative study exploring the experiences of lesbian students in institutions of higher learning in the Western Cape Province of South Africa using five voluntary participants who were predominantly Black students aged between 19 and 25 years, and who openly identify themselves as lesbians, found that beliefs about homosexuality differ substantially by religion and by the intensity of religious feelings. These beliefs play a fundamental role in the formation of individual prejudices. Disapproval is the highest among individuals who attend religious services regularly and pray frequently (Tati, 2009). The participants suggested that high levels of homophobia were displayed by students who proclaimed to be born-again Christians and who were members of the SCO (Student Christian Organisation) (Tati, 2009). Individuals who identified themselves as religious were said to understand same-sex desire as an illness and held a belief that a person who claims an LGB identity could be cured through turning to God for help (Tati, 2009). To a great extent heterosexual behaviour was associated with normality, and abnormal behaviour with non-heterosexual sexualities (Tati, 2009). Similarly, in the Soudien (2008) report, it was found that “hostility, misogyny and patriarchal attitudes of the SRC and fundamentalist Christian organisations on campus strongly discouraged women students from volunteering at the Gender Equity Unit and forming the UWC women’s support network in 2001, on grounds that it would turn them into lesbians”. In addition, Ardnt and Bruin’s (2006) quantitative study on the attitudes towards lesbian and gay men using a survey of 880 heterosexual students (356 men and 524 women) in a Gauteng university found that a higher level of negative attitudes exists when students are deeply religious, particularly with regards to gay males. It is evident from the above studies that lesbian and gay students experience a varying amount of discrimination from students who are religious, more especially those who are Christian.

The above attitudes also link with the study by Graziano (2004) exploring the coming out experiences of 20 gay and lesbian students (one student identified as bisexual) at Stellenbosch University. Eight participants argued that “they are deeply concerned about how others will identify them if seen in public with other gay and lesbian students” (Graziano, 2004, p. 278). Ardnt & Bruin (2006), note that the “violation’ of traditional gender roles may be particularly aversive to heterosexual men because of the perceived threat this may pose to male power and privilege” (ibid., p. 23). Therefore, it seems that negative attitudes toward gay men are part of a larger construct than just negative attitudes toward same-sex sexuality and that endorsing all of these attitudes demonstrates a general belief in traditional gender roles (Ardnt & Bruin, 2006, p. 24). The normalisation of heterosexuality has become a cause for concern because students who believe heterosexuality is the norm are the same students who discriminate against and harm those students who choose a non-heterosexual sexual identity.

Tati (2009) found the narratives given by students reflected a lot of tolerance and acceptance of the lesbian minority group. Findings of the study suggest that the lack of contact with individuals with a non-heterosexual identity leads to negative perceptions and attitudes (Tati, 2009). Primarily, the negative attitudes are due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of the ‘othered’ minority group. Participants felt that heterosexual students can concurrently position themselves as not prejudiced yet prejudiced (for an example – the claim I have lots of gay friends while harbouring homophobic sentiments) (Tati, 2009). These findings are not surprising given the social effects that surface in an era in which diversity, multiculturalism and acceptance of the other are supposed to be highly valued (Tati, 2009).

In addition to the attitudes, Ngcobo’s (2007) study on the difficulties experienced by homosexual students at the University of Zululand, using 10 participant undergraduates and postgraduate students (seven men and three women) aged 18 to 32, found that given the negativity on attitude towards homosexuality, it may be perceived to be less traumatic to pretend to identify with the mainstream or heterosexual culture; some of the respondents were in the closet because they wanted to be accepted within the mainstream culture. In this regard internalized homophobia appears to be reinforced; keeping public and private life separate (Ngcobo, 2007). “The decision to disclose and come out to other people is not taken lightly and the reason underpinning this decision is often linked to social, familial or cultural attitude towards homosexuality” (Ngcobo,

2007, p. 85). Under these circumstances, gay and lesbian students face a range of potential reactions if and when they disclose their sexual orientation to others, and some of those reactions may not be positive (Ngcobo, 2007). Individuals who desire those of the same sex experience threats when they come out to others (Ngcobo, 2007).

In relation to the above findings, Tati (2009) suggests that cultural values and norms often result in a situation where culture is used as a justification that allows people not to have to deal with non-heterosexual identities any further. The study found that students who grew up in a socio-cultural context defined by deeply rooted patriarchal structures and heteronormativity reported that their living conditions were more hostile (Tati, 2009). Non-heterosexual identities that don't conform to the patriarchal and heterosexual norms, such as that of lesbian women, are daily confronted with rejection and discrimination (Tati, 2009). Young women are expected to form heterosexual relationships with men and the notion of two women that are in an intimate relationship is unheard of and therefore unaccommodated, and if it does happen it is considered a taboo and is labelled as un-African (Tati, 2009).

Furthermore, Ngcobo (2007) also found the participants of this study perceived discrimination as alive on campus. They felt that there was a violation of their constitutional rights (Ngcobo, 2007). The participants also expressed that there is a lack of knowledge on matters pertaining to sexual orientation on campus (Ngcobo, 2007). Participants felt that other students violated their human rights (Ngcobo, 2007). In general, participants appeared aware of their constitutional rights. Some participants reported being called names (Ngcobo, 2007).

In contrast to other studies, Graziano's (2004) findings suggest that all participants admitted having a stronger self-image and higher self-esteem than when they were in a LGBTI society in campus, and were able to identify other gay and lesbian students on campus and in town through being a member of the LGBTI Society. Some relied on the society for support more than others (Graziano, 2004). This suggests that LGB societies are important support structured for LGB students in higher education spaces. However, societies can also have a detrimental effect. For instance, 12 participants in the same study said they would not attend events, workshops, or meetings held in public by the society (Graziano, 2004). Participants discussed how heterosexual students once attended a society meeting and later identified and harassed society members on campus and in town (Graziano, 2004).

Another issue that emerges from the literature relates to the lack of support for LGB students. Participants in Graziano's (2004) study noted that they occasionally discussed LGB issues in the classroom during a psychology lecture or in the music or art departments, but not enough to rely on the department or faculty for support (Graziano, 2004). "Overall, participants explained that they did not feel welcome by administrators, staff, faculty, and other students as gay and lesbian students at the university, and relied heavily on the Society for support and comfort" (Graziano, 2004).

Promisingly, Graziano (2004) found that a common method for participants of coping with feelings of loneliness and depression was to visit the university counselling centre. Nineteen participants either visited the counselling centre themselves for support or knew of someone who relied on support from the counselling centre (Graziano, 2004). However, these centres were not always useful. One participant said he felt as if the counsellor did not know how to handle his sexual orientation so decided to avoid it (Graziano, 2004). He concluded, "I felt ashamed, embarrassed and frustrated and eventually realized how to deal with it alone ... by withdrawing from society" (Graziano, 2004). Another participant, who attended three sessions with a Master's counselling student doing her practicum, explained, "I had to pay a fortune to see a professional psychologist because the counselling centre was not properly trained to handle gay-related issues" (Graziano, 2004).

2.2.1.5. Conclusion

In light of the above findings it is evident that homophobia remains rife in many higher education institutions in South Africa, particularly in the residential spaces. The above review has given a sense of the LGB student's experiences and some heterosexual (and homosexual) student's negative attitudes towards LGB students. While all this work has been commendable, to my knowledge no study exists which explores how homophobia is experienced in South African higher education residences, particularly focussed on residential spaces where student teachers are being housed. The above review demonstrates clearly the need for the study. It is the paucity of the research on experiences of homophobia among gay and lesbian students (particularly those training to be teachers) residing in university residences in South Africa that I wish to fill. Same-sex desire remains an under-researched area, and it is this body of knowledge that my study will contribute towards.

Essentially, I ask four questions:

These questions are:

- 1. What are the experiences of homophobia that lesbian, gay and bisexual students staying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences encounter?*
- 2. How do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in contexts which maybe repressive?*
- 3. Why do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in the ways they do?*
- 4. How do the experiences of homophobia by lesbian, gay and bisexual students relate to these students' identities as student teachers?*

In the next chapter I present a discussion on methodology.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION ANALYSIS

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I provided an overview of literature from local and international scholars on the experiences of homophobia among LGB students at higher education institution residences. In this chapter, I focus on the data generation process followed in the study. The chapter is divided into three parts; the first part explores the philosophical underpinnings of the study (i.e. it describes the qualitative research, interpretivist paradigm, the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the study). The section also provides details about the context of this study. The second part focuses on the data generation process. Here, I discuss the methodology adopted in this research, which is case study research. In addition, I discuss the selection of participants, including details of how data was generated. The third part focusses on reflexivity as well as the data analysis process. Here I discuss the analytical framework utilized in the study as well as matters pertaining to ethics. I also discuss the reliability of the study. These discussions are necessary as they relate to how I went about answering the study's research questions on how LGB students staying at the residences of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, experience homophobia, how they negotiate their sexual identities in contexts which may be repressive and how these students' experiences of homophobia relate to their identities as student teachers. The next section is on the study's philosophical underpinnings and context.

3.1.1. Part 1: Philosophical Underpinnings and context

Creswell (2013) and Merriam (2014) state that qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations about social phenomena and aims to help us understand the real-world we live in and why things are the way they are. In addition, Silverman (2013) suggests that usually the qualitative research topic stems from curiosities we have about the real-world: this could be a direct experience, interests in practice, observations and growing scholarly interests. My research topic stems from my curiosities about homophobia in residences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, where I have resided for many years and observed injustices encountered by LGB students who live on residence. For this study, I wish to explore this social phenomenon by adopting a qualitative research design.

Flick (2014) suggests that a qualitative research design helps researchers understand their participants' cultural and social interactions in their living spaces. According to Creswell (2013) qualitative research is concerned with the "social aspects of these living spaces and seeks to answer questions about: why people behave the way they do?; how opinions and attitudes are formed?; how people are affected by the events that go on around them?; how and why cultures have developed in the way they have?; and the differences between social groups" (Creswell, 2013, p. 183). Whilst designing my study, I became interested in exploring the physical reactions and interactions of participants as well as the social and cultural backgrounds of participants and their experiences of homophobia at residence and social spaces. According to Parkinson and Drislane (2011) this can be achieved by using methodologies such as case studies which result in a narrative, descriptive account in a particular setting. These case studies incorporate participants' own motivation, emotions, prejudices and incidents of their personal experiences, beliefs and conflicts (Punch, 2013). In this study, I have used the case study methodology which I discuss in Part Two of this chapter.

However, since emotions, prejudices and incidents of their personal experiences, beliefs and conflicts are not observable, it is important to rely on subjective judgements during interviews to bring them to light (Hatch, 2002). This approach allows for in-depth conversations between the researcher and participant and permits face-to-face engagement (Hatch, 2002). The aim is to describe the phenomena as they occur naturally and not to manipulate the situation under study (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative data is highly contextual and collected through natural, real life settings, often over long periods of time, thereby going beyond a mere snapshot of events. For this reason it displays how and why things happen (Punch, 2013).

The qualitative data generation approach provides rich and detailed information about affected populations; it provides perspectives of specific social and cultural contexts (i.e. the human voice of the disaster) and can be carried out with limited resources (Creswell, 2013). However, qualitative data is not objectively verifiable; it requires a labour intensive analysis process (categorization, recording, etc.) and needs skilled interviewers to successfully carry out the primary data collection activities (Creswell, 2013). Researchers have also argued that the qualitative studies are conducted in a setting where participants are in real life and natural surroundings; hence the researcher ends up presenting a more subjective account in analysing participants' perceptions (Creswell, 2013; Hatch, 2002; Flick, 2014; Punch, 2013). Therefore,

weaknesses inherent in qualitative research may be overcome by using alternate measures, such as presenting the themes emerging from the data generated for review and verification by the participants. I discuss more details of other alternate measures in relation to my study's methodology in the next part of this chapter.

The above demonstrates various features associated with qualitative research. Since the main focus of this study is about understanding the actions and reactions of participants in different social and cultural settings, the qualitative approach was an appropriate approach for this study. I will now discuss the philosophical underpinnings of this project in the section that follows in order to demonstrate coherence between my chosen approach and the underpinnings and assumptions informing my study.

3.1.1.1. Philosophical underpinning – interpretivist paradigm, epistemology and ontology

Understanding the research paradigm and the underpinning ontological and epistemological assumptions is of vital importance when conducting any research because it provides a framework for thinking about and conducting research in a rigorous and systematic way (Browne, 2005). According to Punch (2013), paradigms relate to a research culture with a set of beliefs, values and assumptions that a community of researchers have in common regarding the nature and conduct of research. The paradigm informing this study is interpretivism. Humphrey (2013) defines interpretivism as an alternative research philosophy with its own ontological and epistemological assumptions. It focuses on reality as a human construct which can only be understood subjectively. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) state that the interpretivist approach attempts to understand behaviour, attitudes, beliefs and perceptions, and is often employed by social scientists. In addition, Bell (1999) suggests that interpretivists view the world as changeable, with the main goal of this approach being to understand how people make sense of the contexts in which they live and work. Basically, “interpretivism is about contextualized meaning, involving a belief that reality is socially constructed, filled with multiple meanings and interpretations. As a result, interpretivists see the goal of theorizing as providing an understanding of direct lived experience instead of abstract generalizations” (Gray, 2013, p.15).

From the above mentioned, it is clear that we could never be one hundred percent sure that the world exists like we perceive it (Gray, 2013). According to Kelliher (2011), interpretivists contend that reality can only be fully understood through the subjective interpretation of and intervention in reality. Interpretive studies assume that people create and associate their own

subjective and inter-subjective meanings as they interact with the world around them (Kelliher, 2011). Reality is an inter-subjective construction of the shared human cognitive apparatus. Subjectivity means that each person constructs his or her own reality (Walsham, 2006). However, as this demands an unstructured and subjective form of research, there is a strong chance of researcher bias (Kelliher, 2011). Interpretivists also use the natural surrounding or environment to understand the phenomena of the study undertaken. Humphrey (2013) suggests that interpretivists acknowledge that there may be many interpretations of reality. However interpretivists maintain that they are in themselves a part of the knowledge they are pursuing. Essentially, Walsham (2006) suggests that the overall purpose of the interpretivist approach is the understanding of how groups adopt and adapt to their environment and natural surroundings.

