AN EXPLORATION OF LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES TO RACE WITH SPECIFIC FOCUS ON THE ROLE OF ON-CAMPUS INTERACTIONS AND EXPERIENCES IN SOUTH AFRICA

TAKUDZWA THOMAS TSIKAI

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Supervisor: Shaida Bobat

Co-supervisor: Shanya Reuben

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work, and that I have acknowledged all results and quotations from the published or unpublished work of other people. This thesis is being submitted for the degree of Master of Social Science (Industrial Psychology) in the Faculty of Humanities, School of Applied Human Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other university.

Signature: _____

Takudzwa Thomas Tsikai (216074051)

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore learners' perceptions and attitudes to race with specific focus on the role of on-campus interactions and experiences in South Africa. A review of the literature highlights the 'troubling nature' of race in South Africa as suggested by Durrheim (2017). This is explored in relation to the wider South African context and then narrowed down to the higher learning system. This research is centred upon social constructionism which informed the utilisation of qualitative analysis as the most suitable research design. An exploration of the narratives of learners in higher education was engaged through semi-structured in-depth interviews that were conducted in August 2017. An equal representation of the four main racial groups in South Africa as reflected in South African Census Statistical Release (2011): Black, White, Indian and Coloured were interviewed.

The learners' hesitance towards open engagements on race was unearthed, despite a majority consensus on the significance of such discussions towards transformative efforts within an institution of higher learning that is regarded as a site of transformation in post-Apartheid South Africa. Such hesitance underscores Durrheim, Greener and Whitehead's (2015) notion of 'race trouble' as the authors argue on how race continues to dictate over peoples' actions, utterances and ways of living in South Africa despite the abolishment of apartheid legislature. The key influencers to the learners' interactional patterns are examined in relation to their constructions of race, their experiences as students ascribed to their respective racial groupings and also as an overall understanding of the institutional racial climate.

It was also established that desegregation does not guarantee a change in attitudinal change as understood by Meier and Hartell (2009). The learners reflected inclinations towards the maintenance of interactions within their specific racial groups, and displayed prejudicial predispositions towards the learners of other races, despite their efforts in trying not to overtly depict them. Various barriers to access in education were explored from a non-black perspective, where issues of perceived marginalisation and hostility were discussed in understanding the overall racial climate within the university setting.

Keywords: race, learners, race trouble, social constructionism, prejudice, transformation, identity, language

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Considering the transition of the South African society from the apartheid era, where segregation and prejudice where formalised, to the current post-apartheid era characterised by the legislative abolishment of apartheid-era mechanisms of racial inequality (Higham, 2012), it is equally important to understand learners' perceptions and attitudes to race, considering that the university setting is regarded as a site for social transformation by the South African government as suggested by Badat (2009). 'Race talk' has brought forth various discussions currently, laden with accusations, denials and justifications of prejudice (Augoustinos & Every 2007). Durrheim (2017) posits on how race continues to dictate over people's actions and utterances despite the abolishment of the apartheid regime. This study explores learners' perceptions and attitudes to race with a specific focus on the role played by on-campus interactions and experiences in post-apartheid South Africa. It is hoped that understanding such dynamics within a university campus will reveal some underlying inferences about race. The study also further reveals the attitudes that students have towards race which could be beneficial towards sustainable positive social transformation.

1.1 Historical Context: South African Higher Education System

Historically, the education system in South Africa was characterised by laws of segregation, where scholarship was based on race. A notable example of such laws is the Bantu Education Act (1953) which formally decoupled black school education from white provision. This exacerbated the racial gap through ensuring poor quality education for the disempowered racial groups as a measure of maintaining the status quo (Higham, 2012). Moreover, other legislations of such a nature included: The Extension of the University Act (1959) which was formulated to marginalize Blacks, Coloureds and Indians from being included in white universities (Finchilescu & Tredoux, 2010) and the Group Areas Act of 1950 which prohibited historically white universities from accepting students from other racial groups (Greyling, 2007). Henceforth; the education system was divided along racial lines during the apartheid era, characterized by mechanisms of segregation.

The abolishment of apartheid ushered in enactment and implementation of laws that demolished the barriers that had been set by the apartheid regime in the education sector. The

higher education sector specifically has provisions in the South African Constitution aimed at redressing the past disparities that were created by the apartheid regime. Provisions of the Higher Education Act No.101 of 1997 state:

"Whereas it is desirable to –

(iii) redress past discrimination and ensure representatively and equal access;

(iv) provide optimal opportunities for learning and the creation of knowledge;

(v) promote the values which underlie an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom;

(vi) respect of freedom of religion, belief and opinion;

(vii) respect and encourage democracy, academic freedom, freedom of speech and expression, creativity, scholarship and research;

(viii) pursue excellence, promote the full realisation of the potential of every student and employee, tolerance of ideas and appreciation of diversity. (Higher Education Act No.101 of 1997)"

Given such new laws, one could argue that the legal framework to enable transition along racial lines has been put in place. The education system has transformed from a system characterised by principles of segregation to a non-racial one. Race has been at the centre of transformative efforts as it was the main factor used in apartheid legislation. However, it is equally important to understand how the South African Government aims to foster social transformation through education. Therefore; the university is regarded as a site for social transformation, where tangible change is achieved through education (Higham, 2012). An exploration of the learners' attitudes and perceptions on race based on their on-campus interactions and experiences provides an understanding of the inferences that the learners have drawn on the issue of race, an understanding of the racial climate and an overview of whether transformative efforts have yielded tangible outcomes.

1.2 Constructions of Race

Hooks (1989) argues that race does not have a basis in the natural world but is regarded as an artificial distinction created by humans. The author further argues that these definitions of race have been centred upon those that are in control of production and distribution of resources. Foucault (1982) argues that race is a social construct that is laden with

mechanisms of subjection; which cannot be understood outside their relation to mechanisms of exploitation and domination. This depicts how an understanding of race is optimally derived from manoeuvres of power that are aimed at maintaining dominance and subjection that lie within political and economic interests. The author further untangles the intricate relations of power between those that have been able to provide definitions of race and those that have been categorized by such a process. Those in power provide the definitions of race and what it means to be of a specific racial group.

In South Africa, the post-apartheid government institutions, particularly Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) maintained the racial categories that were used in the apartheid era as namely: Black, Indian, Coloured and White as represented in the population censuses of 1996 and 2001 (McKinney, 2007). These categories have been adopted by this study as the student population is also categorised as such along racial identification. However, McKinney (2007) argues that due to 'race-based' social inequality that continues to exist in South Africa, it somehow limits the possibility of looking at 'race' differently. This process of categorization further exacerbates the racial divide.

However, as race is socially constructed, it has been regarded as an 'untouchable' element that is characterised by accusations, denials and justifications of prejudice. Such dynamics are characteristic of the South African society, largely based on its apartheid legacy. It is what Durrheim, Mtose and Brown (2011) named 'race trouble' as a social psychological phenomenon which submerges through a legacy of racism thereby destabilising the social order. Durrheim (2017) posited how 'race trouble' is whereby people engage ideas of racism to act in ways that are deemed not to be 'racist' in nature. Through such processes, the author argues that racism can be disseminated through anti-racism discourse. An explanation of 'race trouble' is of importance as it brings forth a recurrent phenomenon that is likely to emerge in this study.

Even though learners portray themselves in a non-racial manner this study aims at understanding their perceptions and attitudes to race. Lindsay and Norman (1977) define perception as the process which humans interpret stimuli into meanings that are compatible with their previous experiences. Therefore, the narratives of the learners' experiences to race based on their on-campus interactions bring forth inferences which can further be used to understand the overall racial climate and the racial dynamics in the country.

Considering the socio-political constructions of race in South Africa, the adoption of a social constructionist theoretical framework is pertinent. Such a framework characterizes race as lacking a basis in the natural world but rather regards it as an artificial distinction created by humans through social interaction (Hooks, 1989). This explains how students' perceptions and attitudes on race are formed as a result of their on-campus interactions. One could therefore argue that a lot could be learnt from the learners' narratives in understanding how they construct race.

According to Burr (1996) social constructionism views belief as being socially constructed. Burr (1999) posits that social constructionism engages a critical approach towards knowledge that has been previously taken for granted and places emphasis on the historical and cultural underpinnings. The author further believes that knowledge is constructed between people. This further places more emphasis on the significance of on-campus interactions in understanding the learners' perceptions of race.

1.3 Study Aim

The aim of the study was to understand how students construct race, their attitudes towards issues of race through their university experiences as well as to understand how they communicate, interpret and are inclined to act and react when presented with issues perceived to be racial in nature and lastly to explore the racial climate within a tertiary learning institution.

1.4 Research Questions

The following questions were explored:

1. How do students at university narrate their experience of race?

2. How do they understand and communicate about race?

3. What are their views on race?

4. How do they understand the implications or consequences of their views on race?

1.5 Demarcation of Chapters

This thesis is made up of five chapters in total that make up for major sections: Introduction (Chapter One), a theoretical component (Chapter Two), an empirical component (Chapter Three and Four) and a conclusion (Chapter Five). Table 1 provides a summary of the demarcations and content of each of the chapters.