In addition, the social process is not captured in hypothetical deductions, covariances and degrees of freedom; instead, understanding the social process involves getting inside the world of those generating it (Humphrey, 2013). Through the interpretive research approach the researcher is always implicated in the phenomena being studied. There is no direct access to reality unmediated by language and preconception (Walsham, 2006). “Interpretive researchers start out with the assumption that access to reality is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meanings. The philosophical base of interpretive research is hermeneutics and phenomenology” (Mertens, 2014, p. 417). In addition, the underlying principles are based on openness and dialogue. Interpretivist inquiry is, therefore, subjective, dialectic, and value laden (Gray, 2013).

“An interpretive approach uses all sorts of data to recover the meanings or beliefs embodied in actions. One distinctive feature of such analysis is the need to treat data as evidence of beliefs and desires. A second distinctive feature is the importance of a narrative form of explanation. An interpretive approach rests on a philosophical analysis of the meaningful nature of human action” (Bevir & Rhodes, 2012, p. 6). Human scientists can construct their interpretations by using data generated through many methods. They can use participant observation, interviews, questionnaires, and mass surveys, as well as reading memoirs, newspapers, and official and unofficial documents (Bevir & Rhodes, 2012). This suggests that there is no objective reality which can be discovered by researchers and replicated by others which is in contrast with that of positivism (Walsham, 2006). Interpretive research is based on an attempt to understand phenomena through accessing the meanings participants

assign to them (Humphrey, 2013). For my report, I have employed the interpretivist approach as this enables a deep, subjective analysis of the experiences of the participants.

3.1.1.2. Location of the study

The study has been carried out at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences, in Pinetown, South Africa. This is where the School of Education is located. The campus is, in terms of numbers, female dominated, like most teacher education institutions in the world (Msibi, 2009). This campus offers programmes for initial teacher education, continuing education and postgraduate education. Prior to the incorporation by the University of Natal in 2000 and the merger with the University of Durban-Westville in 2004 to form the University of KwaZulu-Natal, this campus had been a college of education. Edgewood campus is predominantly Black, followed by Indian, Coloured and Whites. The majority of students are from disadvantaged backgrounds. The residences are located at the far end of the main tutorial block but are not fenced off from the tutorial block. The students that I have used in the sample are Black students living at residences, with many being from rural areas that are culturally and religiously conservative. There are off campus and on campus residences in which students from international countries and national provinces reside. The foreign students are from Nigeria, Cameroon and Zimbabwe. All the students are undergraduate or postgraduate students who are completing a PGCE, Honours, Masters and PHD degree at the university. South African students in residences are predominantly those who are completing a BEd degree or a PGCE and foreign students are mostly completing their postgraduate studies.

Furthermore, the residence is structured in a gendered manner. There are ten separate blocks of residences on campus which also include two flats. Most of these residences only have girls or only boys living in them. Kinnoull, Umdoniwood, Pinewood and Fieldswood are boys' residences while Cedarwood, Martinwood, Rosewood and Essenwood are girls' residences. There are two mixed gender residence which is the postgraduate house and Yellowwood residence. However, at Yellowwood female students live on the bottom floor and males on the top floor. There are two people, either the residence assistant and a student or SRC (Student Representative Council) member in flat 1. In flat 2 there are five postgraduate students. In the larger residences there are 100 students with 50 students living on each of the two floors. Each floor has a communal bathroom with eight showers and a washing area. The other areas are the communal kitchen and television room which all

students use. There are Tunnels (i.e. used for disability students and situated on the ground floor in the residences) at the residence catering for four disabled students. There is also the postgraduate house on campus; the structure is similar to other residences mentioned above, however, most of the students who reside there are postgraduate (i.e. Honours, PhD and MEd) students.

In addition, there are eight off-campus residences. These residences are situated in Durban (Pinetown or central Durban). These are mixed gender residences (i.e. for boys and girls). Eagles Castle consists of +- 90 students both males and females. There are five or six students in each room and a residence assistant flat. Royal Castle consists of +- 190 students divided into two houses, these being Royal Platinum 1 and Royal Platinum 2, with each room consisting of four students. Nagina has +-190 students divided into three houses with 60 students per house and two students per room. Emakhosini has +-80 students, both male and female, and similarly to the houses mentioned above there are two students per room. Bedford hall consists of +-100 students of mixed genders with three floors, ground for girls and first and second floor for mixed genders who live on opposite sides and have separate bathroom facilities. Aliwali has +-30 students, around 10 girls and 20 boys, mixed residences with small rooms opposite each other. Emakhosini residences has rooms with four students sharing and lastly Holzner-Gardens has +-80 female students with flats in which there are 5 students sharing two rooms.

Now that we have a clear sense of how students live and the area in which the study was conducted, I move to the second part of the study exploring the data generation process.

3.1.2. Part Two: Research methodology and data generation

3.1.2.1. Research methodology: case study

A case study is one of several ways of doing research in the social sciences and in socially related research because it aims at understanding human behaviour in a particular social context, such as in a community, group or a single event. Yin (2011) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in-depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 18). Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2007) suggest that a case study is an in-depth study of one particular case, where the case may be a person or a group of people. Adding to these definitions, Thomas (2013) states that case studies can be defined as the

analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods. Yin (2014) defines a case study as an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of similar units.

Furthermore, Pickard (2013) argues that interpretivist case studies can be classified as either describing or explaining a particular research phenomenon. “From an interpretivist perspective, the characteristics that are typical of case studies are that they aim for a comprehensive and holistic understanding of how participants relate and interact with each other in a specific situation and how they make meaning of a phenomenon” (Maree, 2007). The aim of the researcher in using a case study is to capture the reality of the participants’ lived experiences of and thoughts about a particular situation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Given the interpretivist position that has been adopted in this study and the nature of the research questions, I have chosen the case study methodology because it provides a systematic way to collect data, analyse information and report the results. It also helps to understand the particular situation in great depth. In terms of this study the case was the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, residences.

A case study answers the study’s research question using evidence from the particular case setting (Thomas, 2013). According to Yin (2014), case study research questions are ‘why’ and ‘how’. In-depth and detailed data collection methods are used to explore and describe the case under study. Methods include interviews, documents, observations or archival records (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont, 2011). “The researcher decides in advance what evidence to gather and what analysis techniques to use with the data generated in order to answer the research questions” (Maree, 2007, p. 52). The case study methodology is concerned with a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case, the researcher is integrally involved in the case. The methodology focuses on individuals or groups of individuals and seeks to understand their perceptions of events (Richie, Lewis Nicholls & Ormston, 2013). Some researchers argue that case studies lack a systematic handling of data. However, Stake (2013) suggests it is a “systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest” (ibid., p. 302). Another criticism is that there is no basis for scientific generalisation. However, this is untrue as the purpose is to generalise theoretical propositions, not to generalise about the population as in statistical research (Yin, 2014).

Given the interpretive stance adopted in this research and the nature of the research questions, I believe that the case study approach was the most appropriate research methodology for this study because of its advantages in revealing in detail the unique perceptions and concerns of individual participants in a real-world situation in a particular context or case, which would have been lost in another research design. The case study design is particularly well suited to situations where it is difficult to separate a phenomenon's variables from its context therefore the most appropriate for this study.

This study is therefore methodologically a case study, with the case being the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus residences.

3.1.2.2. Selection of participants

Bernard (2013) states that “data gathering is crucial in research, as the data is meant to contribute to a better understanding of a theoretical framework. It then becomes imperative that selecting the manner of obtaining data and from whom the data will be acquired be done with sound judgment, especially since no amount of analysis can make up for improperly collected data” (p. 219). Many researchers have used snowball sampling when dealing with sensitive issues such as sexuality and marginalised populations (Browne, 2005; Rhoads, 1995). Because of the sensitivity of the topic, I did not want too many people involved. Snowball sampling allows for this. According to Browne (2005), snowball sampling is a recruitment method that employs research into participants' social networks to access specific populations. Heckathorn (2011) states that snowball sampling emerged as a nonprobability approach to sampling design and inference in hard-to-reach, or equivalent, hidden populations. In this study, I used purposive sampling accompanied by snowball sampling.

According to Gile and Handcock (2010) snowball sampling facilitates the hidden populations via a chain-referral procedure in which participants are recruited. Chain-referral-ampling of a hidden population begins with a convenience sample of initial subjects, because if a random sample could be drawn, the population would not qualify as hidden (Heckathorn, 2011). Therefore, snowball sampling begins with a convenience sample of people from the hard-to-reach population. It then relies on the people in the convenience sample to select other people from the hard-to-reach population; and the people selected by the convenience sample form the first wave of the snowball sampling. The people in the first wave select other people from the hard-to-reach population; and the people pointed to by the first wave of the snowball sampling form the second wave of the snowball sampling. Then the people in the second

wave direct the researcher to other people from the hard to reach population; and the people selected by the second wave of the snowball sampling form the third wave of the snowball sampling and this procedure continues. This is similar to the procedure used in this study. In keeping with snowball sampling and the initial convenient sample I then used purposive sampling to choose the participants I wished to participate.

The purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of informant participant due to the qualities the participant possesses. Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Bernard 2013). Purposive sampling is especially exemplified through the key informant technique (Bernard 2013), wherein one or a few individuals are solicited to act as guides to a culture. Key participants are observant, reflective members of the community of interest who know much about the culture and are both able and willing to share their knowledge (Bernard, 2013; Tongco, 2007; Seidler, 1974; Tremblay 1957).

In this study, I had specific criteria that I established which formed the first base for approaching participants. This criterion was that students were openly or closeted LGB, lived on or off Edgewood campus residences, were willing and able to express their feelings and experiences of homophobia in detail and available for at least two interviews at a venue and time of their choice. This was in line with Browne (2005) who argues that a study can begin with any method, for example a survey, and participants can be chosen from using these criteria. After establishing the criteria I sought for potential participants who self-identified as LGB. I knew a few gay students residing in the residences who were my friends. These friends provided the required entry point for the first group of participants to be approached. I explained to them what I aimed to do in the study and requested if they could direct me to potential participants. Given the sensitivity of the topic, one had to be particularly conscious about 'outing' people who did not want to be 'out of the closet' (Browne, 2005). I therefore intentionally distanced myself from approaching the potential participants myself. Instead, I requested my friends to first approach the potential participants and establish and confirm interest in participating in the study before my approach. This ensured that only those participants who wanted to participate in the study participated. It also ensured that data was drawn not from people immediately who were my immediate friends, but rather from people I did not know. This is an important element of when one uses snowball sampling (Goodson

& Sikes, 2001). The first round of participants then led me to other participants and the chain-referral method then started.

In the final participant grouping, I interviewed ten LGB students who are residing in residences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. However, initially I wished to interview 10 to 15 participants. I chose this number due to the sensitivity of the study, and the reality that many students did not wish to participate. It is also likely that because I am not an insider, that is, I am a heterosexual Indian women, participants were not willing to participate. However, I interviewed participants who were not out (i.e. those who did not identify themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual at university or in the community) and those who were semi-out (i.e. who only identified has gay, lesbian and bisexual with friends). The participants I interviewed also did not subscribe to the categories I had developed when designing the study. For instance, I interviewed four women whom I initially characterised as ‘lesbian’. However, out of the four, only one used the term ‘lesbian’ to define herself and the remaining three used the word ‘butch’ as a form of characterisation. I explore this naming in greater detail in the findings section. I also interviewed three gay males (one out and the other two closeted), two bisexual men who were out (one was male and the other female) and one participant who suggested that he did not want to classify himself into any of the above groups. All participants in the study were from South Africa, in KwaZulu-Natal. They were 19 to 25 years old and were in levels 2 to 4 of study completing their BEd degree. They lived both on campus residences and off-campus residences. Below is a table profiling each of the participants:

<i>Pseudonym</i>	<i>Sexual identity (self-described)</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Year of study</i>	<i>Status(out/closeted)</i>	
				<i>Family</i>	<i>Friends</i>
Cynthia	Butch Lesbian	22 years	4 th level	✓	✓
Joseph	Sexual being	22 years	4 th level	✓	✓
Bongeka	Bisexual female	23 years	2 nd level	X	✓
Sihle	Gay	25 years	3 rd level	✓	✓
Zihle	Butch Lesbian	21 years	4 th level	X	✓

Nonhlanhla	Femme Lesbian	20 years	3 rd level	X	✓
Sipho	Gay	22 years	2 nd level	✓	✓
Elizabeth	Butch Lesbian	19 years	2 nd level	✓	✓
Peter	Gay	24years	4 th level	X	X
Desmond	Gay	22years	4 th level	X	X

3.1.2.3. Data generation

Critical conversations are a one-to-one interview conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee commonly used in life history research (Lather, 2008). Critical conversation techniques and strategies are used to gather information on a particular topic and are concerned with establishing and maintaining a positive relationship between interviewer and interviewee, creating an inter-personal relationship with the interviewee (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010). During the conversation the researcher may also share their own experiences and perceptions (Oakley, 1981). The researcher also establishes common ground through the clothes they wear, interests they profess, the company they seem to keep, the language they use and the ways in which they present themselves. Critical conversations are therefore unstructured, informal, conversation type encounters dependent on the focus of the study and topics to be covered in the research (Creswell, 2013).

Critical conversations are informed by semi-structured questions. These questions then guide the research process, with the researcher focusing on the conversation more than the questions. There are questions which form the base, but probing questions emerge as you converse. Semi-structured questions are widely used in qualitative research. Semi-structured questions are a verbal interchange of where one person (i.e. the interviewer) attempts to gather or succeeds in eliciting information from another person by asking questions (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010). Although the researcher prepares a range of predetermined questions, semi-structured questions unfold in a conversational manner allowing the participants to explore the issues they feel are important (Longhurst, 2003). This suggests that semi-structured questions are similar to conversation we have through daily engagement with people in social settings; but the difference with semi-structured questions is that we talk to people in ways that are conscious, orderly and partially structured. Semi-structured questions

also require that the interviewer formulates questions, selects and recruits participants, chooses a location and transcribes the data while at the same time remaining cognizant of the ethical issues and power relations involved in qualitative data (Longhurst, 2003). Semi-structured questions do not require a time limit. The time spent on each interview is dependent on the interviewee and the interviewer. During the study, I encouraged my participants to exchange personal experiences/stories of homophobia that they or fellow friends have experienced during their stay on residence. I also asked them to share their concerns on homophobia that they encountered living on residences and ways in which they negotiate their sexual identities on residences, and to express their opinions on what could and should be done by the UKZN and the UKZN residence officials to help minimise any form of homophobic violence they may have encountered during their time on residences. In order to unearth these stories, methods that allowed for and engaged and empathetic approach were used. Critical conversations during the study provided a good way of allowing participants to express their thoughts, feelings, opinions, perceptions and emotions. As stated before, I did not aim to generalise my findings; my aim was therefore to understand the phenomenon under study.

Participants were interviewed using critical conversations based on semi-structured questions two or three times. Each interview was done after all lectures were over for the participant. I also made sure that there were no assignments and tests during this time and if so I asked the participant to study or complete their assignment before they decided the time they wanted to be interviewed. The first session was brief, allowing participants to become comfortable, because this is a sensitive topic; I introduced the topic and my own position as a researcher. I did this by first explaining the ethical issues and reading rights and responsibilities as a participant clearly making acknowledgement that they may leave the interview at any time if they feel uncomfortable or choose not to answer questions if they do not wish too. I also requested their honesty during the interview and clearly stated that whatever they may say during the interview will be confidential. This was done during the first three to five minutes of the interview thereafter I started the interview. I started off with a song to break the ice or discomfort the participant felt and then it flowed into the semi-structured questions. Some participants had a lot to say because this was a critical conversation; I allowed for us to speak openly about any matter that may have arouse during the first interview. Overall participants had engaged with the questions well and express their views well. This interview lasted around 30 to 50 minutes (shown on the diagram below). The second interview (i.e. the main

interview) lasted 30 to 60 minutes. At the end of the interview we spoke about other things relating to their personal life. At the end of the interview participants had answered all questions on the semi-structured interview and other issues that arose while doing the interview. All interviews lasted under one hour and are shown in the diagram below. The third interview was to get more feedback and to allow the participants to read whether the transcription were a correct interpretation of their experiences. I did this via email and sometimes in person due to the availability of students after transcriptions were done. This was also an agreed method, however, participants also came to me directly to share experiences that they had after the interviews were done and after transcriptions were sent. Most participants were happy about their views being expressed in the way they expressed it during the duration of the interview. Participants were interviewed in the place where they felt most comfortable. These places were mostly those environments that were quiet and invisible. Because as mentioned above LGB people are a hidden population and, as you will see further on, participants did not really associate with everyone at campus; they had specific people that they communicated with and specific people they were close to. Most of the time these were other LGB students. My room at residences was one of the most comfortable places for most participants. I reside on the second floor in the Flat 2 of the Kinnoull residence. I asked participants where they would prefer to have the interview and suggested many places; however, due to the sensitivity they felt uncomfortable in their own rooms or in open spaces. Although some participants were out they felt uncomfortable that people around them see me with them. They stated that it would be a strange association due to the fact they do not have Indian friends who visit them. Hence, they preferred to meet in my room. One lesbian student allowed me to visit her at her room in the residences. Participants agreed that they would not tell other people about the study unless it was for potential participants and even so they would not tell those people who they felt would not be willing to participate and who would make it known that the study was being conducted.

Sometimes students were really busy and this made it hard for us to set a time and date to meet. However, the participants usually found time during the afternoon to meet. It was also problematic because some students were never interviewed as they were always busy. However, I did not force them to participate and if they could not make it I allowed them to drop out of participating.

In this study, I used semi-structured questions with critical conversations which allowed for a more comfortable way of understanding the participants and also reduced the likelihood of

bias. I had two interviews with each participants in which I gathered the data that was needed. Initially I acquainted myself with participants in that it was a general conversation about them, as if we were meeting for the first time. Once we got to know a little about each other I used a song related to the topic to understand the feelings of the participants in the first interview. However, this was only done when participants were clear about the study and comfortable with speaking to me. This helped to get an overview of their thoughts and feelings around the topic. Altogether, the interviews lasted approximately 12 hours. Details can be found on the diagram below.

<i>Participant name</i>	<i>Interview 1 (hr/min/sec)</i>	<i>Interview 2 (hr/min/sec)</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Date/Time Interview</i>	<i>Date/Time Interview</i>
Cynthia	00:50:07	00:58:16	Kinoull K70	31/01/2014 12:12	13/02/14 13:05
Joseph	00:35:27	00:59:44	Kinoull K70	12/02/14 15:36	21/02/14 16:39
Bongeka	00:10:56	00:31:59	Kinoull K70	12/03/14 14:13	19/03/14 10:50
Sihle	00:20:23	00:40:41	Kinoull K70	27/02/14 13:09	28/02/14
Zinhle	00:10:14	00:40:53	Kinoull K70	13/02/14 18:37	25/02/14 19:36
Nonhlanhla	00:12:06	00:35:13	Kinoull K70	01/03/14 19:01	11/03/14 20:04
Sipho	00:26:57	00:43:29	Kinoull K70	04/03/14 13:08	20/03/14 14:09

Elizabeth	00:20:36	00:44:59	Kinoull K70	07/03/14 20:15	11/03/14 19:46
Peter	00:19:36	00:43:36	Kinoull K70	18/03/14 10:16	28/03/14 09:36
Desmond	00:20:16	00:40:23	Kinoull K70	24/03/14 10:02	31/03/14 10:35

3.1.3. Part Three: Ethical concerns and data analysis strategy

3.1.3.1. Ethical concerns

Ethics form an important part of engaging in research that is sensitive, particularly research that involves marginalised groups of people (Mertens, 2014). This study therefore had to make very carefully considered decisions in relation to ethics, particularly given the phenomenon under investigation as well as my own identification as a heterosexual, Indian woman, someone who is not an insider in the group. All participants in my study were over the age of 18, therefore there was no need to obtain permission from caregivers or legal guardians. However, the participants were given a letter of consent to sign, containing details of the study with the option of participating and withdrawing at any given stage of research. Confidentiality was of utmost importance as the study focussed on the students' sexual identification, something that was not necessarily in the public domain. I had to ensure that research was conducted in a safe, secure and private environment, an environment where the participants would be comfortable to speak freely about their experiences I also used pseudonyms for each participant within my data analysis, and all the residences were given pseudonyms so that there would be no association with the participants that engaged in the study.

Informed, explicit and clear consent forms were signed by participants and each participant received a copy of the consent form. The purpose of the study and how the data would be used was clearly explained. We also had a discussion around how issues of confidentiality and anonymity could be maintained. For instance, the study did not explicitly recruit participants. The participants, even though they had been recruited through the use of

snowball sampling, were asked to not speak of the study to people outside the minority population. It was also clearly stated at the beginning of the interviews that participants did not need to answer all questions and if they felt uncomfortable at any stage during the interview they could leave.

Some LGB students living on residence did not want to participate because of a previous study done on residences in which they felt that their rights as participants were violated. This impacted on my study because I was only able to get ten participants to participate. However, due to the fact that they were willing participants sometimes approaching me to participate I was glad.

Another issue was that of my being a heterosexual Indian female. Many of the participants were close friends with those students who were also in the LGB community. As you will see in the data analysis chapter they were reluctant to join people who were heterosexual. Although they did communicate with heterosexual students they felt much more comfortable around LGB students and felt that they were able to talk more openly to them. However, I also shared personal experiences dealing with race and other issues on residence.

The issue of sexuality was not very strange to me. I explained to all my participants that my view was that if they love someone it is not my duty to stop them from doing so. I was very open about my feelings and in that way I noticed how students became more open about their experiences. In some instances participants stated that they have never told anyone what they have said to me. They were very honest about their feelings. Discussing same-sex relations came natural because of my understanding whilst conducting research and my personal experience of discrimination on residence.

Only one of my participants was a student of mine. He volunteered to be a participant even though he was closeted. He did not experience discomfort during the interview. He spoke to me about when I lectured him about sexuality and his likes and dislikes about the topic. Throughout these interviews I had also learnt a lot from the participants. The conversations that entailed giving advice and receiving advice.

Although I did not get the 15 participants I had initially planned to get, the participants who did participate were ones who were opened and willing to give detailed descriptions of their accounts on residences. They were also not shy to tell me things they did that were embarrassing and which they felt were immoral as such. I enjoyed the interviews and still

communicate with all my participants, therefore, this was an exciting and good experience for me.

Full ethical clearance was also applied for and granted at the University. However, not without any challenges. The ordeal of obtaining ethical clearance for sensitive studies has been highlighted by scholars (see Sikes & Piper, 2010). It was therefore not surprising for my supervisor and myself when we were informed that the ethical application we had made had not been granted at our first attempt. What was however surprising were the ultra-conservative and ill-informed justifications that were being used by the Ethical Clearance Committee to refuse permission for the study to occur. The most shocking was the critique of the snowball sampling as an appropriate sampling technique as “it is possible that participants who are LGT but who have not ‘come out’ despite practising their sexuality, may feel threatened and identified by a peer, which could be a risk in this situation” (Letter of Rejection, November 2013). This demonstrated not only a complete misunderstanding of the sampling approach, but also that Committees often do not understand real ethical matters when it comes to sexuality research. For instance, I had not claimed that participants would simply be identified by some arbitrary colleague, but rather I had carefully considered the implications of outing participants, and ensured that only people who were friends with potential participants and knew of their sexuality would approach the participants on my behalf. I would only get to meet the potential participants once their friends had told them fully about the study and once they had agreed to meet with me. The challenges encountered demonstrated just deep-seated conservatism around sexual matters goes in South Africa. Needless to say, after a few explanations, full ethical clearance was granted on the 29 of January 2014 and the Student Services Department was also be notified of the study prior to its initiation. Interviews commenced during February and March 2014.

There were serious considerations that I had to address during the data generation process, which, despite careful planning I had to confront. These related to the withdrawal of potential participants even before engaging with the study. We would set dates and time and venues to meet and then the participant would not pitch. Sometimes they will say I’m coming now and two hours would go by. Then, when I tried calling them their phone would be off. Sometimes they said that they are busy now and would make another date. Some participants made another date when they were busy and they did come in that time while others just continued in this way; after five times of trying I gave up and did not bother.

And then, it became clear from the discussions with some students that my identity as a heterosexual Indian woman was affecting the participation of some individuals. I addressed this by becoming friends with them and earning their trust. This was important especially with the first wave of participants because I needed them to help me find other potential participants. I earned their trust as a friend and not just as an interviewer or researcher.

As a researcher, I have had positive and negative experiences. I have found that students who do choose same-sex identities are often reluctant to participate in research that focuses on their sexuality. This is due to the fact that they have experienced homophobia and they are more comfortable with being around people whom they know and are familiar with. I also found like I needed a reference (another LGB students approval) before I approached students. Many students I approached alone did not want to participate at times they would agree to participate; however, they would ignore calls and sms's. This was disappointing because I am a friendly and outspoken person. I did not understand the reason behind the non-participation. As time passed after meeting numerous students I found that it was not about the researcher but about the questions. When I approached a participant in this study for the first time she asked me if I would be asking questions about sex and how they have sexual intercourse. She also told me that that is what people want to know about that's why some people do not wish to participate. Had I known this previously I would have clarified it with others. However, once I began interviews with the first few students it was much easy to find other participants. It should also be noted that although I use the term participants here each participant was not just a participant and I am still friends with all of them. The formation of a friendship allowed me the opportunity to collect rich data. It did not cost me to interview participants as stated above these interviews were conducted in the residences due to confidentiality issues. Due to time constraints I have not been able to share my findings with my participants, however, I have shared their transcriptions with them which they have read and corrected. In sum, I have faced many negative experiences at the beginning of this study but I have learnt a lot about sexuality and research throughout and although these negative experiences can be considered a limitation it is something which I have learnt from and learnt to expect in a sensitive study such as this. An important ethical issue also relates to data storage. For this study, data is stored in a safe place, in the office of my supervisor. All interview transcripts will be shredded after the requisite period of five years.

3.1.3.2. Trustworthiness, fairness and authenticity

In qualitative research, data is often not ‘validated’ as the data collected does not involve numbers, and cannot be easily ‘triangulated’. Instead of validity, trustworthiness in relation to credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, authenticity and fairness is often used.

Creditability of research responds roughly to positivist research (Fortune, Reid & Miller, 2013). Creditability poses questions of whether the researchers’ analysis and participants’ answers are corresponding. While this is not a positivistic study, the study attained credibility through allowing the participants to read the transcribed data to check if the transcriptions captured their experiences in the ways they intended. Transcriptions have been read by participants and alterations have been made to certain participants’ transcripts, with the addition of new experiences that they had experienced after the interviews were complete.

Transferability is a form of external validity (Fortune, Reid & Miller, 2013). It is the extent to which data can be generalized (Thomas, 2013). However, in a qualitative research there is no true or correct answer for generalizability (Tobin & Begley, 2003). “The aim of the study is not to attain generalizability but to understand the phenomenon under investigation, though of course the work may perhaps be transferred to similar contexts as the work undertaken” (Thomas, 2013, p. 32). For example, most students were from rural communities where heterosexuality is the norm and most of the time members of the community have little or no knowledge of non-heterosexual relationships.