Table 1

Chapter	Content
Chapter 1: Introduction	The reader is equipped with a historical understanding of the higher educational system in particular relation to race. The changes in legislation are brought forth and the resultant racial dynamics. An understanding of race is then presented as well as the possible influencers towards how learners perceive race is highlighted. An outline of the aims and the research questions in this study is then made.
Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework	A review of literature surrounding the study is made. It explains the socio-psychological phenomenon 'race trouble' and its influence on society and particularly on learners. Critical understandings of race are also made. Social Constructionism is discussed as the core paradigm in this study.
Chapter 3: Methodology	The methodology utilised in this research is outlined in relation to the research questions, research design, the method of data collection, the data analysis process and the ethical considerations.
Chapter 4: Results and Discussion	A qualitative analysis of the results derived from the study is presented and infused in a discussion guided by literature and the theoretical framework.
Chapter 5: Conclusions, Recommendations and Limitations	This chapter presents conclusions drawn from the study and a summary of the main findings. An outline of the proposed interventions that could be implemented from the findings is made. An account of the limiting factors to the study is made and possible suggestions for future research are made.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of two components which are namely: a review of literature in the context of race and race trouble in South Africa and amongst learners within the higher education system and the theoretical framework to be engaged in this study namely: Social Constructionism. An explanation of the central tenants of the approach shall be made. A discussion of these central tenants shall be betrothed in relation to the literature review. Lastly, the relevance of the utilised literature and theoretical framework to the research questions shall be delineated.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 The Historical Context of the Higher Education System in South Africa

It is important to understand the historical background of higher education in South Africa, with specific focus on racial composition. The transition has brought about changes in racial composition and it has in turn changed the campus social dynamics, specifically, on-campus interaction amongst students of different racial groupings. This study specifically aims at understanding how students perceive race, and the attitudes they have formed towards racial issues, whilst closely looking at the role of on-campus interactions in the formation of such attitudes and perceptions.

Historically, the higher education system in South Africa was guided by laws that were aimed at widening the 'racial gap' and ensuring unequal access to education amongst the different racial groups in South Africa. It is through an understanding of the 'racial gap' that one would derive meanings of race, hence it is of significance to this study as it aims at understanding learners' perceptions of race and how they have encountered it on-campus through interactions with other students of different racial groups. There are notable examples of such legislations such as The Bantu Education Act (1953) which formally decoupled black school education from white provision. Thus, a department of education was set up for each population group. This was aimed at solidifying the inequalities between

racial groups ranging from the staff to student ratios and examination pass rates. Therefore; the consciousness of such legislations is crucial to understanding the transition process in higher education. It also sets context with regards to how the racial dynamics have drastically changed, allowing for more on-campus racial encounters which are vital to the study.

Furthermore, the apartheid era was characterized by several legislations that were aimed at championing white supremacy and ensuring that the other races remained in subjection (Higham, 2012). It was a tool to maintain power over the other populations and aimed at making the marginalized populations internalize inferiority. An example of such legislations is 'The Separate Amenities Act' (1953) which legislated for the separate and unequal provision of public services based on official hierarchy of 'racially' defined population groups. Such legislations ensured that different racial groups, specifically, black and white could not share the same spaces, thereby limiting interaction between these different racial groupings. It is through such legislations that people from different racial groupings could not share the same spaces during the apartheid era. It is clear that under such a setup, there was not much of multiracial interaction which occurred on-campus as compared to the present. The current higher educational space is vital to study as it is not only a site of transition, but also rich in encounters and events that are crucial to the study of on-campus interactions which might have an influence on the learners' perceptions and attitudes to race.

In addition, the Extension of the University Act (1959) was coined to exclude Blacks, Coloureds and Indians from being included in white universities (Finchilescu & Tredoux, 2010). Greyling (2007) also highlights the Group Areas Act of 1950 which prohibited historically white universities from accepting students from other racial groups. Thus, the division between different classes was very clear as the Apartheid government made sure that the segmentation would not go unnoticed. This was not only implemented in workplaces and homes; it was extended to the education system. What this means is that segregation then trickled down to interpersonal relationships, determining the quality of relationships between the different racial groups. However, the study aims at understanding whether the quality of interpersonal relationships amongst learners of different racial groupings remains compromised or has also improved through modern legislation and equal access.

Apartheid era legislations ensured that a particular racial group had access to higher education, specifically the white learners. The racial composition of institutions of higher

learning were dominated by white learners as they enjoyed access that was guaranteed by legislative laws of the apartheid era. It is equally important to understand how these predominantly white spaces were then occupied by those who had been legislatively prohibited, thereby shifting the social dynamics of such spaces. In the broader context, there was a clear demarcation that was created by the apartheid regime. In post-apartheid South Africa, not only constitutional changes were enforced, more specific changes to the higher education system were legislatively implemented. These changes are of significance in that they depict how transformation came about, and further explain how institutional dynamics shifted, specifically racial composition of institutions. More importantly, they unearth the historical context of higher education, which might be a crucial factor in the current on-campus dynamics amongst learners from different racial groupings. Furthermore, it is notable that race was the main distinctive factor in apartheid era legislation. It is equally important to understand how students are open to engage on issues of race and how they make meaning out of such engagementsThis study aims at understanding such dynamics.

2.2.2 Legislative Changes in Higher Education

Specific legislative changes in higher education ensured change which shifted the on-campus social dynamics, particularly interaction amongst students of different racial groups and some of these will be looked at in this section. Legislatively, apartheid era laws had to be abolished to pave way for equal access to higher education regardless of race. These legislative changes enforced racial integration in higher education. It was no longer a matter of choice but one of adhering to the laws. Learners from all racial groups in South Africa now share the same educational space as a result of such changes. Such changes led to the likelihood of students' interactional engagement on racial issues increasing due to this shift in racial composition. The South African Constitution that was enacted in May 1996, aims at redressing the above-mentioned formal inequalities in education that were fostered by the apartheid regime. Provisions of the South African Constitution in Chapter Two, Section Nine states:

> "(2) Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms.
> To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken.

(3) The state may not unfairly discriminate directly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.

(4) No person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds in terms of subsection (3). National legislation must be enacted to prevent or prohibit unfair discrimination." (Republic of South Africa 1996a).

Apart from the above, higher education specific legislation has been implemented to facilitate transformation of the higher education system in South Africa. Provisions of the Higher Education Act No.101 of 1997 state:

"Whereas it is desirable to –

(iii) redress past discrimination and ensure representatively and equal access;

(iv) provide optimal opportunities for learning and the creation of knowledge;

(v) promote the values which underlie an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom;

(vi) respect of freedom of religion, belief and opinion;

(vii) respect and encourage democracy, academic freedom, freedom of speech and expression, creativity, scholarship and research;

(viii) pursue excellence, promote the full realisation of the potential of every student and employee, tolerance of ideas and appreciation of diversity. (Higher Education Act No.101 of 1997)"

Furthermore, institutions of higher learning in South Africa have aligned their institutional constitutions with the central tenants of the South African Constitution. An example would be the UKZN SRC Constitution (2006) which pledges to unite and build a non-racial community as a representation of the South African Constitution. The inclination towards the adoption of the South African Constitution by institutions of higher learning depicts the shift in on-

campus racial dynamics that is guided by such institutional changes which were implemented to foster racial integration amongst learners.

In addition, the political party that was influential in the abolishment of the apartheid regime- the African National Congress (ANC) drafted a specific policy, namely: the ANC Policy for Education and Training (1994). It was aimed at ensuring freedom and equality in education. Furthermore, it was to ensure that resources and funding would be accessible to previously disadvantaged learners. The ANC aimed at transforming higher education for economic growth and the enhancement of a democratic political system. This further depicts the government's commitment towards changing the on-campus racial dynamics. It further influences the nature of on-campus interactions on racial issues which is of critical value to this study as it aims at understanding the significance of such interactions and the meanings derived from them.

The new legislations brought about novel dynamics in the institutional spaces. Spaces that were previously reserved for specific racial groups were made accessible to all racial groups. It in turn shifted the social dynamics within such institutions. It is this study's aim to understand how students perceive race, how they interact across the different racial groups and the perceptions and attitudes on race they draw out of such interactions.

2.2.3 Notable Changes in South African Higher Education

The higher education system experienced specific changes in the post-apartheid era. These changes drastically changed the social and educational spaces of institutions of higher learning. The South African government has made reasonable efforts to change the curriculum (Higham, 2012). An understanding of the changes the higher education system; specifically, curriculum changes, is of equal importance as it has the potential to depict the extent to which students actively and openly engage on issues of race, and the depth of such interactions. It further enlightens one's understanding of the levels of critical engagement which the learners are inclined towards which is determined by the quality of the curriculum that they are exposed to. Furthermore, changes in curriculum might also influence the levels of academic involvement amongst learners of different races which could also have an effect on on-campus racial composition and active engagement amongst learners. Historically, pro-apartheid curricula were aimed at instilling the values of white supremacy. Badat (2009) argues that intellectual discourse, teaching and learning curriculum, and knowledge

production and research were strongly influenced by the apartheid social order, and the socio-economic and political priorities of the apartheid separate development programme. The curriculum changes resemble the government's commitment towards fostering social transformation through education. Higham (2012) suggests that, the changes entail a more positive sense of self-worth amongst the previously disadvantaged populations. Therefore, directly or indirectly, the implementation of a non-racial curriculum has encouraged scholarship from previously disadvantaged populations, which has seen their participation and eagerness to acquire tertiary education. This has directly resulted in an increase in enrolment of students that were historically prohibited, thereby shifting the student population dynamics especially in terms of race. This shift in student population dynamics is of equal importance to the study as it widened the spectrum of the diverse racial student population and in turn influenced the nature of interactions amongst the learners and further influence the frequency of on-campus racial interaction which enriches the study.

There has been considerable change in the racial composition of schools that has taken place since 1994 (Lemon, 2004). This is mostly due to the previously mentioned desegregation measures by the government and affirmative action of previously disadvantaged populations. This shift has produced various social and institutional dynamics within higher learning institutions. The resultant dynamics are instrumental to this study, as it aims at understanding perceptions and attitudes that are formed out of on-campus interactions, especially how students interact with their peers from different racial groups and, what these interactions and experiences mean to them.

Furthermore, the uniqueness in the diversity component of South Africa's population induces a viewpoint on race, much different from the European-American viewpoint which traditionally focuses on the differences between black and white (Durrheim, Mtose & Brown, 2011). Moreover, South Africa boasts a multi-cultural context which enriches the different viewpoints on race in relation to different races within the same contextual setting. The tertiary learning environment equally boasts of such a diverse multiracial context due to the changes in higher education under discussion. This highly diversified on-campus population is attributable to the various institutional changes as discussed previously that encouraged inclusion of previously excluded learners based on race. There is a way in which the political changes have resulted in race relations in South Africa in general and at KwaZulu Natal University in particular. South Africa boasts a multi-cultural context which enriches the

different viewpoints on race in relation to diversified races within the same contextual setting. The tertiary learning environment equally boasts such a diverse multiracial context.

Summary

The legislative and institutional transition from apartheid era to a democratic South Africa has been highlighted. 'Race' has been used in most interactions and legislations in South Africa due to its strong influence on apartheid era livelihood. Furthermore, it is the main feature of this study as it aims to understand on-campus perceptions and attitudes to race based on interactions amongst learners, how they have experienced such interactions and how they perceive them. An understanding of how the current racial climate came about is of equal importance to the study as it provides precursors on the possible influencers of the attitudes and perceptions under study. The historical underpinnings on race in South Africa and specifically the higher education system have been unearthed. It is crucial at this juncture to engage critical viewpoints on race, to understand how race came about, and to engage the various critical discussions that have been overlooked in the past.

2.2.4 A Critical Perspective on Race

In understanding higher education learners' perspectives on race, it is equally important to engage critical viewpoints on race that explain 'taken for granted' knowledge surrounding race, to understand the various influences on the differing perspectives that have emerged from the study. This study aims at applying a critical approach to race; that is free of 'oppressive interpretations' through an exploration of the lived experiences of the South African student population in higher education in relation to race. 'Race' has been abundantly used not only in this text, but in post-apartheid era due to the essential role it has played in the Apartheid era. Race is derived from relations of power between different groups of people (Durrheim, Hook and Riggs, 2009). The authors highlight how race is a construction through relations of power mainly based on political and economic influences, whereby; one ought to retain power using race as a justification for such. Furthermore, it unearths a dichotomy whereby; there is the centre of power and the subject. This depicts inequality, where the centre of power has control over the subject. This is representative of the unequalities of race and how it has been used in the past to serve the interests of those who retained the power in the apartheid era. Hooks (1989) further argues that race does not have a basis in the natural world but is regarded as an artificial distinction created by humans. The author further argues

that these definitions of race have been centred upon those that are in control of production and distribution of resources.

In South Africa, the post-apartheid government institutions, particularly Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) maintained the racial categories that were used in the apartheid era as namely: Black, Indian, Coloured and White as represented in the population censuses of 1996 and 2001 (McKinney, 2007). These categories have been adopted by this study as the student population is also categorised as such along racial identification. However, McKinney (2007) argues that due to 'race-based' social inequality that continues to exist in South Africa, it somehow limits the possibility of looking at 'race' differently. This process of categorization further exacerbates the racial divide.

Race is a social construct that is laden with mechanisms of subjection; which cannot be understood outside their relation to mechanisms of exploitation and domination (Foucault, 1982). This depicts how an understanding of race is optimally derived from manoeuvres of power that are aimed at maintaining dominance and subjection that lies within political and economic interests. The author further untangles the intricate relations of power between those that have been able to provide definitions of race and those that have been categorized by such a process. Those in power provide the definitions of race and what it means to be of a specific racial group. Through such a process, these definitions elevate those in power and ensure subjection of those categorised within an inferior racial group.

Furthermore, Hooks (1989) argues that the same racial majority group (in terms of power) has been influential in the construction of language. This has resulted in the production and reproduction of societal 'ideals' that serve and preserve its political and economic interests. The author argues on how the emancipatory strength of the marginalised is disempowered as the same majority group stands to validate the voices of the marginalised, thereby downplaying emancipatory manoeuvres through such validations. Furthermore, the emancipatory efforts of the marginalized is then infused in the language that is compatible with the images and ways of knowing of the majority group that reinforces domination. It further highlights the argument on how race has been previously constructed to serve the interests of specific groups. It is through such a process that various 'ideals' have been constructed; 'ideals' that are entwined in mechanisms of exploitation and domination.

On the other hand, there is a more directed argument on the role of psychology in the maintenance and reproduction of 'ideals' and constructions on race by those in power. It is

posited that mainstream psychology downplays the lived struggle of the oppressed as the intensity of the struggle for freedom is lost in psychological interpretations and re-interpretations, ignoring the actual cries for justice, the yearn for emancipation and liberation (Hook, 2004). It is congenial to note that through such interpretations, mainstream psychology has advocated for oppression. This is where critical psychology interjects towards the eradication of the oppressive uses of psychology. This exemplifies how oppression was entwined in disciplines that were perceived to be free of oppressive practices, through the use of language and set practices aimed at maintaining the status quo. This study engages a critical approach to race; that is delineated from oppressive interpretations through an exploration of attitudes and perceptions that are formed out of the learners' on-campus interactions.

In addition, Hook (2005) explains how the engagement of critical viewpoints from those who have experienced social marginality enables one to have a broader depiction of societal imbalances. Through an engagement of the learners' perceptions and an understanding of how such perceptions have been formed, one is able to understand the implicit causes towards such attitudes and perceptions. There is an affective element to such accounts, that has the penetrative capability to crack through the 'status quo'. The interactions sought by the study are not just accounts of ordinary encounters, but significant interactions that the learners perceive to be of value which would have affective connotations that speak on perception and attitude formation on race-related issues. The author refers to the work of Bhabha (1994) and Fanon (1986) highlighting how some psychological concepts, explanations and experiences have operated in the domains of power, attaching deliberative meanings to dreams and utterances of the oppressed. Through a critical engagement, reinterpretations are avoided and one's experiences are accounted for according to the individual and not according to what the listener wants to hear. It thereby makes room for tangible transformation that is free from pretence and oppression as how it came about in the past as previously discussed.

Durrheim, Hook and Riggs (2009) posit on how the discursive approach unearths the implicit racial nature of social interactions; thereby providing an understanding of how people 'talk about race' and how it is accounted for. This draws back to the argument of race being a social construction, hence the analysis of interaction is equally important. It further underscores the aim of the study to understand how such interactions amongst learners would have influenced their perceptions and attitudes towards race. The authors further highlight

how the focus on language and the exclusion thereof, enables one to understand the speaker's worldview. It is not all about what is said that matters, what is omitted equally matters as a pattern of 'deliberate' omission can be drawn and subsequently, inferences from such omissions. The strength in discursive analysis emerges on its ability to draw inferences from both what has been mentioned and what has been omitted especially when a 'sensitive' topic such as 'race' is under discussion. The learners might deliberately omit certain viewpoints or significant events, but such omission also has significant connotations towards an overall overview of the racial climate.

In summation, the critical viewpoints on race create a more informed understanding of the influences that may arise on the different learner's perspectives derived from this study. It provides in-depth insight on how race has been construed and the different mechanisms that have been employed to maintain such constructions. As much as the critical viewpoints have been explored, it is equally important to explore the main resultant dynamic that has arisen specifically in racial interactions known as 'race trouble'. This could also reflect on the nature of racial interactions amongst tertiary learners.

2.2.5 'Race trouble' amongst Learners in South African Higher eEducation.

The South African higher education system has been through the wider historic transformation from the apartheid era which was guided by principles of inequality and segregation based on race, to be a system of democratic principles that are guided by the South African Constitution. The South African government's commitment towards transforming the higher education system is evidenced by the 'Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education' usually known as the *White Paper* that was formulated in 1997. The *Education White Paper 3* emphasized the role and the obligation that higher education played in catalysing social transformation (McKinney, 2007). McKinney (2007) posits that, "Linked to this, universities were given responsibility to play a crucial role in the 'uprooting of deep seated racism and sexism' and in developing a campus environment that is sensitive to racial and cultural diversity" (p.217). This underscores the change initiative that has been fostered by the government and the resultant social change. What remains crucial to the study is an understanding of the emergent on-campus interactions that are laden with racial history of the educational space and how students make meanings of such interactions.

The transformative process has realized issues of race and identity arising in most instances (Suransky & van der Merwe, 2014). The authors highlight how questions on whether transformation has truly occurred within institutions of higher learning keep recurring, especially when incidents that are laden with race discourse occur, such as that of the University of the Free State (UFS); Reitz Residence that occurred in 2007. Dolby (2001) questions how students reproduce or challenge race, engage about it directly, or through their passiveness and infuse it in their educational and social spaces. The UFS Reitz Residence students engaged in what they 'merely' perceived as a 'prank' with older female residence staff. The main issue that arose from the 'prank' is the issue of race - the students being white and the residence staff being black (Suransky & van der Merwe, 2014). Students and staff engaged in a process of accusations and denials of racism, engaging dialogically on-campus, online platforms and in research studies; trying to make sense of the incident and attach meanings of whether the event was an act of racism or not (Suransky & van der Merwe, 2014). It is a clear depiction of what Durrheim and others (2011) referred to as 'race trouble'. Such instances of 'race trouble' highlight the debilitative phenomenon towards constructive engagement, that has influences on how students of different racial groups approach issues of race with considerations on the resultant consequences that might arise.

A further exemplification of the questions concerning transformation are depicted by the setting up of an Oversight Committee on transformation in South African Universities that was set up by the Minister of Higher Education and Training in 2013, to ascertain whether a true non-racial and non-discriminatory higher education system had been born out of the new democratic South Africa. The committee concluded that none of the South African universities could safely claim that they had transformed or engaged with the challenges in a satisfactory manner (Suransky & van der Merwe, 2014). Steyn (2007) argues that it is equally important to consider institutional culture as the overall values, attitudes, styles of interaction and collective memories in trying to understand the barriers to transformation. This explains why most on-campus relations are defined along racial lines; influenced by the institutional culture that is deep rooted in apartheid whereby race is the main distinctive characteristic amongst the student and staff population (Higgins, 2007). Such questions on whether the higher educational space has realised tangible transformation relate to the aim of the study in exploring the current on-campus racial climate.

Meier and Hartell (2009) posit that post-apartheid policies and legislation that obligatory desegregation in education produced diverse ways of responding to the diversified learner

population. Du Toit (1995) argues that the abolishment of barriers to higher education according to race does not automatically ensure mutual understanding and acceptance between the staff and learners and amongst the learners themselves. Meier and Hartell (2009) argue that desegregation does not always lead to meaningful attitudinal changes. It could lead to heightened tension and prejudice. Therefore; the learners are tasked with interacting and conducting themselves in accountable ways that are deemed not to be racist in nature, although this does not imply that they are not racist (Durrheim, 2011). The same 'race problem' keeps recurring amongst students where they ought to find ways to express themselves or interact in a 'plausible' manner in line with what society expects of being part of a non-racial 'rainbow-nation' university. This notion further depicts the likely dynamics that might emerge through an exploration of the racial climate, as argued by Du Toit (1995) that the abolishment of barriers to access do not guarantee equality and non-racialism amongst the student population.