Dependability relates to reliability and reflexivity (Fortune, Reid & Miller, 2013). According to Thomas (2013), reflexivity is central to the audit trail in which researchers keep a self-critical account of the process of the research including the internal and external dialogue. I kept a reflective journal in which I documented how I felt when interviewing students and other aspects which influence the research. The data was tape recorded (with permission from my participant) thereafter the data was transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically. In this approach, the researcher reads the text several times and highlights statements which appear to reveal the phenomenon he/she is researching that appeared (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). Themes were identified by highlighting material in the interview transcripts that speaks to the experiences of homophobia among gay, lesbian and bisexual students.

Conformability usually deals with the issue of presentation (Fortune, Reid & Miller, 2013). Here steps need be taken to ensure that the findings are in the participants' experiences rather than in the researcher's preferences (Tobin & Begley, 2003). I have given all participants the opportunity to read the transcribed interviews. This allowed participants to confirm that what I have transcribed is a correct analysis of participants' experiences and not merely my own preferences.

Authenticity entails researchers showing a range of different realities with descriptions of their associated concerns, issues and underlying values (Thomas, 2013). This is how fairness is also acquired. In this research, I used residence students using a snowball sampling method. In so doing, the participants who participated in this research were those that were willing to participate. Other participants were out, others on the verge of coming out and some closeted. The experiences of participants were therefore different in a variety of ways. Experiences in a real life setting usually vary and therefore my research fairly addressed experiences of students who are exposed to different realities of being gay or lesbian living on campus residence.

3.1.2.3. Data Analysis Strategy

“If we do not know how people went about analysing their data, or what assumptions informed their analysis, it is difficult to evaluate their research, and to compare and/or synthesize it with other studies on that topic, and it can impede other researchers carrying out related projects in the future” (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 315). Thematic analysis is widely used, but there is no clear agreement about what thematic analysis is and how you go about doing it (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Boyatzis, 1998; Tuckett, 2005). “It can be seen as a very poorly ‘branded’ method, in that it does not appear to exist as a ‘named’ analysis in the same way that other methods do (e.g. narrative analysis, grounded theory)” (Tuckett, 2005, p. 78). Thematic analysis was used in this study to identify themes in the data collected. Within the interpretivist strategy a researcher is allowed to treat social action and human activity as text (Aronson, 1994). It is suggested that human action in relation to the above statement refers to a collection of symbols expressing layers of meaning (Aronson, 1994). Thematic analysis is commonly used in qualitative data analysis.

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns/themes within data. This type of analysis assists in minimally organising and describing data set in rich detail. However, frequently thematic analysis goes

further than this, and assists in understanding various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). Holloway and Todres (2003, p. 347) identify “thematising meanings as one of the few shared generic skills across qualitative research analysis”. For this reason, Boyatzis (1998) characterizes it, not as a specific method, but as a tool to use across different methods. Similarly, Ryan and Bernard (2003) “locate thematic coding as a process performed within ‘major’ analytic traditions (such as grounded theory), rather than a specific approach in its own right” (p. 97).

One of the benefits of thematic analysis is its flexibility. Qualitative analysis methods are essentially independent of theory and epistemology, and can be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches. Through its theoretical freedom, thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex, account of data. Rubin and Rubin (2011) claim that analysis is exciting because you discover themes and concepts embedded throughout one’s interviews.

Thematic analysis can be an essentialist or realist method, which reports experiences, meanings and the reality of participants, or it can be a constructionist method, which examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on are the effects of a range of discourses operating within society (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). It can also be a ‘contextualist’ method, sitting between the two poles of essentialism and constructionism, and characterized by theories such as critical realism (Willig, 1999), which acknowledge the ways individuals make meaning of their experience, and, in turn, the ways the broader social context impinges on those meanings, while retaining focus on the material and other limits of ‘reality’. Therefore, thematic analysis can be a method that works both to reflect reality and to unpick or unravel the surface of ‘reality’. However, it is important that the theoretical position of a thematic analysis is made clear. Any theoretical framework carries with it a number of assumptions about the nature of the data, what they represent in terms of the world, reality, and so on. A good thematic analysis will make this transparent.

Thematic analysis focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of living and/or behaviour. The first step is to collect the data. Audiotapes should be used to collect data and thus to study the talk of a session or interview (Spradley, 1979). From the transcribed conversations, patterns of experiences can be listed which can come from direct quotes or paraphrasing common ideas. The next step to a thematic analysis is to identify all data that relate to the already classified patterns. To continue the above example, the identified patterns are then expounded

on. All of the talk that fits under the specific pattern is identified and placed with the corresponding pattern. The next step to a thematic analysis is to combine and catalogue related patterns into sub-themes. Themes are defined as units derived from patterns such as "conversation topics, vocabulary, recurring activities, meanings, feelings, or folk sayings and proverbs" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1989, p.131). Themes are identified by "bringing together components or fragments of ideas or experiences, which often are meaningless when viewed alone" (Leininger, 1985, p. 60). Themes that emerge from the informants' stories are pieced together to form a comprehensive picture of their collective experience. The "coherence of ideas rests with the analyst who has rigorously studied how different ideas or components fit together in a meaningful way when linked together" (Leininger, 1985, p. 60). Conostas (1992) reiterates this point and states that the "interpretative approach should be considered as a distinct point of origination" (p. 258).

When gathering sub-themes to obtain a comprehensive view of the information, it is easy to see a pattern emerging (Attride-Stirling, 2001). When patterns emerge it is best to obtain feedback from the informants about them (Conostas, 1992). This can be done as the interview is taking place or by asking the informants to give feedback from the transcribed conversations. The interviewer uses the informants' feedback to establish the next questions in the interview and thereafter the interviewer transcribes the interview or the session, and asks the informants to provide feedback that is then incorporated in the theme analysis (Tuckett, 2005).

In this study data was analysed in the ways identified above by the various scholars cited. This involved collecting the data and transcribing each interview separately making sure that I have captured the words and expressions of each participant clearly. This included making sure that the hmmm, pauses and phrases they used, even if not in English, were captured accordingly. From these transcriptions I then read each interview making small notes of which phrases and comments as well as experiences brought out the experiences of homophobia experienced by students. I then read the transcription again finding which of these patterns link together. I then went on to highlight the patterns I found in a specific colour and also highlighted the linking ideas, experiences and paraphrases in that colour as well. I then used a spreadsheet to combine these ideas under different sub-themes. I then used this spread sheet to arrive at my final broad themes under two different chapters: one on the family and background of participants and the other based on residences and the experiences within the context study.

3.1.4. Conclusion

This chapter consists of three parts. I first explain and theorise my paradigm and underpinning ontology and epistemology, moving on to the methodology and methods used to obtain the data in detail and thereafter I explain the data analysis and ethics within the study. In the chapter that follows I will present the findings. In so doing, I seek to respond to the following research questions:

1. *What are the experiences of homophobia that lesbian, gay and bisexual students staying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences encounter?*
2. *How do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in contexts which maybe repressive?*
3. *Why do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in the ways they do?*
4. *How do the experiences of homophobia by lesbian, gay and bisexual students relate to these students' identities as student teachers*

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the methodologies adopted in this study. In this chapter the analysis of data is presented. I used thematic analysis to analyze the data generated. I did this by reading the transcriptions several times, highlighting and using in-text comments to sieve out the issues and experiences which were frequent and common among the participants. I then grouped these experiences into various themes. These themes presented were informed by the four research questions of the study, which are:

1. What are the experiences of homophobia that lesbian, gay and bisexual students staying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences encounter?
2. How do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in contexts which maybe repressive?
3. Why do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in the ways they do?
4. How do the experiences of homophobia by lesbian, gay and bisexual students relate to these students' identities as student teachers?

The table below highlights the themes that emerged during the data analysis process:

Themes
Persistent homophobia: Denial and tolerance
Homophobic colonisation of residential spaces
Resistance and support
Shaping teacher identities

4.1.1. Persistent homophobia: denial and tolerance

Homophobic people reflect an irrational fear or intolerance towards people who choose a same-sex identity (Weinberg, 1972). Herek (2004) suggests that homophobic people also feel emotions such as anger and disgust towards LGB individuals. According to Mhkize, Reddy, Bennett and Moletsane (2010) homophobia is pervasive in the South African society. It may be articulated through numerous expression such as jokes, assumptions about LGB individuals dress and behaviour; exclusions; teasing, sensationalisations of sexual activity and misconceptions about a LGB person's sexual identity (Mhkize, Reddy, Bennett & Moletsane, 2010). The findings of this study are that homophobia in the residential spaces of the university where this study took place is rife. Many students reflected on numerous incidences of homophobia which they had experienced during their stay in the residences. The homophobic behaviour by students in the residences demonstrated their intolerance towards LGB students living on residences. The homophobic practices of the homophobic students in residences were portrayed in multiple ways. Homophobia experienced by the students studied range from physical abuse to verbal abuse and oppression. The participants noted that the most commonly used homophobic harassment in the campus residences was the use of derogatory labels. All students declared that they have been called names frequently by other some students on residences. The names most commonly used were 'isitabane' and 'ingqingili' which are derogatory labels for LGB people in the Zulu language. These labels, which were similar to the words 'faggot' and 'moffie' in English and Afrikaans respectively, are used on a daily basis against LGB students. Students noted that:

"They call me names all the time but I don't say anything because they are like that they won't change. Sometimes I just walk past a student not knowing that that student is homophobic and I greet the students and the student says isitabane instead of greeting me." (Zinhle)

"Yes they call me names like isitabane. It's because I dress like a boy (Elizabeth)."

"My neighbours don't speak to me but I don't mind cause as I said I keep to myself. I speak to one neighbour only and not often. The others when they see me they call me stabane or they will say something about a stabane and walk past me..." (Bongeka)

“Yes, I was called names. They call me stabane all the time. Sometimes they do it in groups when I walk past. I am quite so I don’t say anything. I don’t care about what they think. They are stupid sometimes.” (Sipho)

Not only have students been called names but they have also experienced other LGB students being called names in their presences. The use of this type of homophobic violence has no particular reason except to degrade students who choose a non-normative sexual identity. It was clear that homophobic students in residences do not consider the feelings of LGB students in residences. All the LGB students interviewed suggested that they have heard of other LGB students being called names sometimes. Although they were also a member of the LGB community, some students would victimise another student who either was walking with the LGB student or was in close proximity to the LGB student interviewed. Joseph, who defines himself as a ‘sexual being’, for instance noted in response to whether he has witnessed anyone else being called names: that

“Yeah, I’ve seen guys who’ve been called names. They call them stabane. They don’t have a reason but you know these guys they are homophobic.”

Sipho, Peter and Sihle also stated that they have heard students been called names by fellow students in residences with no one taking any action. Note for example their expression in the interviews:

“Yes, my boyfriend was called isitabane and ungqingili. My boyfriend was very hurt. He didn’t say anything to them he just left them. They called him that because he was wearing a traditional outfit. They were saying you know these stabanes they don’t know how to dress and one guy even came up to my boyfriend and he went up close to his face and said yes you are a stabane don’t stand and look at me.” (Sipho)

“Sometimes when I sit in my room I hear my heterosexual friends calling other guys stabane and they laugh but you can only hear the homophobic students in the residences calling the lesbian and gay students names. I don’t hear the LGB student saying anything. But I don’t look cause if they see me then they will also pick on me.” (Sihle)

“Some of the guys in the residences they call other guys names sometimes you will hear it from a distance and then if I can see them I don’t walk past there I will walk another way. Most of the time they will be one or two people you know. They support

each other. But they don't know that we are in the LGB community. We also support each other. We are family and when these things happen we don't scream and shout but we ignore it and we speak about it to our friends who are also LGB because it makes us feel better.”(Peter)

All participants in the study noted that they had experienced this type of name calling, especially towards students who are openly LGB in campus residences or were suspected to be LGB in residences. However, it became clear in the study that derogatory names were usually directed to those students who are openly LGB. Similar findings have been presented in other studies. For instance, Evans and Broido (2002) in residences of a US university found that those students who felt that the residence halls were homophobic usually heard the ‘out’ LGB students being called names or experienced posters in relation to LGBTI networks being defaced. Young (1990) suggests that the deliberate use of verbal harassment, intimidation and discrimination against a person can be considered as violence. Furthermore, verbal harassment has also been found in other studies. For instance, in the schooling context of South Africa, Graham & Kiguwa (2004), in a study conducted using a sample of youth in the Benoni area, found that verbal harassment was commonly used in communities and schools in Johannesburg. These findings are not isolated as the Human Rights Watch (2003) found that LGB school learners in Pietermaritzburg have also expressed their experiences of verbal harassment at school. Furthermore, Msibi’s (2012) study of 14 marginalised rural learners from a community in KZN found that learners have also experienced being called names such as isitabane, ungqingili, inkwili, uvezubuso, danone, moffie and faggot. Mkhize, Reddy, Bennett and Moletsane (2010) also suggest that for every child who complains of being called “isitabane in South African schools it is possible to find thousands of others’. Harro (2000) states that dominant groups often set the boundaries for which subordinate groups are expected to follow and live by; the dominant group also hold the power and authority in society and decide on how this power may acceptably be used (Harro, 2000). In this case, the dominant group was the homophobic students.