Vincent (2008) studied an undergraduate student population and found out that there was an appearance of interracial group contact although informal boundaries remained in between the various racial groups. Vincent (2008) further posits that, "racial difference continues to have an often unacknowledged and unseen power" (p.1427). This is an exemplification of the implicit racial boundaries that continue to govern relations amongst students. It is no longer an explicit 'unthought' process, it is carefully thought out, expressed in a manner that would try to disguise its racist nature. Furthermore, it is representative of how despite all the efforts that have been implemented to foster a non-racial, fully integrated higher education system, the aspect of 'race' seems to continually find its way within such efforts and influence the outcome. This elucidates on how informal boundaries can influence the degree to which students can openly engage about race. The likelihood of the students to engage about race is abridged as a result of limited interaction due to such informal boundaries that are drawn along racial lines.

McKinney (2007) in her study of higher education leaner's perceptions and attitudes towards race in a previously white dominated university highlighted a hodgepodge of apartheid discourses that the students engaged in. The author engaged in a discursive analysis on the interchange between students during her literature. The author highlighted how the students were hesitant to directly address the issue of 'race' and resorted to using the word 'culture'. The researcher also experienced the learners' attitude towards seeking the reaffirmation as they wanted to maintain 'politically correct' positions in their utterances, which is reflective

of Durrheim's (2011) conceptualisation of 'race trouble'. The discomfort associated with talking about race was evident in this study. This is reflective of the 'troubling nature' of race within South African higher education, disturbing possible critical engagements that are crucial to transformation. The same phenomenon was explained by Hook (2004) as when participants in discussions resort to 'politically correct' utterances due to the negativity surrounding 'racially saturated' utterances which might not give a true reflection of their perceptions. The author further highlighted the difficulty in the use of apartheid terminology which is being used to perpetuate redress without coming across as being 'racist'. McKinney (2007) concluded that this hesitance in talking about race maintains the status quo and remains a stumbling block in the way of transformative agenda.

Soudien (2001) outlines the three discourses that are dominant within educational spaces namely: the official, the formal and the informal discourse. The author explains the formal discourse as being shaped and dominated by whichever political group is in power at that specific time. Walker (2005) believes that identity (amongst learners) is formed through these three discourses and that it is not rigid. Through the author's study on a South African university undergraduate population, further explains how the 'rainbow nation' discourse is an example of the official discourse that is dominant in South Africa, based on principles of non-racialism and equality. The author manages to reflect on the conflict between the official discourse; that is based on principles of equality and non-racialism, and the informal discourse; which articulates constructions of identity amongst students; whereby language also plays a crucial role. Walker (2005) highlights how the complexity of race relations in South Africa whereby language trumps race and colour. Walker concludes thus:

> The university is an important location for the ensuing identity work as a site where discourses collide, are distorted or articulate. The older apartheid ideology has been subdued but arguably not entirely defeated. It lives on aspects of the symbolic life of the campus, not at least in the halls of residences as bearers of decades of white Afrikaner traditions that are culturally exclusive, deeply gendered and consciously or otherwise racist. What is clear is that all of these students' lives are marked, whether acknowledged or not, by race, by racialized subjectivities, and by a past of racial separateness. (2005, pp.53).

Pillay (2016) argues on the racial dynamics of the 'Fees Must Fall' and the 'Rhodes Must Fall' movements. The author highlights how silence is an act of violence especially in the

face of transformative agenda. The racial composition of the protestors is best understood in socio-economic terms; as the disadvantaged learners are mostly black whereas, the privileged learners are mostly white. The racial composition of the 'Fees Must Fall' protests alludes to the white learners as being 'silent' towards transformative agenda being championed by their black colleagues. Pillay (2016) believes that the 'silence' is a hidden act of violence against those in need of advocacy, empathy and allies in championing change. This instance is a further exemplification of 'race trouble' amongst learners in higher education, where non-participation in such activities is carefully thought out and anticipated to be of a non-racial nature. However, Durrheim, Mtose and Brown (2011) argued that through such silences, the underlying perceptions can still be harnessed.

'Race trouble' in South Africa has been explored in the context of higher education. It is of equal importance at this juncture to understand 'race trouble' in the wider South African society as this study aims to understand the perceptions and experiences of the learners within such a context. It is agreeable to acknowledge that the learners under study came out of the wider society, they were exposed to the communities they live in before they were part of the university population. It is therefore of equal importance to have an understanding of how race has taken a new form within the wider society as it influences perceptions and attitudes on race which is better known as 'race trouble'.

2.2.6 Race and 'Race Trouble' in South Africa.

South Africa has realised a shift in institutional demographics as a result of affirmative action and policies which have been put in place to foster transformation (Durrheim, Greener & Whitehead, 2015). The authors argue that this shift in post-apartheid South Africa has brought about controversies which are laden with issues on race and racism. Considering Goodman's (2000) notion on how racial classification lacks genetic significance, Durrheim (2017) argues on how race is a social construction which determines how humans interact and act upon each other. The author highlights how 'race trouble' entails a personal understanding of (the anticipation of) being treated stereotypically as a case of a racial category. This process is within interactions, where people engage and form understandings on what is deemed racist or what is not, thereby providing a frame of how to interact in an 'acceptable' manner that is deemed not to be racist. Durrheim et al. (2015) argue that for one to act in a manner that is deemed not to be racist in nature, they ought to understand racism

itself. This has been a new form of racism that has emerged in South Africa, as posited by Van Dijk (1992) and Barker (1981) as contemporary racism - laden with repudiations, vindications, reversals and other discursive devices which engaged in hindering inferences of negative nature towards a particular outgroup. Durrheim, Mtose and Brown (2011) posited how 'race trouble' is a social psychological phenomenon that submerges through a legacy of racism thereby destabilising social order. This phenomenon is of equal importance to this study as it can unearth the perceptions and attitudes towards race that learners have formed because of their on-campus interactions with learners of other racial groupings.

Furthermore, Durrheim (2017) posited how 'race trouble' is whereby people engage ideas of racism to act in ways that are deemed not to be 'racist' in nature. Through such processes, the author argues that racism can be disseminated through anti-racism discourse. Augoustinos and Every (2007) argue how modern race talk is strategically organised to deny racism. Edwards (2003) also argued that 'race trouble' is discursive in nature, laden with rhetoric. Therefore; it becomes apparent that the lack of racial discourse could be a clear indication of the reasons behind its omission - the fear of being deemed to be 'racist'. This phenomenon is what Goodman and Rowe (2013) labelled as 'discursive de-racialisation'. Augoustinos and Every (2007) highlight how previous studies on race and racism including that which was conducted in South Africa by Seidel (1988) have identified the inescapable discursive repertoires and rhetorical devices that are used by majority group members to justify negative evaluations of minority outgroups in interactions. Goodman and Rowe (2013) posit on how positive self and negative other presentation influences the outcome of such interactions. The troubling nature of post-apartheid South Africa is the inability to interact freely without race being drawn into the picture. There are some incidents that genuinely could not have been racially-driven, but through the accusations, denials and justifications of racism, they were drawn into the issue of racism. The shift from the apartheid regime has seen the legislative abolishment of explicit 'racism'. However, race continues to dictate over peoples' actions, utterances and ways of living in South Africa (Durrheim, 2017). This could also be the case amongst the highly racially diversified student population where one's actions, utterances and ways of living could be influenced by race.

A study by Durrheim, Greener and Whitehead (2015) on a South African institution's online discussion platform to discuss transformation - 'Change Listserv'. This study depicts the racial nature and how interactions of this sort take course on most online interactions in post-apartheid South Africa. A discursive analysis of the participant's contributions was engaged

the authors managed to unearth how post-apartheid interactions continue to be troubling in racial terms within South African institutions. The study highlighted the phenomenon that Reeves (1981), Augoustinos and Every (2007) identified as 'discursive de-racialisation'. The participants engaged rhetoric, disclaimers, justifications of their utterances whilst others engaged in the process of accusing the speakers of 'prejudice'. Durrheim, Mtose and Brown (2011) highlight the context in which such interactions take place; laden with a history of apartheid built from ideologies of racial inequality and segregation. The context where racialism is not acceptable, new forms of racialism have emerged where one ought to carefully interact in a manner that is to be perceived as non-racial in nature. The authors outline how the legacy of racism dictates over the quality of interracial interactions, where speakers ought to communicate in ways that would not be deemed as being 'racist'. This is suggestive of how the learners under study might be inclined to interact in patterns that are influenced by South Africa's racist legacy.

Mtose (2009) unearthed the differing experiences of 'race trouble' that are attached to one's racial category which has a historical link to the apartheid regime through her dissertation. The author managed to unearth various interpretations of what it meant to be within a specific racial category in post-apartheid South Africa. Themes on the stigma attached to being black, racial hatred and the need for authenticity emerged in the author's thesis. Durrheim et.al (2011) highlighted how the post-apartheid South African government was constantly accused of corruption and incompetence whilst ignoring the massive strides it had achieved in changing the lives of ordinary South African; granting those who were marginalised access to basic services, housing and education. The way affirmative action has brought about questions on the competency of the appointees, the way black people in South Africa carefully select places of social gathering for fear of being confronted by whites and the way the blacks validate their actions and choices according to white 'norms' and beliefs reflects the legacy that has burdened the black people in South Africa. Durrheim et.al (2011) argue that active racism has been quashed legislatively, what remains troubling in post-apartheid South Africa is the presence of racially laden discourses in social spaces that has hindered room for 'real' transformation. These discourses are also characteristic of the higher educational spaces that are under study where issues of governance, affirmative action, decolonisation of curriculum and shared on-campus spaces have arisen; with racial connotations attached to them, they could be indicative of the learners' perceptions on race.