Even though clearly there was the presence of homophobia in residences which students who were interviewed experienced on a daily basis, these experiences mentioned above were frequently excused by students by the suggestion that ‘it’s not bad’, ‘that’s not really homophobia’ and that ‘it depends on how you define homophobia’. At times students also excused these notions by suggesting that the homophobia was done in a state of drunkenness. This meant that the homophobic practices were not intended and therefore it could be

excusable. Students stated that the consumption of alcohol usually made residence students, whether homophobic or not, do things (i.e. depict homophobic behaviour) that they don't really want to. Such actions ridiculed LGB students, but, it was stated, they were saying things (i.e. passing homophobic remarks and sentiments that are hurtful, insensitive, cruel, painful and agonizing to LGB students) that they didn't really mean. In five of the ten interviews conducted students stated that the reason that they were able to excuse the students when they were drunk and portrayed homophobic behaviour was because the same students would not do it during the day when they are not intoxicated or drunk. This was disturbing to me given the fact that many of the discussions and examples cited by the students suggested a dangerously uncomfortable and distressing environment for LGB students in the residences. It was also troubling because of the experiences of LGB people in various incidents documented in media reports in which drunken people had been very physically abusive. For instance, the incident reported in News 24 in 2013 where a 23-year-old Russian man revealed he was gay to some drinking companions; these heterosexual Russian males beat him, shoved beer bottles in his anus, and crushed his head with a stone (Mezzofiore, 2013). In fact, as I and my supervisor were preparing a paper related to this study, my supervisor was approached by yet another lesbian student, not part of this study, who had been assaulted on the bus by a 'heterosexual' male student (to be discussed in detail below). Repeatedly, students stated that the situation was not bad, due to the fact that they were coping with it. Two students who were interviewed felt that the residences were an unsafe space considering the homophobia that they had experienced, and eight of the students who were interviewed indicated that they usually felt safe on campus and that they did not consider the residences to be homophobic spaces. However, during the interviews, after prompting questions and the above descriptions of the experiences of homophobia, it became clear that these accounts of students weren't consistent with reality and the residences are unsafe spaces for LGB students. As demonstrated through the citations below, when students stated that they were safe it did not necessarily mean that they in fact were safe. I argue that this demonstrates a deep rooted culture of homophobia which has been normalised by LGB students in residences. Often this normalisation is premised on internalised homophobia and guilt for being LGB (Harro, 2000). Students often felt that the homophobic practices of students in residences were not their actions as they had no choice in the matter due to the fact that they come from rural areas and the idea of fluidity of sexuality does not exist. Note for instance the various responses from participants:

“Yes, sometimes they call my friends who are gay stabane (faggot). But nothing physical, just name calling that’s all.” (Sihle)

“I have not experienced anything [serious]. One day I was walking in the residence and this guy called me a stabane and he was screaming and telling me that I want to be a man. I didn’t say anything I just left him.” (Zinhle):

“People calling me names like isitabane that’s it. No other names... they say things that will hurt me.... you are a stabane...They try to date me when I refuse they call me names.” (Nonhlanhla)

“They call me stabane but you know these people they are from rural areas I don’t expect them to understand. I think they learn it from home. They learnt they must treat us different because we are doing something wrong.” (Peter)

“Where I am right now Nullwood, they are fine. My neighbours are fine even though I have one or two people who don’t speak to me because they know that I’m dating a boy. But the rest of them they okay with that.” (Joseph)

“There is no homophobia on residences. But it depends on how you define homophobia. I define it as you know like in rural communities where women are raped for being lesbian. But when they call me stabane. It’s not really homophobic. If you take it as an insult then ya its homophobic but it doesn’t hurt me because I have friends and I can talk to them they will make me feel better. Plus you know I a cool person.” (Elizabeth)

The above suggests LGB students were on the receiving end of homophobia, however, the homophobia was so entrenched in the culture of the institution that the students saw it as unimportant and repeatedly excused the homophobic behaviour. This was usually because homophobic labelling and sentiments were a daily occurrence. It is also because students spent most of their time in residences and their encounters with students who do not accept their sexuality became a normal phenomenon. However, it became clear that the homophobia had a negative impact on students as they expressed pain and hurt. This silenced their identities and the freedom they had to express their identities. Many students hid their same-sex interests in fear of victimisation. This suggests that LGB students internalise homophobia and begin to excuse homophobic actions as normal. Harper, Jernewall and Zea (2004) state that LGB people time and again experience multiple layers of oppression because they

contend with the negative attitudes towards their sexuality. Young (1990) refers to this as internalised subordination which she understands as the marginalisation of oneself. She states that subordinate groups collude with their own oppressive environments by accepting the dominant group's ideology about their group and accepting a negative definition of themselves, even though this is hurtful and limiting to their growth. Hardiman and Jackson (2007) state that the subordinate group thinks, feels and acts in ways that demonstrate the devaluation of their group and of themselves as members of that groups when they internalise homophobia. Clearly, students internalised homophobia and limited their growth by accepting the hurtful, homophobic, behaviour of fellow residence students. By excusing and tolerating the homophobic behaviour of residence students, LGB students colluded with their own oppression.

The above discussion clearly suggests that homophobia in residences was rife and that the systems which exist in the residences worked to subordinate LGB identities. Such actions were geared to create a climate of panic and self-policing due to the different misconceptions that are often present. I will discuss how the homophobia operated in the residences.

4.1.2. Homophobic colonisation of residential spaces

The use of terms such as '*isitabane* and *ungqingili*' was found to be a frequent occurrence in the residences as described above. This linguistic violence is used in a way that demonstrates power, making other students targets. According to the World Health Organization (2002) violence is a complex phenomenon which has no single definition but is dependent on a matter judgement. Homophobic violence is violence which is perpetrated by homophobic individuals who seek to silence same-sex identity due to personal preferences which they believe all individuals should follow (Reddy, 2002). Most often homophobic violence is perpetrated by homophobic heterosexual people; however, this is not to say that internalised homophobia does not exist. Young (1990) argues that violence is used to oppress people, causing damage, humiliation or physical harm to a person. The linguistic violence experienced by LGB students demonstrates the negative attitudes of some homophobic students towards LGB students in the residences. One of the main themes that appeared in the analysis was related to how certain social spaces were used by homophobic students to perpetrate homophobia. These social spaces were used by violent and homophobic students in constructing a fearful environment for any students choosing a non-normative sexuality and therefore kept students' identities silenced. It also excluded students who did choose

LGB identities in residences, made them feel othered and regulated LGB students' sexualities. Note for instance the various statements by students:

“One of the residences is called “love den” because gay people live there; another “the parliament” which is a [space where a] group of heterosexual boys sit in the front of the residence passing remarks to lesbian and gay students.” (Desmond)

One of the requirements for the complete functioning of ‘The Parliament’ was the presence of multiple homophobic male students who would come together to make homophobic sentiments towards LGB students and sexist comments towards women walking past. It should also be noted that the homophobic male students who occupied ‘The Parliament’ came from different residential buildings in the on and off campus residences. Several LGB students who were interviewed declared ‘The Parliament’ as the most homophobic space on campus. Due to the severe victimisation that students often experienced whilst walking past ‘The Parliament’ they (LGB students) often feared ‘The Parliament’ and avoided walking past. LGB students were often called derogatory names and were stopped and bombarded with uncomfortable and personal questions on their sexualities. These questions were often related to sex within LGB students’ relationships and other questions about relationships that they have had with students of the opposite sex. Speaking about the marginalising and violent nature of ‘The Parliament’ students noted that:

“The guys at the Parliament here by Kimann (pseudonym)... They’re always calling my girlfriend and asking her out. They also call me names because they can see that I dress like a boy. These guys, some of them are homophobic ...They have this thing that it’s ok to be rude and beat people up....some of them will be like oh it’s because you’ve never been with a guy, we need to show you...” (Elizabeth)

“The Parliament is the worst. The guys there they are homophobic. They are very homophobic. They don’t only start the girls walking past but they can’t even see the other LGB students walking past they think they own the residences. It’s like what they want is important and what they believe in is only important. What we feel is not important to them. They will even come up to you when you walk past and ask your girlfriend or boyfriend about how we have sex.” (Bongeka)

“The heterosexual boys at ‘The Parliament’ they are a bit dangerous because they physically harm LGB students. One day when I was walking past one guy came by me. He was trying to

provoke me to hit him but I didn't and he tried while the other guys were screaming.”
(Joseph)

The victimisation identified here was not only targeted at those who were ‘visibly out’, but often also those seen walking around with LGB students, clearly a tool to deter supportive students from supporting LGB students. Some of the students noted:

“I don't walk to residence directly because I wait to see if there is anyone at the Parliament. I am afraid to walk past them. They will call me names because you see the way I talk and the people I join. They will comment. So I try not to pass them the best I can.”

“My friends who are not lesbian or gay always get called lesbian because they walk with me past the Parliament.” (Cynthia)

It also became evident in the narratives of the participants that the colonisation of space instils fear in LGB students. Young (1990, p. 43) states that “group-directed violence is institutionalised and systemic to the degree that institutions and social practices encourage, tolerate or enable the perpetration of violence” against members of a certain group. This is not only evident through the “The Parliament”, but also in that the buses that transport off-campus students were also used as spaces for exerting linguistic and physical violence on LGB students. One of the lesbian participants noted how ‘heterosexual’ men often behaved like thugs by singing traditional Zulu songs insulting both women and LGB students (as well as other men perceived to be too soft or ‘modern’). In one incident, a male student started singing about the participant (Elizabeth), and when she confronted them, they became aggressive, swearing at and insulting her. No student intervened.

The above experience was not isolated. Several participants cited similar experiences, with even an incident, also reported to Risk Management Services, where a petite lesbian woman was blocked by one of the heterosexual singing males from entering the bus. When she tried going under this male student, she was assaulted in front of other students in the bus and told that it was her “lesbian identity beginning to cloud her mind” (Zinhle) and that she was starting to think that she is a man. I argue that at the root of this victimisation are deep-seated notions of Zulu patriarchy: where young men believe that because of their Zulu male identities, they have a right to regulate and dictate the terms through which other students should identify themselves. What was interesting was that the very same violent boys would, when confronted walking as individuals on campus, “change their aggression and become

more friendly and understanding” (Elizabeth). This suggests heterosexual males who occupy social spaces demonstrate their power in the residences, and that by victimising LGB students they show their masculinity to the fellow students in these social spaces. It also shows us that these social spaces are used to demonstrate power among other students. For the colonised social spaces to be fully functional they require the presence of a group of homophobic students. Kimmel (2004) states that manhood is demonstrated for other men’s approval in the sense that men want to boast about things such as their sexual encounters, fights they had won and so on. Taulke-Johnson (2010) states that the residence are heterosexualised by groups of male heterosexual students who wish to demonstrate their power. Additionally, Kimmel (2004) states that males are under scrutiny to demonstrate their manhood and any deviance towards one’s manhood constructs a fear in men of being viewed as too feminine to other male counterparts. It was clear that the project to colonise space was tied to this heteronormative project.

Seats on the bus were reserved for the use of heterosexual males. Students who live on the off campus residences stated that they could not sit on any seat in the bus. The back seats were often reserved for the homophobic heterosexual males. Cynthia and Elizabeth, who live in the off campus residences, shared their experiences of the bus situation. Cynthia, long after the transcriptions were completed, came to me in tears. She told me that she needs to talk to me about something but before she could speak she was already shaken up and very emotional. After calming her down, she shared the story of her experience on the bus just a few minutes before she arrived to my room on residence. Cynthia stated that the morning buses are not usually full sometimes, but on that morning there were a lot of students in the bus and only seats available were those seats in the back of the bus. She went on to say

“I didn’t have anywhere else to sit and no one was sitting there but then... these boys, they are heterosexual, they came into the bus and they started calling me names and harassing me in front of everyone. They said that they sit there and I must move but I didn’t want to because I also pay for residences so they got angry and they started calling me isitabane and telling me that I want to be a man and that I got no dick so I mustn’t try to be a man and they just carried on.”

From the above discussion, it is clear that space is used quite powerfully to assert the male authority in busses. Such approach was clearly directed at lesbian women, who had to be shown that they are not men. This of course is not something new in South Africa, where

lesbian women are violated daily with the aim of showing them that they are not men. For instance, in an HSRC study conducted by Mkhize, Reddy, Bennett and Moletsane (2010) titled *The country we want to live in: hate crimes and homophobia in the lives of black lesbian South Africans* it was found that women who name themselves as lesbian place themselves in danger in contexts where the politics of stigmatisation and hate are rife. In other research based on violence against lesbian women, similar findings were noted. For instance, Muholi (2004) states that in a single homophobic attack, a lesbian woman may face numerous verbal outbursts about raping her or killing her because of her sexual identity. Young (2004) states that groups positioned in dominant positions in different contexts demonstrate their dominance in ways that undermine the target group, so much so that the target group does not defend themselves in the publicity of others. This clearly suggests that the groups of students who colonise spaces in residences are doing so not only to dominate the space but also to show their power among their friends.

The colonisation of space even went into the actual residential buildings, as already hinted above, with certain residences declared by the heterosexual mob as ‘gay-free’. This often forced LGB students to go into ‘gay friendly’ residences where they could have the protection of other LGB students. I discuss this part later on in the chapter. Several participants recited a story of how one of the openly gay students (Mondli) was physically removed from his residence, with his clothes packed for him by the same group of ‘heterosexual’ male students who sing traditional Zulu songs and who occupy front row seats in the bus. According to the participants, Mondli used to invite his friends to visit him in his residence, as a way of dealing with homophobia. Due to the increased visitations by his gay friends (who were supposedly making the residence a ‘gay residence’), the mob decided to pack Mondli’s clothes while he was away on campus, and delivered both Mondli and his clothes in the afternoon bus, returning back to campus. A similar incident was also shared by Peter, albeit in a different residence. Peter noted that:

“Oh, and when I used to live in the outside res one of the guys lived with a group of guys they had to share a room with. And they took his clothes and they kicked him out. And they took his clothes and they threw it in the hall way at Duckwood. And I was like why are they kicking him out and all of that and they were like no we can’t share a room with a gay guy.”