On the other hand, the experiences of white people in post-apartheid South Africa were studied by Brown (2009). Themes of stigma, marginalisation and racial hatred where unearthed in her interviews with white participants in her study. The author outlined how the participants felt of the affirmative action agenda as being excessively limiting them for past atrocities of the apartheid regime that their fathers and fore-fathers committed. Furthermore, there are themes of how the whites feared for their safety in public spaces that had been 'taken over' by the black majority. The author posited how the fear of being judged as being racist and the fear of being treated in a stereotypical manner is what the present-day South Africa is struggling with. Such perceptions may be formed outside the campus setting and outside on-campus interactions. However, they might influence the way in which the learners interact with those of other racial groupings and also their attitudes towards other learners which is pertinent to this study. Furthermore, the ability to provide a neutral platform in the exploration of perception and attitudes derails biased perspective, which in turn inspires tangible transformation that has been too biased in the past, failing to acknowledge varying perspectives.

Durrheim, Quayle and Dixon (2016) posited on how people in society tend to tailor their expressed prejudices to the societal norms as a way of upholding a sound personal identity. The authors further argue on how denials of prejudice could also serve as identity performances as it sets societal norms which in turn, activate roles in identity performances. In the South African context, prejudice has been condemned and those who openly express it face the societal consequences. The authors also highlighted the process through which collective understandings of 'genuine prejudice' are formulated through accusations and denials of prejudice. This is apparent in most incidents that are regarded to be prejudicial in nature, especially on online platforms. Various commentators engage in a process of justification, denial and accusation of prejudice. Such a process has been deemed as a distinctive characteristic of contemporary racism as described by Dijk (1992). This process of tailored prejudices to suit the societal norms is a likely characteristic of participants in a race-related study, as the participants might be inclined to present themselves as being aligned to the 'new' societal norms in fear of being judged.

Durrheim and Dixon (2005) posited how ways of informal racial segregation and clustering continue to exist in post-apartheid desegregated spaces. The authors 'study on South African beaches was a depiction of how segregation and clustering is still evident in post-apartheid South Africa. The disconnection amongst different racial groups is evident (Durrheim &

Dixon, 2005). This evident disconnection, perpetuated by race has seen people of different races living separate lives and yet it is post-apartheid South Africa is 'troubling' (Durrheim et.al., 2011). The authors outline how accusations and counter-accusations of racism and prejudice have influenced interaction in post-apartheid South Africa. This draws to the main argument by Durrheim et.al. (2011) on how actions and interactions of people have perpetuated racialism, segregation and inequality within a space where racism is deemed illegal and unconstitutional. This informal segregation of space has the likelihood to trickle down to the educational space. It has the potential to influence the frequency and quality of on-campus racial interaction amongst learners.

Schaller and Conway (1999) argue on how individuals adjust their expressed prejudices to suit the social norms as a method of maintaining a sound personal identity. However, in as much as people try to act ways that are perceived not to be prejudicial, their implicit inclinations are unearthed through discursive analysis (Durrheim et al., 2016). The lack of prejudicial discourse is equally important in understanding its omission and in the process, understanding one's reason for such omissions. This elucidates on the learners' inclination towards maintaining a sound personal identity through an adjustment of expressed prejudices although the presence or absence of prejudicial discourse all have relevant racial connotations that can be derived through discursive analysis.

The underlying phenomenon of 'race trouble' has been explored in relation to its causal factor: - the apartheid legacy. It is evident that it has not only affected the wider society, but also the educational spaces as the students are brought up within the wider society before being exposed to the higher learning environment. The varying influences it has on people's behaviour and attitudes depicts how it might influence the course of this study. It is agreeable to launch an exploration of other studies on race as it harnesses diverse findings that elucidate on one's understanding of race.

2.2.7 Related Studies on Race

Several race-related studies on institutions of higher learning have been conducted. A study by Durrheim, Trotter, Piper and Manicom (2004) on the University of Natal student population revealed that regardless of the transformative drive the university had engaged, there was not much of cross-racial contact amongst the students. The study revealed how residential segregation is replicated in social and learning spaces on-campus (Durrheim et al.,

2004). Regardless of these findings, eighty percent of the participants highlighted that they wished to be part of a fully integrated university which is free from racialism. The authors gathered that the white students attributed such segregation to cultural differences whereas the black students attributed it to the institution's authorities; predominantly white staff members. This depicts how perception and experience differs amongst the learners.

Furthermore, Alexander and Tredoux (2010) conducted a study on informal segregation at a South African university. The authors posit that the students acknowledge the apparent racial segregation on-campus. Pertinent to this study, is the attributions that are attached to such segregation as being caused by differences in culture or differences in interests. The students could not directly acknowledge the differences in racial groups as a contributing factor towards such segregation, following through a pattern of avoiding 'race talk' (Alexander & Tredoux, 2010). This study brought about the previously discussed inclinations towards being 'politically correct' and aligning oneself to societal norms through an adjusted pattern of behaviour that is deemed 'acceptable'.

In addition, Moguerane (2007) conducted a study on student interactions at a historically Afrikaans university in South Africa. The author found out that regardless of the student residences being declared to be integrated, the students preferred to live with other students of their own races. The author also highlighted how one of the residences resembled 'racial tolerance' rather than integration. Moguerane (2007) concluded that the difference in the students' cultures was the main causative factor hindering integration. This elucidates on the apparent difference between racial tolerance and racial integration, where tolerance would mean acknowledging diversity without active engagement as integration, which influences the quality of interactions amongst learners.

To add upon, Higham (2012) conducted studies on the aspects of place, race and exclusion and aimed at assessing the students' accounts of their University experience. The first study conducted at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) unearthed that much of the student body was still embodied in its historical orientation to the Coloured population. The authors unearthed a recurrent theme that was reflective of a sense of ownership, as they indicated that other races had occupied their space. This highlights the historical influences of the educational spaces on the learners' attitudes and behavior.

Apart from the above, Higham (2012) found out that most of the black African students could describe instances of what they deemed institutional discrimination in terms of admittance

into certain courses and student jobs. Apart from the above, the student-lecturer relations were found to be different based on social grounds. There is a form of linguistic marginalization that was unearthed with those who spoke Afrikaans to be likely favored by their white and coloured lecturers. This could be the case as the university statistics show that most of the people within the university's administration are coloured (Higham, 2012).

Moreover, Shutts, Kinzler, Katz, Tredoux and Spellze (2011) conducted studies on South African children to ascertain their racial preferences. They hypothesized that children are likely to learn attitudes towards other races through exposure to the media, observation of social behavior of their respective families and also through personal encounters. The authors found out that children of all races generally preferred the white color and there was not any prejudice towards the various racial groups reflected in these studies.

The historical underpinnings of race within the South African context and in higher education have been explored. A further depiction of the resultant phenomenon that is characteristic of most institutional spaces has been unearthed. An outline of related studies on race and on-campus interaction within higher education has been generated to highlight the findings that have been derived, and how they relate to this study. It is of equal significance at this juncture to have an overall understanding on how these components are of significance to this study.

2.2.8 Relevance of Literature to the Study

South Africa's higher education needs to be looked at from a historical context since most current issues on transformation are grounded on such historical context. The evident transition from a restricted education system to an all-inclusive system is depicted. However, the literature has highlighted that desegregation does not imply integration. Furthermore, the resultative consequences of such a transition is elucidated on which also drives into the core of this study.

In addition, an understanding of 'race trouble' has been influential in providing an understanding of the resultant dynamics that have emerged because of the apartheid legacy. It further highlights how these dynamics might influence the quality of participation in such a study that focuses on a 'sensitive' topic of race, that most would not want to openly engage on race influenced by the dynamics surrounding 'race trouble'. Furthermore, it enables one to

have an informed understanding of diverse perspectives, attitudes and utterances on race and their underpinnings.

Apart from the above, the literature's focus on discursive analysis reflects the value that lies within utterances, through such analyses, various authors have managed to draw on how students have formed their identities in institutional spaces. Student's interactional patterns and their reasons behind their choices of interaction have not been spared by such studies. Furthermore, the omission of specific racial discourse has pointed out the hesitance within students in directly engaging on issues pertaining to race and also, their quest to be part of the institutions' bigger picture of non-racialized, 'rainbow institutions'. It is through this quest that the learners alter their utterances, actions and carefully choose their interactions in a bid not to deviate from the 'norm'- 'rainbow institution'. However, this study aims at questioning the 'unquestionable' and engaging on the reasons behind this hesitance, or the lack of that is in engaging with colleagues on issues pertaining to race.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Social Constructionism

The theoretical framework gives an understanding of the theory that best explains a research study. This study adopts a social-constructionist framework. The socio-political constructions of race in South Africa justify the adoption of a social constructionist theoretical framework. It reverts to the notion on race lacking a basis in the natural world but regarded as an artificial distinction created by humans through social interaction (Hooks, 1989). This elucidates on how students' perceptions and attitudes on race are formed as a result of on-campus interactions.

According to Burr (2015) social constructionism views belief as being socially constructed. Burr (2015) posits that social constructionism engages a critical approach towards knowledge that has been previously taken for granted and places emphasis on the historical and cultural underpinnings. The author further believes that knowledge is constructed between people. This further explicates the significance of on-campus interactions in understanding the learners' perceptions of race. Burr (2015) argues that language plays a pivotal role in constructing the world. Lock and Strong (2010) highlight the various disciplines that

influence this approach ranging from: linguistics, psychology, philosophy and sociology. However, this approach rejects the notion of set rules and structure, informed by post-modernism and post-structuralism, it places emphasis on multiplicity and context (Burr, 1996). There are key features of social constructionism that have been outlined by Lock and Strong as:

a) It is concerned with meaning and understanding as the central features of human activities.

b) Meaning and understanding have their beginnings in social interaction, in shared agreements as to what these symbolic forms are to be taken.

c) Ways of meaning-making are inherently embedded in socio-cultural processes, are specific to particular times and places.

d) Delineation of the processes that operate in the socio-cultural conduct of action to produce discourses within which people construe themselves.

e) Adoption of a critical perspective – a concern with revealing the operations of the social world, the political apportioning of power that is often accomplished unaware (2010, pp. 7).

The above features of social constructionism as outlined by Lock and Strong (2010) explain the absence of an objective truth. Therefore, how one ought to view the world is not through objective observation but, through the social processes that people engage in. Burr (2015) concurs on this viewpoint through an understanding of the processes of meaning-making and understanding through social interactions. Furthermore, such viewpoints edify Hooks' (1989) notion on how race is socially constructed. Berger (2011) further argues that regardless of being a conscious or unconscious process, race is always socially constructed.

Apart from the above, language is an important factor in social constructionism (Burr, 2015). The author argues that interpretation of experiences is largely influenced by language. Furthermore, language allows for the classification of knowledge through social interactions. Gadamer (1988) posited that language is rich in history and contextual value from which we derive our meanings from. However, the author argues that in as much as language bears such integrity, individual experience continues to differ. This further draws back to the study by McKinney (2007) in which learners highlighted language as one of the key distinctive

features between cultures. This highlights the significance of language in identity formation and meaning-making.

Language plays a crucial role in the construction of race. The use of language in fostering dominance is discussed by Hooks (1989) where the group that has power stands to validate, interpret and reinterpret the experiences of the marginalised through the use of a specific dominant language. The intricate lines of power entwined within language and constructions of race are further unearthed by Hooks (1989). The author suggests that the group that possesses power has been in the past, influential in the construction of language henceforth; defines race and further defines experience at the expense of the marginalised. The author argues on how the emancipatory strength of the marginalised is disempowered as the same majority group stands to validate the voices of the marginalised. Furthermore, the emancipatory efforts of the marginalized is then infused in the language that is compatible with the images and ways of knowing of the majority group that reinforces domination.

In addition, the constructionist viewpoint paves way for constructive alternativism – the existence of multiple constructions of events (Burr, 2015). This elucidates on how experience differs and in turn, constructions differ. It further elucidates on the provision of emancipatory power to the marginalised through an understanding of their experiences within their own frames of reference and how they interpret it. This study takes on such an approach as it gives the participants the independence to trace the historical growth of their identity and to further appreciate their ability in shaping their own identities.

Castells (1997) posits that construction of identities is a multifaceted process – encompasses a hodgepodge of resources. The author further posits how individuals, societies and groups process all these different facets, and regroup meaning according to social purposes that are grounded on social structure and their contextual framework. Castells (1997) argues that social construction of identities happen in contexts characterized by relationships of power and outlines the three origins for building identities as:

   a) Legitimizing Identity – this is developed through dominant institutions of society that extend and rationalise their domination. The apartheid era South African government is one such good example as it legitimised apartheid through the rule of law which championed race based supremacist agenda.

b) Resistance Identity – this is developed by those that are in positions which are stigmatized by domination, thereby finding ways of resistance and survival on the foundations of the principles that are in opposition to the dominant ones in society.

c) Project Identity – this is developed by individuals who build new identities based on whichever cultural resources that are available to their disposal, build new identity that redefines their position in society and in the process, seek transformation of the overall social structure.

Furthermore, the historical context of South Africa and how it has influenced discourses around racial identities can never be ignored (Gounden, 2010). The contextual shift from apartheid – characterised by discourses of dominance and subjection to post-apartheid surrounded by discourses on equality and unity has given rise to identity conflicts.Gounden (2010) argues on how identity conflicts in South Africa arise from the various and shifting identities which seek to assert themselves in a multiculturalist, pluralistic post-apartheid society.

2.3.2 Theoretical Relevance to the Study

Understanding students' attitudes and perceptions on race, in relation to their experiences on-race, a social constructionist approach untangles the process. It elucidates on the process of meaning-making and further appreciates uniqueness of experiences. In addition, an understanding of the social constructions on race provides insight in the underpinnings of race that are entwined in social processes that are influenced by various external socio-political factors. Furthermore, a social constructionist approach elucidates on the historical context of the South African higher education system and the transition, and further appreciates its influences in the formation of identities from the existing racial discourses.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter places emphasis on the research methodology that is to be utilised in this study. Kothari (2004) posits that research methodology entails the various steps that are adopted by researchers in the study and comprehensive knowledge of the logic behind such steps. Therefore, research methodology encompasses research methods, an account of the logic behind such methods, an understanding of the context that the methods are being applied and an explanation of the use of such techniques over other available techniques.

3.2 Research Questions

This study aims at exploring learners' perceptions and attitudes to race with specific focus on the role of on-campus interactions and experiences in South Africa. The precise questions examined were:

1. How do students at university narrate their experience of race?
2. How do they understand and communicate about race?
3. What are their views on race?
4. How do they understand the implications or consequences of their views?

3.3 Research Design

Pandey and Pandey (2015) argue that research design is a framework that is adhered to in the collection and analysis of data in a study. It is calamitous to conduct a study without such a guide as it may lead to conflicting methods of collection and analysis. One cannot utilise a quantitative method of data collection and then further analyse the data qualitatively, the

nature of the data will be unable to suite the purpose. Therefore; it guides the researcher in the data collection phase as well as the analysis phase.

Methodology decisions rely on the nature of the research question (Pout & Hungler, 2004). According to Henning (2004) "methodology is a coherent group of methods that complement one another and that have the ability to fit to deliver data and findings that will reflect the research question and suit the research purpose" (p.36). Henning's notion on methodology is coherent with Burns and Groove's (2003) understanding of methodology being inclusive of the design, setting, sample, limitations of the study, the methods of data collection and analysis.

Kothari (2004) manages to outline the difference between research methods as being the techniques engaged in conducting a research whilst research methodology entails an understanding and the motive behind the various steps that are engaged by the researcher in tackling the research problem. This chapter shall elucidate on the various research processes engaged in the study and the rationale behind the use of such steps.

This study is a descriptive, exploratory and contextual qualitative study in racial interaction amongst tertiary learners. The researcher engaged an interpretive phenomenological design and methodology to achieve the objectives of this study. Taylor (1985) posits that interpretive phenomenological analysis understands people as self-interpreting beings.

Breakwell, Smith and Wright (2012) argue that phenomenology is concerned with understanding how things appear to us in experience, how we perceive and talk about events and objects. The researcher's role was defined through the process of enabling the participants to make meanings of their lived experience through dialogue. Smith and Osborn (2008) further highlight the emphasis on the exploration of participants' meaning making of their personal and social world in interpretative phenomenological analysis. This is reflective of the researcher's motive behind the interviewing process right up to the analysis of the data. The authors further highlight how the approach aims at extracting personal experience based on personal perception. This elucidates on the aim of this research in understanding the perceptions of students and how they have experienced race on-campus.

Henning (2004) argues that the distinctive feature of a qualitative study is the focus on the depth of analysis rather than the quantity of understanding. Within the process of analysing the depth of understanding, a researcher utilises processes of observation, artefacts, interviewing and literature in the data collection process. There is a clear process undertaken

by the researcher in this study, having an in-depth understanding of the phenomena, the causal factors, the consequences and what it means to the participants rather than merely focusing on the quantity of responses and failing to understand the motive and rationale behind such. A deeper engagement with the participants shall be sought through the interviewing process, which also gives room for further inquiry on matters that require clarification thereby enriching the value of the data.

Kothari (2004) argues that qualitative studies initiate discovery of the underlying motives and desires, using in-depth interviews for the purpose. The author further outlines the importance of qualitative methods of collection and analysis of data in behavioural sciences where the main aim involves the sighting of the underlying motives of human behaviour.

Wilson and MacClean (2011) believe it is much due to the complexity, richness and uniqueness of human experience that have initiated the debate on the appropriateness of quantification in studying humans. There is need for in-depth analysis of human actions and interactions especially with consideration of the depth of human processes. There are emotions, feelings, thoughts and circumstances attached to human experience that require qualitative enquiry. The authors further outline how qualitative studies are based on interpretation of experience and the meaning attached to experience.

3.4 Population and Sampling Strategy

Hart (2005) posits that sampling is a procedure that entails the generalisation about a population without having to conduct research on every unit within that specific population. Purposive sampling technique shall be used to select participants for the interviews. Terre, Blanche and Kelly (2002) argue that purposive sampling enables the researcher to include the needed variables without having to engage statistical methods to ensure generalisability.

The criteria purposive sampling in this study is based on the selection of participants from all the races as represented by the South African Census Statistical Release (2011) – Black African, White, Indian/Asian, Coloured and third year students based on the assumption that they have had adequate experiences of on-campus racial interactions. A lack of it would also be crucial to the research. The sample size comprised of twelve participants, three participants being representative of the previously outlined four racial groups. Furthermore, the researcher ensured equal representation of both genders as a way of limiting the potential

influence of the gender variable to the findings. Smith and Osborn (2008) highlight how most interpretative phenomenological studies rely on small sample sizes as it is committed to thorough analysis of cases rather than drawing inferences on unfounded generalisations.