He continued to explain that no one did anything to the roommates of the gay student. The student was thrown out and had to move into a girl’s room. This is similar to the above

mentioned incidents in the male residences on campus. What this suggests is that space gets instrumentally used to assert heterosexuality and to keep LGB students marginalised. This works to produce LGB students who are second class citizens in the residences, something which clearly violates the South African constitution. The homophobia that students experience in the social spaces of residences has a damaging effect on them. Imber (2009) states that the normalisation of heterosexuality ensures that homosexuality is othered, or marginalised. Additionally, Zapata (2000) states that compared to heterosexual students, LGB students note less sense of a community.

Another important aspect related to space that emerged concerned the use of bathrooms. Due to the gendered nature of placement in residences, it was difficult for LGB students to use the bathroom in campus residences. The bathrooms in residences are a communal space which all students of the floor are expected to use. The sexuality of students is not considered a factor during the placement of the student in residences. Many heterosexual students believe falsely that all LGB students are interested in sleeping with all the people of the same sex, a clearly homophobic idea. Many of the heterosexual students felt threatened when it came to using the shared bathroom and therefore became homophobic. These heterosexual students were fearful of gay students; this ended up often in homophobic practices such as the harassment of LGB students who wished to use the bathroom at the same time they did. All openly LGB students noted that they had experiences of homophobia whilst using the bathroom in residences. Zinhle one of the participants noted that:

“You know these girls they think that you want them. They were afraid of me using the bathroom in the first year because they knew that I was a lesbian but I told them I have a girlfriend and they know my girlfriend so I don’t want them. Now they are cool with me.”

While, this incident was dealt with ease in the female residences the same cannot be said for the male residences. Joseph and Siphon stated that the heterosexual males on residences are afraid of them using the bathroom. Siphon (gay) suggested:

“If they see you going to the bathroom and they also want to use the bathroom they will not come in. They will wait for me to finish. When you go in the bathroom and they are in the bathroom and they see you, they will walk out and wait for you to come out. I don’t think they even care if they are going to miss their lecture, just as long as they are not in the bathroom with you.”

Clearly, what Sipho shares above reveals a deeply embedded fear of 'the homosexual'. Much has been written about how homophobia manifests in fear from heterosexual students. For instance, Williams (2008) calls this type of behaviour 'homosexual anxiety', which he describes as the obsessive "fear of being or becoming homosexual, the experience of intrusive, unwanted mental images of homosexual behaviour, and/or the obsessive fear that others may believe one is homosexual" (p. 197). This was clearly visible in this study in that residence students who have roommates who are openly gay were uncomfortable and feared living with students who are LGB. In this study, male homophobic heterosexual students had a problem and fear of living with gay males. Williams (2008) suggests that sometimes heterosexual males begin to question their own sexuality and are therefore fearful of becoming gay, given the multiple misconceptions in relation to LGB identities. Consequently, these thoughts of questioning one's own identity make some males homophobic, and they thereby commit irrational violent acts towards other gay males with whom they are in close contact (Williams, 2008). These homophobic practices may also be a technique used to avoid accepting one's own non-normative sexuality (Williams, 2008). Kimmel (2004) states that homophobia consists of the cultural organisation of one's manhood in that it is fear that other men will emasculate and unmask one's manhood and reveal their true self which may not be masculine enough, to the world.

The 'fear of the homosexual' was not simply limited to the bathrooms; it also concerned the use of shared rooms. Cynthia and Elizabeth stated that they have experienced homophobia from roommates whilst living in the off-campus residences. Cynthia stated that when she first moved into the room with her roommates, they felt very uncomfortable. In order to address their discomfort, she removed her clothes and told them that she was also a woman and what they have she also has. This was clearly a way to shock the roommates and also get them to understand that she wasn't 'after them'. This seemed to work as the roommates started treating her better. Cynthia was not the only participant to experience this type of victimisation. Elizabeth for instance noted that her roommates still feel uncomfortable around her. She noted that

"They are kinda homophobic but they joke about it a lot. Like when I come out the bath or they come out of the bath. They tease me and tell me that they gonna see all my man parts. Then when they come out of the bath and I am in the room they will say that I must leave and we laugh about it but they don't really mean it."

I have two roommates in the main bedroom. It's one of the hardest things I have to do. I do everything in the bath so everyone has to wait for me. And if I come out with a towel they laugh and they will scream and say I'm a chick and stuff. They know that I'm lesbian and they are cool with it. One of them is an old friend of mine. So she knows about it and has dealt with it but they still feel uncomfortable to change in front of me. They take turns to change but I also feel uncomfortable to change in front of them. (Bongeka)

While Elizabeth's roommates are clearly uncomfortable with her presence in the room when they are naked, it is apparent 'making fun' of the situation becomes a key strategy in negotiating the relationship and also making her peers comfortable. That LGB students often have to compensate their beliefs in order to fit in has been previously documented. Taulke-Johnson (2010), for instance notes that 'straight' students re-inscribed the heterosexual matrix so much so that gay students feel that they have to pretend to be heterosexual in fear of the danger of being openly gay in residence halls. This became clearly evident in this study.

Another area of concern regarded how notice boards were used to 'out' gay students, therefore violating their rights. Notice boards were used by homophobic students to humiliate LGB students more especially gay students in the presence of other male students to prove that another male is not as masculine as they are and therefore should be regarded as such. Peter (gay) stated:

"This one day there was this person who wrote on the notice board that this other guy is dating another guy and that day I went to that person's room and said can you please come out and see what is happening on the notice board and then he went out and saw the notice boards and everything about him was written there and by doing this I was trying to be on his side and say let me just feel the anger with him."

Also linked to the point on the use of notice boards to exert homophobia on LGB students is the use of hallways to undermine and violate LGB students' rights. Some participants for instance shared with me how the hallways were being used by homophobic students to show disdain for same-sex issues. Sipho (gay) stated:

" There are guys I don't ever talk to, we just pass each other in the passage and we don't talk at all because they find out I'm gay, so they talk to each other when I pass. They don't even greet me because I'm gay. So there are some of them who we don't communicate with and

there are others who we actually communicate with and converse with but they don't pass remarks. They just walk past and act like I don't exist."

Young (2004) suggests that people use cultural imperialism to suppress other people in the belief that everyone should follow their culture. This type of homophobic behaviour often seeks to silence LGB students in campus residences and usually promotes the notion that a homosexual identity is actually wrong and sinful. Other studies also demonstrate the silencing of LGB individuals. For instance, Evans and Broido (2002) state that lesbian and bisexual women in their study often felt the residence halls to be homophobic when students past remarks and did not speak to them due to their identity.

Another issue that emerged through the study was how some of the residences were described as 'gay dens', because gay people live there, in an effort to undermine same-sex desire and exclude LGB students from certain residences. All students, even those who are closeted, suggested that they were afraid to enter the residence labelled the "love den" due to this name being related to the fact that there are a lot of gay males living in these residences. For instance, the citations below were noted by students in the interviews.

"If you go in the love den, then you are gay especially in the night. You mustn't visit the love den in the night because it will mean you are gay and going to sleep with a guy there." (Desmond)

"Well you know these homophobic students they call our residence the 'love den' because there are a few gay guys here. Other students in the residences sometimes are afraid to speak to us because they don't want anyone to think they are gay. Even my straight friends they don't visit me here because they are afraid that they will be called gay." (Joseph)

"I don't know whether you can call this homophobic but there is one residence on campus that they (residence students) say all the gay people live in so they now calling it the 'love den'. It's irritating because they shouldn't be doing that. I mean like you find some people laughing at the residence because they think that it is funny to be gay. It makes us look like a joke or something." (Sihle)

From the above citations, it is clear that space was used quite instrumentally to limit LGB students' movements and to also label them. LGB students in residences which were labelled often felt powerless and felt that they had to accept the homophobic students in residences.

To keep away from confrontation LGB students on residences accept that the homophobic heterosexual students have more power in residences than the minority of LGB students who are accommodated in residences. Space served to regulate people's movements and it was also used to limit interaction of students considered 'straight' and those considered LGB. The idea of the regulation of space is not something new. Taulke-Johnson (2010), writing from the UK context, found that "male flatmates exaggerated heterosexual masculinity, as articulated both physically, through behaviours coded as hegemonically masculine, and verbally, through expressions of anti-gay attitudes and utilisation of fag discourse" (p. 413). They also reinforced the heterosexual matrix through assertion and thus contributed to the construction of these environments as straight.

All of the above demonstrate that the residences are homophobic spaces. Another important issue emerged from the study reporting these issues. Clearly, all of the LGB students interviewed suggested that they did not report homophobic incidents which they faced in residences. All the participants suggested that residence assistants demonstrated ongoing support towards LGB students on residence; however, they suggested that the other housing staff were unsupportive and did not show much interest in their lives. LGB students interviewed therefore felt that they could not report issues relating to homophobia. Note for instance, the various comments by students.

"Resident assistances are quite supportive. Those people quite understand. If you and complain to the resident assistant they'd be like what can we do about it. That's what I love about them they are very supportive. You will find them fighting for you..."
(Sihle)

"I wouldn't report it. Who will I report it to and what are they gonna do? Does people don't do anything. They don't care. Okay, maybe if you complain in a residence meeting they'd entertain if. That's the RA's but the other housing staff they don't care. If you complain to them and say this is what students are doing to me, they won't care. So there's no point." (Sipho)

"The housing staff doesn't know about it. We don't tell anyone about it. They might not protect us. Another issue is that if you report an issue you, at the end of the day you will feel like a stupid. Like why did I report it? They don't attend to our problems. You can see they don't even have something representing us (LGB students) in their programmes. Just one thing that says we are diverse in campus residences and that

there are different people who choose different sexualities and that students in residences must treat everyone with respect. Nothing at all.”(Nonhlanhla)

Clearly, RA's are supportive, however other housing staffs have no interest in the homophobic practices of residence students and the experiences of LGB students in residences. RA's have the potential to be guiding influences on the way in which LGB students are supported. Some of the residence assistants were supportive in this study. Housing staff on the other hand, are not supportive and do not show interest in the lives and experiences of LGB students in the residences. Clear, LGB students interviewed felt that they were not welcome to speak about the issues they faced in residences.

It is clear from the above discussion that the processes of normalising homophobia require the use of mob power and violence, often as a means to silence LGB students while entrenching heteronormativity and patriarchy. Alongside this violence is the instrumental colonisation and use of certain spaces, which ensures that heterosexuality is entrenched.

4.1.3. Resistance and support

It is undoubtedly important to note that students do experience homophobia on residences. However, while this may be important it is also imperative we also acknowledge that the experiences of homophobia in residences are not always as bad as I have already highlighted above. Students have expressed that they are comfortable in residences and have been able to resist the homophobia which they experience. Students also suggested that not all students are homophobic. Many students related stories of how heterosexual students in residences which they have been allocated to often contest anti-gay notions by homophobic students. These confrontations against anti-gay notions were done within meetings and in instances where heterosexual students were in the presence of students who were being victimised by other students. This demonstrates that there was a direct resistance to homophobic practices by some heterosexual students. This kind of anti-homophobic activism by students shows that higher education residences are not all that bad and there is a shift from anti-gay behaviour to a free and comfortable environment with students who are tolerant and acceptant of non-normative sexualities. Note, for instance, many students' indications of their experience of the resistance by heterosexual students towards anti-homophobic sentiments:

“At one stage there was a meeting and this guy walked in and he was like can I make a statement (and the meeting was about something else) and he said here at residence

we have straight guys, we have gay guys, we have different types of people so can we treat everyone with respect. I'm tired of people doing something bad to the next person. It was a shock...you know...we were like where did that come from..."
(Joseph)

"One day my friend was walking with me but she is not lesbian and we were walking from the residence and these people were looking at us like we were a couple and then one of them said something. My friend doesn't take nonsense. She stood there in front of that girl and she screamed at her 'what did you say, you talking to me'. She told them that they mustn't talk about LGB people and we are not in the farms and that this is a university. They didn't talk back cause they were afraid of her."
(Elizabeth)

This indicates that groups of students who resist anti-gay sentiments and homophobic practices are in the position to assist in immobilising homophobic practices and cultures of students in residences. It also suggests that even though institutional policies are not able to assist in dismantling established homophobic cultures, networks of students may be able to do so. This is evidenced above in that a heterosexual male student was able to stand up to a group of students in the residence against homophobic behaviour of his fellow students. This demonstrates support towards LGB students in residences and resistance to homophobic practices in residences.

Another important issue evident in the findings was the ways in which LGB students coped with the homophobia they experienced. The negotiation of identities by LGB students living in residences often meant the use of "coming out of the closet" in. This was done to prevent LGB students from being victimised by students in residences because they are already aware of their sexuality. Note some of the responses from students:

"I do not entertain it (homophobia) ever and I think it has worked for me for 4 years.... You know when you have a hole in your clothing like somewhere somebody will laugh at it and you like, guys look I have a hole in my clothing. People will laugh at it at that time and it's gone. Nobody will come back and say haaa you have a hole in your clothing. Because you'll be like I just told you I have a hole in my clothing. So then when a guy tells me you are gay and all that I'm like yeah so...for them it's like oh damn he's okay with it..." (Joseph)

“I think it’s a matter of putting yourself in someone else’s shoes. I mean you know when you are a size 7 and your friend is a size 6 and you have to use her shoes the whole day. You will walk in that shoes but it will be so painful. You will be putting yourself though so much of pain. That’s how I view it. It’s painful and it hurts a person to do that so it better to tell the truth then lying to people. Also I think that this is my life what I do is not up to other people. Like I told you I have never denied my sexuality. Other people were in denial. They didn’t want me to be like this. They didn’t want me to be lesbian.” (Cynthia)

Additionally, other students shared their identities through clothing actions and mannerisms. This was a way in which they resisted and stood up against the deeply embedded homophobic cultures of the institution. The use of openly feminine and masculine dress, actions and mannerisms was a successful technique which students used to deter homophobic residence students from outrageous homophobic practices towards them. For instance students noted:

“I guess it’s the way I dress and the way I act. I guess that is how people identify me and the way I show my identity. My dressing and behaviour is different.” (Elizabeth, lesbian)

“When I’m going with my girlfriend they can see that I’m lesbian because we always kissing and playing and stuff.” (Nonhlanhla, lesbian)

“My boyfriend and I we kiss in public and we hold hands in the passage. We stay together sometimes. So they know that we are gay.”

“I don’t know if everyone in the residences knows but my girlfriend stays with me and my LGB friends always come to my room in residences.” (Bongeka)

This clearly suggests that while there remains certain homophobic cultures on campus residences, students have found tactful techniques in which to repel homophobia. This also helped interviewed students to claim their sexual identity in the university residences and have the freedom to fully explore their sexuality. However, even though students demonstrated clearly that these strategies were successful and re-affirmed their sexuality, there were also some negativity which emanated with this. Evidently, because of their openness through their mannerisms, students continued to experience homophobia, therefore the technique of changing dress, actions and mannerism also openly invited homophobic

students to victimise students. Nonetheless, students' ways of negotiate their identities demonstrate the courage they have in contexts that are repressive.

As I have discussed in chapter one, residential spaces are often perceived as 'homes away from home' (Ardnt & Bruin, 2006) mainly because higher education residences are perceived as liberal and safe spaces. Residences are also perceived to have a sense of comfort which they supposedly offer to students. It is clear from this study that higher education residences are not as safe and liberal as perceived in society. This is due to the daily experiences of homophobia which students experience while living in residences and the high levels of victimisation that students face on a daily basis (see Palmer, 1996). Although many students in the residences indicated that they explicitly experienced homophobia it was also notably surprising that LGB students interviewed also indicated the overwhelming positive emotions they had about living in residences. As highlighted earlier, LGB students often suggested that they felt happy that they stay in the residences. All the ten participants in the study viewed residences in a very positive light. This was related to the freedom that they were offered in residences and also because they were able to explore their LGB sexuality. Note for instance the responses from the participants:

"Actually I love residence it's like my escape place away from home....away from my family....a place where I can get freedom to be who I am. It's not necessarily Ironwood (student residence); it's the matter of not being at home that's why I love it so much" (Joseph)

"...I'm more comfortable here than I am at home" (Cynthia)

"My home is far away but I wanted to stay at res because I wanted my freedom and to be independent from my family" (Nonhlanhla)

"Well I think when I was at home there was not a lot of freedom. I thinkwhen a person comes to university...it's about freedom and finding out who you are" (Desmond)

From the above responses it is visible that student felt comfortable in residences and that they view residences in a positive way. Students also felt that residence life was affirming to their LGB identity or sexuality in that they were able to do things in the residences that they were not able to do at home. This suggests therefore that the freedom that the students spoke about

was misguided but rather, they see the residences as a better space than they would have been at home.

4.1.4. Shaping teachers' identities

Nine of the ten students interviewed suggested that their experiences of homophobia in residences have shaped their identities as teachers because they are now more understanding and agentic. They suggested that they are aware of the homophobia that LGB people face and they have become more caring and kind. The participants saw a close connection between their future identities as teachers and their same-sex identities. They noted:

“Even though they don't do things to me directly because they don't know that I am gay. I regard myself as a teacher and so I say let me just ignore them.” (Desmond, gay)

“When I experienced homophobia on residences, I think to myself I'm here to receive and education. So this is what I will also do in schools. I go to work so if I experience homophobia there I will do the same thing, I will ignore it or if I need to stand up for myself I will and I will stand tall like I do here. I will teach my learners to stand tall too.” (Joseph, gay)

“I believe that what is right is right and what is wrong is wrong. That's how I operate. It's about keeping your head up and knowing that you are a teacher which means that you are educated and you don't need to be afraid to show people who you really are. I will always make sure that my learners know this.” (Cynthia, butch).

“I'm really the kind of person who talks to everyone, and I appreciate people, especially the people who accept me. But it hurts me that they don't want to talk to me. I feel hurt but I'm developing this new attitude where I don't care about people and what they think about my sexual orientation. Well I'm trying to change.” (Sipho, gay)

“Well I only talk to people who I am close to, I don't talk to everyone. There is no need to talk to people who don't accept you. I'm a teacher I'm an educated women, that's what I am a women, and I don't need people who do not accept me. I think that in schools to we have a lot of learners and they are also gay and they are different from each other and this is something that I will teach them to because when you

allow people who do not accept you for who you are you tell them to hurt you. You teach them how you want to be treated.” (Bongeka, bisexual)

The above responses suggest the students are clearly conscious of their identities as teachers and that their identities have made them more sensitive to learners who may be LGB. This suggests that LGB students’ experiences of homophobia impacted their future identities profoundly, particularly in the ways they hoped to support their learners in future. Many spoke about the care they should exhibit as teachers, and that they have accepted everyone. Their experience seems to also suggest that they have also learnt how to deal with the homophobia they have experienced and which they may experience as teachers. While it may appear that the LGB students have a positive outlook towards same-sex issues and their future practice as teachers, it was concerning to observe that many remained closeted, not out of choice but due to the social pressure. This suggests that many of these students will remain closeted as teachers. This is concerning as this will deprive many LGB and ‘straight’ students an opportunity to obtain a richer education. Finally, on this point, it is very concerning that so many of the ‘straight’ students, who one day will also be teaching, were found to be homophobic. Unless there are serious interventions in the course of their studies, such students will proceed to become homophobic teachers. What is promising though is that some of the ‘straight’ students are allies, and are able to challenge homophobia.

4.1.5. Conclusion

It is clear that although higher education is a space in which students are perceived to have the freedom to express themselves, this is not entirely the case. Heterosexualising residences through the policing of sexuality as highlighted in these findings is a major concern. The data presented here suggests that homophobia in higher education residences is rife and requires some serious interventions. Students were found to be abused linguistically and physically. It was also found that spaces were colonised in the residences to deter LGB students from claiming their identities. What this suggests that South African higher education residential spaces need urgent interventions. It is promising though that student resist against homophobia. In the next chapter I will provide a discussion on these findings and provide some recommendations for intervention.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter the analysis of findings was presented. In this chapter, I provide a summary of the key findings, with the aim of showing how this study has responded to the main research questions. I discuss the findings of my study by relating these to the critical questions, literature and theoretical framework. I then provide recommendations and suggest areas for further future research.

The intention of my study was to explore how gay, lesbian and bisexual students staying in the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences experience homophobia. The focus of my study was directed by the four critical research questions.

These questions are:

- 1. What are the experiences of homophobia that lesbian, gay and bisexual students staying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences encounter?*
- 2. How do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in contexts which maybe repressive?*
- 3. Why do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in the ways they do?*
- 4. How do the experiences of homophobia by lesbian, gay and bisexual students relate to these students' identities as student teachers?*

5.1.1. Discussion of findings

There were essentially four questions that this study sought to answer. These research questions were motivated by my interest in wanting to understand how lesbian, gay and bisexual students in the residences of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus experience homophobia. Below I show how each research question was addressed by the findings in the previous chapter.

Research Question 1: What are the experiences of homophobia that lesbian, gay and bisexual students staying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences encounter?

The findings suggest that there was homophobia present in the residences of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus. It became clear from the responses of participants that homophobia in the residence was rife. There was a strong sense that the residences were unsafe. Often students experienced homophobia on a daily basis. The homophobic practices were exerted through both physical and verbal oppression enacted by homophobic students in the residences. The experiences of homophobia included verbal harassment, physical violence, silencing of LGB students through colonisation of certain spaces, outing LGB students through notice boards, discrimination and physical violence. Students often characterised these experiences as hurtful and painful.

Graziano's (2004) study focusing on the coming out experiences of lesbian and gay students at one South African university, also confirms the presence of homophobic violence in the residences, although the study was not focused explicitly on residences. Gay students in this study stated that they no longer lived in the residences because of their encounters with homophobic students in the residences (Graziano, 2004). Similarly, studies in the US and UK have also found that residences are homophobic spaces and do not possess the kind of liberated space for the freedom to express one's non-normative sexual identity freely (Evans & Broido, 1999, Evans & Broido, 2002; Taulke-Johnson, 2010). The study by Evans and Broido (1999) found that the residence halls were hostile environments. Many lesbian and bisexual women in the study suggested that they felt this way due to being called derogatory names and seeing posters related to LGBT networks being torn down (1999). Taulke-Johnson (2010) study found that students had negative experiences in the residence halls as some students sprayed shaving foam and spray paint outside the doorway and windows of gay students. The same study found that students made derogatory jokes about gay males in the residences (Taulke-Johnson, 2010). Evans and Broido's (2002) study on bisexual and lesbian women reported similar findings when they have heard comments such as all 'queers should be shot' in their residences halls.

This study found that spaces in the residences were often colonised by homophobic students. One of the key findings suggested the colonisation of homophobic spaces in the residences such as the open spaces these were – in front of residential buildings, buses which transport

off-campus residence students and even within residential buildings – such as the bathrooms, notice boards and students’ rooms. These spaces were used by violent and homophobic students to create a culture of fear, exclusion and regulation of the LGB students’ sexualities. All the LGB students interviewed referred to ‘The Parliament’ which is a space located outside a male residence where a group of male students sit and pass judgements and discussions to and on students walking past. Several students in the study indicated that this was the most homophobic space in the residences. Students were often stopped and bombarded with derogatory names and uncomfortable questions on their sexualities. It was clear in the findings that ‘The Parliament’ is used by students as a way to correct and police LGB students. The study also found that the buses used to transport students were used by homophobic students to oppress LGB students. These strategies were also used to render LGB students invisible. The study further found that colonisation occurred within the actual residential buildings. One participant in the study, responding to a question as to whether he had heard of incidences of homophobia enacted towards other LGB students, stated that there had been an incident in which a student was physically removed by his heterosexual male roommates, leaving him and his clothes in the hallway of one of the residences off-campus. Notice boards were also used by residence students to out LGB students living in the residences. Many students had negative experiences when using the bathrooms in the residences. This was mostly related to the fact that some heterosexual students were fearful of using the same bathrooms as gay males and lesbian women because of the misconception that all LGB students are attracted to all people of the same-sex. The study found that some LGB students are often powerless in certain residential spaces due to the violence that is often directed at them. It was clear that the colonisation of residential spaces was actually used to silence LGB identities while entrenching heteronormativity and patriarchy which gave homophobic students power to act.

It was clear that the Five Faces of Oppression were present in the experiences of the students researched. Violence was the most pervasive form of oppression in residences; with marginalisation also dominant. For instance the colonisation of certain social spaces can be related to marginalisation and violence. Students were violently treated in social spaces and were considered outsiders. According to Young’s theory, marginalisation occurs when students are made to feel inferior and othered. In this study it was clear that students were made to feel othered and were discriminated against. They often had no power to defend themselves against homophobic students’ stereotypical views and the insensitive comments

which were directed towards them. It is clear from the evidence presented that oppression is pervasive in the residences as all LGB students in the study highlighted various incidents in which they had experienced some form of homophobia, whether they were openly LGB or closeted.

The above findings represent the responses of students in relation to their experiences of homophobia in residences of the University of KwaZulu-Natal Edgewood campus. I will now explore how students negotiate these experiences in the residences.

Research Question 2: How do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in contexts which maybe repressive?

Clearly, there students who were interviewed experienced homophobia on a daily basis and space was used quite instrumentally. Many students suggested that these experiences were often hurtful and painful. However, students frequently negotiated their homophobic experiences by internalisation of the homophobia they experiences. Such homophobia occurred through excusing, avoiding and tolerating the homophobic actions of homophobic students, while interestingly students also demonstrated agency and resistance.

Students often excused the homophobic actions by suggesting that ‘it’s not bad’, ‘that’s not really homophobia’ and that ‘it depends on how you define homophobia’. At times students also excused these notions by suggesting that the homophobia was done in a state of drunkenness. In five of the ten interviews conducted students stated that the reason that they were able to excuse the students when they were drunk and portrayed homophobic behaviour was because the same students would not do it during the day when they are not intoxicated or drunk. What was intriguing was that even the most overt and violent forms of homophobia such as assault and dehumanisation was excused. Often students avoided walking past ‘The Parliament’ given the severe victimisation they experienced. LGB students interviewed also suggested that they go into more ‘gay friendly’ residences where they could have the protection of other LGB students. LGB students’ responses often suggested that they tolerated derogatory name calling. This was disturbing to me given the fact that many of the discussions and examples cited by the students suggested a dangerously uncomfortable and distressing environment for LGB students in the residences. This is what Young (1990) refers to as internalised subordination, the marginalisation of oneself. She states that subordinate groups collude with their own oppressive environments by accepting the dominant group’s

ideology about their group and accepting a negative definition of themselves, even though this is hurtful and limiting to their growth. For instance, the LGB students in this study internalised the oppression they experienced by avoiding, excusing and tolerating these homophobic practices making it difficult for them to move freely in the residences.

While it is important to acknowledge the homophobia experienced by students it is also important to acknowledge that students found ways to resist homophobia and that some 'straight' students stood up in public spaces against homophobic practices. Some of the strategies used to negotiate one's sexuality in the residences were outwardly declaring one's identity, public displays of affection towards one's partner and the use of dress, mannerisms and actions as a way of demonstrating their sexuality.

Evans and Broido's (2002) study in the residences found that students use different mannerisms (i.e. dress, rainbow badges and so) to disclose their identities in residence halls. This was also an important finding in this study. What was interesting in this study was that students interviewed mainly displayed affection in public, which is sometimes not common in South Africa. For example, some heterosexual students showed their resistance by the use of their anti-homophobic sentiments in open spaces where homophobic students were present. This suggests that there is a shift in the higher education residences. Although there may not be institutional policies available to motivate an anti-homophobia programme in the residences, individual actions by students assists in dismantling the establishment of the homophobic culture present in the institution. As Williams (2008) argues, being victimized by homophobic students does not have to mean that LGB students are powerless victims who lack any capacity for resistance and self-assuredness.