3.4.1 Participants Demographic Information

Participant	Race	Gender	Age	Year of Study
P1	Indian	Female	21	3rd
P2	Coloured	Female	23	3rd
P3	Black	Female	22	3rd
P4	Black	Female	24	3rd
P5	White	Male	21	3rd
P6	Coloured	Male	24	3rd
P7	White	Female	21	3rd
P8	Indian	Male	25	3rd
P9	Indian	Male	21	3rd
P10	White	Female	21	3rd
P11	Black	Male	25	3rd
P12	Coloured	Male	22	3rd

Fig 2. Racial distribution

Race

■ White ■ Black African ■ Coloured ■ Indian/Asian
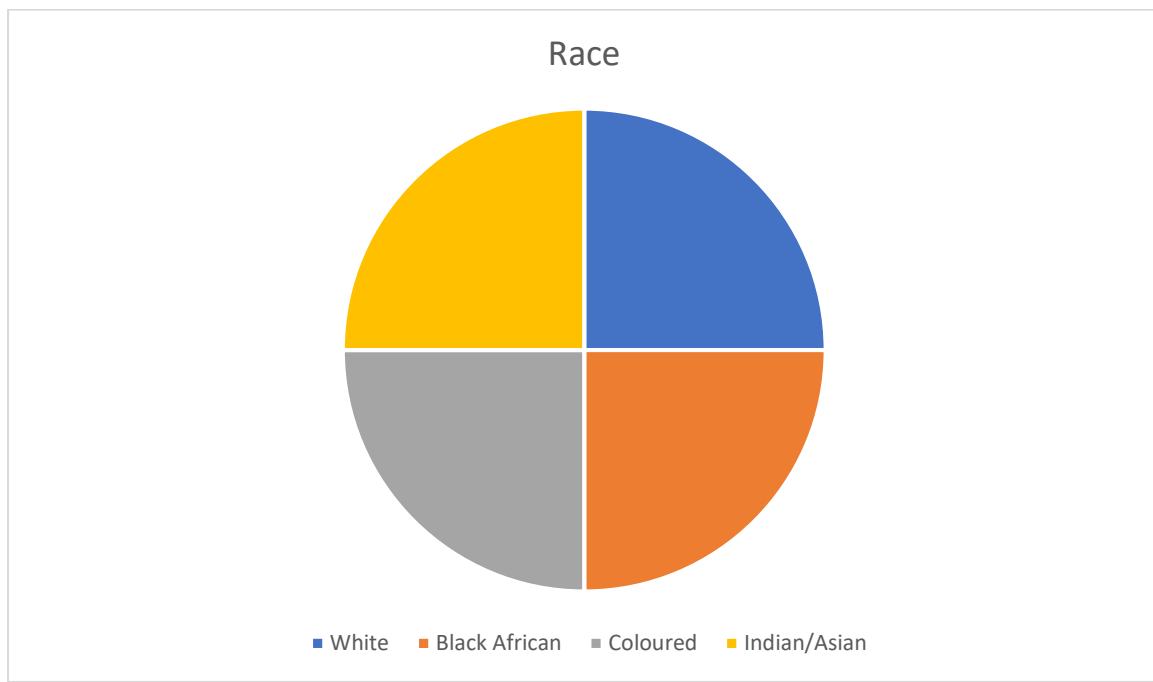
3.5 Research Strategy and Procedure for Data Collection

This study utilised in-depth semi-structured interviews as a method of collecting data. According to Smith and Osborne (2008), semi-structured interviews establish rapport with the respondents, it allows elasticity of exposure and allows the interview process to enter new precincts, thereby generating richer data. The learners' experiences on race on-campus and their attitudes and perceptions are unearthed through such a process. The researcher is able to obtain data according to the participant's experiences and how they perceive them.

Individual interviews were conducted with third year students from a tertiary institution in South Africa and the students were representative of the four main racial groups as represented by the South African Census Statistical Release (2011) being: Black African, White, Coloured and Indian/Asian. A total of twelve interviews were conducted, three representations of each of the main racial groups.

3.5.1 Position of the Researcher

The researcher's position in this research is defined by Welscott (1979) as both insider and outsider. As an insider the researcher's position is underscored by his candidature at the institution of higher learning, where he completed fulltime Coursework requirements of the Master of Social Sciences degree. In such a capacity, the researcher experienced being a student at the university and has had some interaction with students from different racial groups. He generated perceptions of race in South Africa from such experiences and interactions on-campus as it is where he spent most of his time in the initial period of his stay in South Africa.

The researcher holds an outsider position in that he is of Zimbabwean origin. He spent the greater part of his life in Zimbabwe and Namibia respectively. He has only been in South Africa for a year, and equally have been a student at a universityin South Africa for a year. He is a self-funded student and has only enrolled at the institution for a Master's programme. The present researcher has not experienced being an undergraduate student at the particular university. He has not been exposed to the campus environment as much as the research participants have been. His understanding and experiences of the Howard College campus dynamics are thus limited as such.

Therefore, in exploring learners' attitudes and perceptions on race based on their on-campus interactions, the researcher needed to engage in a critical reflection of his own explanations throughout the interviewing process. He engaged Siedman's (1991) guidelines to interviewing throughout the process and ensured active listening which encompassed the key facets to good interpersonal communication. He was guided by Blanche, Durrheim and Painter's (2006) notion on the maintenance a position of empathic understanding in conducting a good interpretive analysis.

3.6 Data Analysis

A systematic analysis of the data was done as outlined by Terre Blanche (1999). The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed in English. The researcher also paid detail to voice intonations and took note of such as it also reflected implicit inclinations. The field notes which were generated throughout the interview process where also utilised which mostly denoted non-verbal cues that were disseminated throughout the interviews.

Afterwards, the data was coded to themes as recommended by Smith and Osborn (2008). Then the researcher engaged in a process of familiarisation with the data through a thorough perusal of the transcripts.He maintained a neutral stance throughout the process of perusal as a way of limiting potential personal biases in the analysis process.

A thorough understanding of the transcripts was established as the researcher could identify where specific data could be located in the transcripts. The key issues were identified and noted down. The researcher then engaged the process of inducing themes as outlined by Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) where related themes and sub-themes were grouped. Thereafter, the researcher then coded the themes to link related themes as highlighted by Terre Blanche et.al., (2006) as the dismantling of data to ease the analysis process. The researcher then interpreted the data through a written account of the findings whilst linking it with literature.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct the research was sought from the Higher Degrees Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences at the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN). Furthermore, ethical approval was granted by the Ethics Committee of UKZN (Appendix B). The Registrar of the University of KwaZulu Natal granted approval for the sample to be drawn from the University learners (Appendix C). The participant's consent in participating in the research and in being audio recorded was then sought before each interview and a consent form was then signed as proof (Appendix D).

The interview process was characterised by an initial briefing of the participants by the researcher where the aims and objectives of the study were made known to the participants. The participants' rights were outlined to them in this phase. Thereafter, a guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity was given by the researcher in protecting the identities of the participants and pseudonyms would then be assigned throughout the whole research process. The interviews were held in private rooms at the University of KwaZulu Natal where the interview environment was free from any potential distractions. Lastly, the findings and recommendations from the study were conveyed to the and the University of KwaZulu Natal management.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Following the data collection and analysis process, the outcomes are analysed in relation to three key themes. The first central theme, Learners' on-campus interactional patterns, explores an array of issues from the learners' preferences in communication, reasons behind such preferences, discussions on race and the hesitance to interact on such issues thereof. It brings forth the hesitance and fear within learners to openly engage in discussions of race on-campus largely based on 'race trouble'. The second central theme, 'Understanding race', explores how students construct race, their attitudes towards race, their perceptions of their peers of other races and how they perceive themselves in relation to others within the University environment. The third theme, 'The racial climate', explores students' understanding of the different racial dynamics across a diversified student population, occurrences of a racial nature and what they have made of these occurrences.

4.2 Learners' On-campus Interactional Patterns

The learners reflected specific interactional patterns that were determined by preferences based on language, culture, shared interests and religion. For purposes of this study, the participants' inclinations to communicate based on racial perceptions where prioritised. Beyond such interactions, the learners' willingness and hesitance to openly discuss race were evaluated. Furthermore, the reasons behind such inclinations were examined and through such, learners' perceptions and attitudes to race are brought forth.

4.2.1 Interactional Choices

The majority of the participants reflected a high inclination towards intra-racial interaction regardless of having the choice to interact outside their own race groups considering how highly racially diversified the campus setting is. Acknowledgements on how the university campus is racially diversified were made by most of the participants, although a minority of

the participants indicated that there were fewer white students on campus and another indicated that it was predominantly black learners. Indications of such acknowledgments on the diversified student population are indicated in the following excerpts:

P3: ...there is some diversity at Howard, like especially in classes, you see different races, different ethnic groups, and not just race but in terms of language, age, young people and older people. You always find them in one class. So, there is diversity.

P6: Yes, there is some form of diversity in my opinion. It is just that the degree ...or the percentages to which different students of various races is quite skewed. You find more Black students and Indian students on campus and less White and Coloured students.

P7: Yes, there is racial diversity on camps. You find a mixture of all the races although Indian learners and...Black learners seem to be in their abundance as compared to us White learners and Coloureds.

Most of the participants concurred that the university campus is racially diversified. However, despite a majority consensus regarding how the university campus is highly racially diversified, there are some participants who had different opinions with regards to whether the student population was diversified:

P2: No! I think it's now majority Black. So, I suppose if you like compare to the Westville Campus, it is quite different from Howard.

P10: ...I think there are more Black and Indian learners on campus. There are less White learners and you find a handful of Asian, by Asian I mean the Chinese students and so on. But, that is how I perceive the campus to be.

Therefore, considering how racially diversified the campus is as perceived by most of the participants, it is postulated that interaction with peers of other race groups is a matter of choice in a highly diversified population, basing on principles of freedom of association and freedom of speech as provided in extracts from the South African Constitution, Chapter Two, Section 16n and 18 which state:

"16. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes-

(b) Freedom to receive or impart information or ideas.

18. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of association." (Republic of South Africa 1996a).

[45]

Furthermore, Ahearn (2001) argued that despite our social identities and roles being shaped by the groups and communities we are ascribed to, as individuals, we also have the autonomy to shape them. What this means is that despite the acknowledgements of diversity of the student population, there was an indication of students preferring to interact within their own race groups. Vincent (2008) studied an undergraduate student population and found out that there was an appearance of interracial group contact although informal boundaries remained in between the various racial groups. Despite participants' efforts in portraying elements of being neutral, contradictions in their utterances could be noted and their actual preferences emerged:

P3: I interact with all students. ...I find it easy to interact with everyone...I find myself more comfortable with my race, because obviously I can speak in my own language, and there are some words that you can't translate so it is easier to speak in your own language. And also, because I have become so accustomed speaking in my native language. I find it easier to socialise with people of my race.