In sum, this study found there to be a lot of homophobia in the residences, but this homophobia was restricted and negotiated by students in complex ways. I will now explore the reasons why students use these different strategies to negotiate their sexualities.

Research Question 3: Why do lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus residences negotiate their sexual identities in the ways they do?

Students often indicated that they felt safe in the residences. Of the ten students interviewed two students viewed residences as unsafe spaces. This demonstrates an ingrained culture of homophobia which was normalised. This was often premised on internalised homophobia and

guilt for being LGB. Clearly, from the responses of students interviewed they were on the receiving end of homophobia, however, the homophobia had become so ingrained in the culture of the institution that the students saw it as trivial and often excusable. Students also felt that residences afforded them the freedom to explore their sexualities without their family and community gaze. Often homophobic students claimed control of women's sexualities by policing what they wear and how they should look. The outward expression of sexuality prevented students from being victimised in the future. Dress, actions and mannerisms often demonstrated visibility and outwardness. Although strategies used do serve to re-affirm the LGB students' identities, students in this study do this to reclaim and resist homophobia. This says much about their bravery in the South African context.

In relation to the similarities, Ardnt and Bruin's (2006) study in university campuses found that students' endorsement of negative beliefs about same-sex sexualities demonstrates a general belief in traditional gender roles. Ngcobo's (2007) study at Zululand University also suggests pretending to identify with the mainstream culture is less traumatic to LGB students in university environments. This was also present in Tati's (2009) study in the Western Cape province of South Africa where she found that some heterosexual students position themselves as 'non-prejudiced yet prejudiced' with sentiments of how they have many LGB friends or associate with LGB students.

Young's theory on the Five Faces of Oppression suggests this type of oppression presented above is represented through powerlessness; students were powerless towards the uniform expectations of heterosexual students. According to Young's theory the powerless lack the authority to exert the power that dominant groups have. Having said this, it was clear too that students' sexual identities were policed and regulated in residences. For example, students' excusing of the homophobic practices often demonstrated that they were used to these practices and it therefore became internalised. As Nel and Judge (2008) argue, both heterosexual and LGB individuals internalise homophobic stereotypes and sentiments causing harm to the fluidity of the LGB sexuality.

The above findings represent the responses of students in relation to why they use the strategies they do to negotiate their sexualities in this repressive contexts. I will now explore how the experiences of homophobia encountered by students shape their identities as student teachers.

Research Question 4: How do the experiences of homophobia by lesbian, gay and bisexual students relate to these students' identities as student teachers?

The findings of the study suggest that the experiences of homophobia made students more understanding and agentic as student teachers. Students were aware of the homophobia they experienced and they became more kind and considerate, they were more conscious about learners who may be LGB in the future and the type of care they should exhibit in the future. Students interviewed saw a close connection between their future identities as teachers and their LGB identities. Clearly, interviewed students were impacted by the homophobia they had experienced and they are now able and willing to enshrine the diversity which is present in the constitution of South Africa.

5.1.2. Implications for policy

It is clear that homophobia is rife in the residences, and that it often goes unreported and unpunished, often even tolerated and normalised. I therefore propose that the university where this research took place as well as other universities in South Africa explicitly spell out the protections of LGB students in their policy documents, such as the rules and regulations of the residence. These rules should also be utilised by residence assistants in promoting a more liberal and diverse environment for students. The university needs to start promoting and sustaining policies in which students receive equality. There needs to be awareness of these policies so that all students are aware of the diversity promoted within the campus environment and how the use of any form of exploitation, victimization, or violence on university campus will be severely dealt with. This will also ensure their safety and assure students the opportunity to learn in a conducive and non-threatening environment.

5.1.3. Implications for practice

In terms of practice, I believe we need to separate out practice in relation to what the universities should do to act against homophobia in the residences generally and what universities should do given the future teacher identities of the participants that have participated in this study. There needs to be stronger involvement of university accommodation staff in not only the lives of LGB individuals but also in the lives of all students. I believe that accommodation staff such as the residence assistants, maintenance and allocation staff need to become more pro-actively involved in the lives of students by receiving training to enable them to be better equipped and able to deal with homophobia and

other forms of oppression in both a professional and personal capacity. With this extensive training, accommodation staff will be able not only to deal with problems which arise in relation to homophobia but also to assist in changing the hearts and minds of students who possess homophobic attitudes.

In light of this there should also be a place to which all students are able to go to when they are in need of support. In principle this is the job of the residence assistant. Their role needs to incorporate pastoral care duties, which will ensure that all students are able to have support when need arises.

The notice boards need to be covered in with glass so that only important information is presented on them. The notice boards can also be used to also paste information posters on support networks available for students who need support in residences. Social spaces such as buses and other open spaces (such as 'The Parliament') need to have security in case of victimization when students walk past. Security at campus need to also be able to stop this type of victimization, and trained in assisting students who are been victimized or harassed on residential spaces. Security also needs to be more pro-active in their involvement when students approach them if and when they encounter a problem. There must be something done to help the LGB students within 48 hours of the incident or homophobic attack.

5.1.4. Implications for future research

In terms of research, this was a small study focussed on how LGB students living in residences of one higher education residence experience homophobia. I propose that there must be more research done in relation to residences and how students experience residence life. Most students who are living on residences are directly out of high school and have very little knowledge on the diversity the world as to offer.

We need to focus and address issues faced by minority groups such as LGB individuals' experiences on residences to address problems and create more welcoming environments. The different types of campus climates and settings of universities must be researched in great depth. More research will enable us to be more pro-active approach in developing policies, programs and strategies for higher education residences.

5.1.5. Limitations of the study

Limitations exist in designing and conducting research. One of the most inherent limitations was seeking depth in the research instead of breadth, as is usually associated with qualitative research. Although qualitative research provides richness in understanding the subjective experiences of participants, these experiences cannot be generalised beyond the experiences of the LGB students interviewed. The sampling size was small and therefore concentrated on obtaining rich data rather than a representative subject pool. The experiences represented in this thesis are therefore only that of the ten LGB students interviewed and maybe different to other LGB students in residences.

Despite the above mentioned limitations associated with the current study, it also was characterized by numerous strengths. Specifically, the use of both critical conversations and purposive sampling captured the gay, lesbian and bisexual students' lived experiences, resulting in a wealth of rich information. The open-ended conversations allowed for an in-depth exploration of events the participants could vividly recall and which seemingly had a significant impact on them. The opportunity that I had to reconnect with several of the participants to discuss the appropriateness of my interpretations of their experiences further added to the trustworthiness of the results obtained. Recruiting gay, lesbian and bisexual students from different stages of their academic career (i.e. undergraduates from their 1st to 4th year of study) as well as persons who were not open about their sexual orientation added more to the trustworthiness of the study.

Finally, as a heterosexual Indian female, this is truly a cross-cultural research endeavour. "As is the case in any cross-cultural research, the biases, known and unknown, of the researcher may also have an effect on the entire conceptualization of this study, what participants experienced, how they responded, and how results were interpreted" (Rubin & Rubin, 2011, p.25). It is possible that a gay, lesbian or bisexual researcher might have conceptualized this study differently, have focused on different questions, interpreted the findings differently, and elicited different participants and responses.

5.1.6. Conclusion

In this dissertation, I sought to explore the experiences of homophobia by LGB students staying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus residences. I also explored the strategies LGB students interviewed used to negotiate their sexualities and why they used

these strategies. I further explored the impact that LGB students' experiences of homophobia have on their lives has student teachers. I have provided findings which suggest that homophobia in the student residences is rife, with students experiencing homophobia on a daily basis. However, given the ingrained culture and internalisation of homophobia present in the residences, students often used strategies such as excusing, tolerating and avoiding homophobic actions. While, the internalisation of homophobia has been noted in the findings, I also found that students demonstrated agentic qualities and resistance to homophobic actions. I also showcased how straight students stood up against homophobic actions of homophobic students in public spaces. Although this demonstrates a shift in the higher education residences, I suggested that more pro-active interventions must be adopted by higher education residence staff to curb the daily experiences of homophobia in the residences.

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Appendix A: Participants consent forms

Dear Participant

I am an M.Ed student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal; I would like to thank you for volunteering to participate in this study. This form outlines the intention of the study, and provides a description of your involvement and your rights as a participant.

Contact details

Descriptions	Name and Surname	Contact Number	Email address
Researcher	Miss Valenshia Jagessar	073 417 2813	208525491@stu.ukzn.ac.za
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The purpose of this study is to explore how gay, lesbian and bisexual students staying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, Residences experience homophobia. The study is part of the requirements for the thesis portion of the Master of Education degree at the University of the KwaZulu-Natal.

Procedures

If you decide to participate in this study, I will ask you to spend some time with me discussing your experiences of homophobia as a gay, lesbian or bisexual student residing at the Edgewood Campus residences. You will be requested to participate in two or three interviews lasting for approximately one to two hours each. The first interview will be to get

you comfortable, as this is a sensitive topic, by introducing the subject and my own position as a researcher. The second will be a semi-structured interview to answer my research questions and third interview will be to get more feedback and to allow you to read whether the transcriptions represent your utterances during the interview process. With the interviews will take place in a place where you feel most comfortable, and will occur at a time determined by yourself in consultation with me. This is to ensure that you are not inconvenienced in any way. These interviews will be tape-recorded for analysis purposes. You will be asked to give consent to this recording. In order to fully protect your identity, I will use pseudonyms in my transcripts and data dissemination processes. All information you give during the interview process will therefore remain anonymous and confidential. You are also free to withdraw at any stage of the research process if you feel uncomfortable. There will be no financial incentives for participating in the study; what is important however is that you will have an opportunity to share your experiences with a caring, supportive individual. The findings of the study will be sent to you via email, should you wish to read them.

-----**To be returned to the researcher**-----

Statement of Consent:

I am above 18 years of age. I have read the above information, and my questions about the research process have been sufficiently addressed. I consent /do not consent (please circle appropriate) to take part in the study. I also consent /do not consent (please circle appropriate) to the discussion being tape recorded.

Participants signature _____ Date _____

Participants name (printed) _____

Appendix B: Pre-interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself: who are you, where are you from, how old are you, what type of family do you come from etc.
2. How is your relationship with your family?
3. How many siblings do you have? What is the nature of your relationship?
4. Do you have any other family members who are gay, lesbian or bisexual?
5. How do you sexually identify yourself and why? When did you come to terms with your interest in the same sex?
6. Did you make any adjustments to your lifestyle after coming to terms with your sexuality?
7. Who have you told about your sexuality? What was their reaction?
8. Have you come out? Do you intend to come out and what are your views on coming out?
9. What have been your experiences of homophobia in your community?
10. Do you think the experiences are worse when you've come out?

Appendix C: Second interview schedule

1. When did you arrive at Edgewood, what year or level of study are you in, and what have been your general impressions about the institution?
2. Have you experienced any homophobia during lectures?
3. What prompted you to move into residence and why did you move in?
4. How has your life changed since moving into the residence? What was life like for you before you can move into residence?
5. How has your sexuality orientation changed your life as a residence student?
6. How do students in general react to your sexual identity at res?
7. How do you deal with homophobic sentiment from other students?
8. Where do you get support from while living on residence?
9. What are your roommates (if any) attitudes towards your sexuality?
10. Have you personally experienced homophobia on campus residences, tell me about this incident?
11. Do you know of friends who have experienced homophobia on campus residence? Can you share what your friends have told you?
12. How do you negotiate your sexual identity on residence?
13. Who are you friends on campus residence?
14. What are your experiences with your gay, lesbian and bisexual friends and heterosexual friends?
15. How do students at different levels of study t(1st – 4th year) living on residence treat you? Do they know your sexual orientation?
16. Are there differences in the way supposedly heterosexual males and females treat you? If yes, what are the differences?
17. How do other gay, lesbian or bisexual students on residences treat you?
18. How do students at residence of different ages treat you?
19. How do students at residence of different racial groups treat you?
20. How do religious views of students impact the attitudes towards your sexuality?
21. How would you describe the university residence environment as a gay, lesbian or bisexual student? Please comment on your relationship with fellow residence students and the accommodation staff.
22. Are there any support networks that are available on campus residence? if any are they beneficial to you and your needs.

23. How has the university accommodation officers/services responded to your needs as a gay lesbian or bisexual student?
24. Are any of your residence assistants or accommodation officers gay, lesbian or bisexual and how does this impact on students' attitudes towards you?
25. Do you report instances of homophobia in the residences?
26. Are residence assistance accommodating towards you if you encounter a homophobic related problem on residence?
27. How do you feel about the accommodation officers and residence assistance with regard to their attitude towards your sexuality?
28. Is there anything that can be done to minimize sexual discrimination (if any) on campus residences?
29. What are your views about your sexuality being un-African? Does this impact attitude towards you?
30. Do you feel that concealing ones identity is better than coming out on residence?
31. Any other issue, which you would like to raise in relation to your sexuality and your experiences in the residence?

Appendix D: Letter of approval from registrar



21 November 2013

Miss Valenshia Jagessar
School of Education
College of Humanities
Edgewood Campus
UKZN
Email: 208525491@stu.ukzn.ac.za

Dear Miss Jagessar

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Gatekeeper's permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal towards your postgraduate studies, provided Ethical clearance has been obtained. We note the title of your research project is:

"An exploration of how gay, lesbian and bisexual students staying in the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus residences experience homophobia".

It is noted that you will be constituting your sample by randomly interviewing students from Edgewood Campus residences.

Data collected must be treated with due confidentiality and anonymity.

Yours sincerely



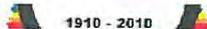
Professor J J Meyerowitz
REGISTRAR

Office of the Registrar

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Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

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Appendix E: Approval from Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics Committee