The above excerpt reflects the contradictory nature of P3's responses. In the first instance of the paragraph, the participant reflects an inclination towards being neutral as better explained by the social desirability bias where one ought to act or talk in ways that they perceive to be socially acceptable (Kaminska & Foulsham, 2013). However, the participant's standpoint was then revealed during the course of the interviews, where a different response was given that reflected being inclined to interact within her own race, quite opposite to the initial response of being neutral.

Furthermore, it underscores Durrheim's (2017) views on how people tailor their actions and utterances in order to be perceived in socially acceptable ways that are considered free of prejudice. Therefore, in analysing the participants' responses, they initially wanted to portray themselves as being neutral and open to communicate with anyone regardless of their race. Upon further questioning, it was brought out that they actually preferred interacting within their own race. Henceforth, the initial responses were tailored to suit socially preferred expressions which are perceived to be non-prejudicial in nature.

Apart from the above, the participants provided justifications as to why they preferred interactions within their respective races. An apparent repertoire of how the participants provided such justification without being questioned on them could be an indication of their thought processes in trying to maintain a 'socially acceptable stance' throughout the

interview process as explained by the social desirability bias or in what Holgraves (2004) identified as impression management. Pertinent to these findings is the notable avoidance of the learners' use of 'race' as a factor in determining interactional choice. Instead of using the word 'race', the learners replaced it under the guise of language, culture, shared interests and religion. This is consistent with a study by Moguerane (2007) that concluded that the difference in the students' cultures was the main causative factor hindering integration. Furthermore, this trend in the participants' responses underscores Van Dijk's (1992) and Barker's (1981) notion which they described as being laden with repudiations, vindications, reversals and other discursive devices which are engaged in hampering inferences of negative nature towards a particular outgroup. The learners provided an array of reasons towards their preferences which were mostly based on issues of language, culture, shared interests and religion. The excerpts below highlight such justifications:

P1: ...Because your social spaces are different, you don't have mutual hangouts, you don't have mutual spots or mutual activities that you can do together.

P3: I find myself more comfortable with my race, because obviously I can speak in my own language, and there are some words that you can't translate so it is easier to speak in your own language. And also, because I have become so accustomed to speaking in my native language. I find it more easier to socialise with people of my race. But not that I stigmatize people that are not of my race but I find it more comfortable.

P8: I was brought up in an Indian community, and our religion connects us. It is much easier to talk about issues on religion and all that because we would understand one another. We have the same belief system, I mean me and my friends. You find that us Indians we have different belief systems but the way in which we do most of our things is equally similar.

The learners portrayed inclinations towards confining meaningful interactions within their own race groups although at the same time, they tried not to sound prejudicial through carefully tailored responses that were laden with justifications of their lack of interracial communication. This phenomenon underscores Durrheim's (2017) notion on how race continues to dictate over people's actions, utterances and ways of living.

The learner's hesitance to engage with other races has been unearthed. Furthermore, the students depicted the importance of language and identity in their interactional choices. This could also further explained why the learners are hesitant to interact with others or the deeper reasons thereof.

4.2.2 The Language and Identity Factor in Interaction

Altieri (1994) argued that in using language, our identities are brought forth and are shaped in the process. The participants reflected inclinations towards interacting within their race, which they mainly identified through sharing the same language. Most learners' interactional choices were largely based on shared identity. Although shared identity does not imply non-interaction with those considered as the 'outgroup', the participants justified themselves along such lines. Upon further inquiry, it was discovered that this particular sense of shared identity was established through sharing the same language, which in turn enticed them into interacting with each other:

P2:...because I was speaking about language and how you know people find language being a common factor.

P3: I find myself more comfortable with my race, because obviously I can speak in my own language, and there are some words that you can't translate so it is easier to speak in your own language. And also, because I have become so accustomed speaking in my native language. I find it more easier to socialise with people of my race. But not that I stigmatize people that are not of my race, but I find it more comfortable.

P11: ...Although I am more comfortable with my race, because of the culture that we share and of course the language. It is much easier to connect when you speak the same language. Not saying I can't connect with English speaking or Afrikaans speaking people, I find it more easier to express myself in my mother tongue. You know, growing up we used to speak our mother tongue at home and at school, so the adjustment is quite drastic but I am now comfortable with speaking in English unlike before I came to varsity.

Therefore, drawing from the above excerpts, it is apparent that language shapes a vital part in shaping the learners' social identity; which also influences their communicative patterns on-campus. There is an element of 'comfortability' that keeps recurring which highlights how uncomfortable one might feel in communicating in any other language besides their mother tongue as expressed by P3. In this regard, the element of South Africa's multiple official languages cannot be ignored in such an instance. It further questions whether sustainable transformation can be achieved especially when language seems to be the 'unifier' and on the other hand, several different languages are officially recognised.

However, Block (2007) argues that the degree to which individuals exert effort in shaping identity differs. This underscores that despite being faced by issues surrounding multiple languages, one's efforts in shaping their identity differs. There are participants who did not cite language as a barrier to communication nor socially identify with a specific group as a result of language:

P9: ...I am not picky in terms of whom I interact with. I talk to anybody and everybody. Most of my classmates freely engage with me because they know I am not that uptight as other Indians. I am a sociable person and that is just my vibe.

P9's response indicated a more neutral and receptive stance towards other learners regardless of their language. Block (2007) posits how individual identity is potentially engaged when one enters a communicative moment. It further draws into the question of whether interactional choice on campus is really a matter of language and identity or it goes beyond that. In as much as students identify with certain groups, is it reason enough to avoid interaction with the perceived outgroup considering the notion of individual identity.

Furthermore, despite sharing the same language and identifying with a group, interaction with others within a shared space, in this case; a university campus is a matter of choice. Moreover, a contradiction emerged throughout the interview process as all the participants were interviewed in English, which is not the mother tongue to most of the participants, but they resembled to be comfortable in expressing themselves and fluently expressed themselves. This further question the authenticity of their notion on 'comfortability' in interacting with learners of other race groups based on language. It further draws back to the argument of social desirability as outlined by Kaminska & Foulsham (2013) whereby the participants could have presented and acted in ways that they deemed to be socially acceptable throughout the interview process despite them being uncomfortable internally. It also underscores Durrheim's (2017) notion on race trouble; how individuals carefully avoid remarks that would be considered to be laden with racist connotations. The participants' contradictory nature and their avoidance of forthright responses that could be portrayed as racist brings forth the 'troubling nature of race' amongst the student population.

However, Duranti (1997) argues that individual action cannot be understood outside the context which is saturated not only by linguistic constructions of identity but also, by the historic and socio-political forces. Therefore, in understanding the participants' actions, it can be understood how the historical legacy and socio-political environment of South Africa

continues to shape them. This indicates how the participants' inclinations might be outside their reach of autonomy considering the historical legacy if the shared space; the University Campus, which also happens to be the site of interaction.

The significance of language and identity in interaction has been examined. The learner's inclinations to draw their identity centred upon common language has been explored. Issues surrounding identity formation have been unearthed in relation to the learners' on-campus interaction. However, despite the influences of language and identity on interaction, perceptual biases were unearthed throughout the interview process. Such biases were also highlighted to be influential in the learners' on-campus interactional patterns.

4.2.3 The Role of Perceptual Biases on Patterns of Interaction

The participants reflected some predispositions in their interactions with students of other races and this further influenced their choices as such. Cameron (2005) identified such processes as being part of identity enactments, historically grounded and socially constructed knowledge. These reflected to be determined by their perceptual processes in which some participants categorised students of other races to be either hostile or receptive to open interaction on campus. Lindsay and Norman (1977) made key contributions in defining perception as the process which humans interpret stimuli into meanings that are compatible with their previous experiences. There are various perceptual biases that reflected to have an effect on the participants' on-campus interactions.

There are some participants who attributed their lack of interaction with other students outside their race. This phenomenon is best explained by Heidler's (1958) Attribution Theory which maintains that individuals offer explanations as to why certain occurrences take course and is largely based on an individual's perception rather than the underlying reality of events. P3 is a Black participant that attributes her non-interaction with her White colleagues to their 'individualistic tendencies':

P3: So, what I have noticed from campus, Uhmm…the White students are very westernised, they don't like sharing their work, they like working alone and when you are in a group with someone that's from like a western culture, they like isolating themselves and do their own share of work and hand it in to the group. As opposed to an African person, that would rather sit, discuss and talk…you know it is all about that African thing of coming together,

uniting...we share knowledge, we share history, we talk about anything. Western people are more selective, like they only contribute when it's time to contribute.

The above excerpt depicts how P3 attributes her non-engagement with her White colleagues to their 'individualistic nature' whilst portraying herself and others from her own race group as being collaborative and willing to engage. These attributions reflect how P3's attribution towards White learner's non-willingness to engage could potentially determine her willingness to interact with her colleagues of this race group. It further underscores the debilitative inclinations that could potentially hinder the course of social transformation in South Africa, laden with accusation and counter accusations, where individuals fail to take responsibility, and rather find fault in others.

Apart from the above, the majority of the participants engaged in a process of attributing their own beliefs onto others. Pickney (2005) described such a process as projection, when one engages in a process of attributing his or her own beliefs onto others. Through such a process, they attributed their lack of interaction with students of other races onto others through portrayal of the others being hostile and non-willing to engage, whilst it might be a reflection of their own internal inclinations that may be projected onto the perceived outgroup. The author further highlighted how such a process unconsciously takes place. Freud (1984) posited that projection is a defence mechanism protecting oneself from feelings of guilt and anxiety. A Black participant; P11 brings forth this perceptual repertoire that he observed amongst his colleagues:

P11: We always want to accuse White people for being racists that is the honest truth but I think us Blacks are equal racists as well. I always find myself or my friends gossiping about a White person or Indian person probably based on their dressing or action and would pass on those silly little comments. But, those silly little comments if said to the person directly, would be obviously racist in nature.

The majority of the participants reflected stereotypical perceptions on the other race groups which could also have an effect on their interactional patterns on campus. Pickney (2005) posited that a stereotype is conformist depiction applied to whole groups of people and the treatment of groups according to a static set of generalized characteristics. The most common stereotypes were laden with inferences of violence and hostility, which could possibly determine why learners of other races do not prefer interaction with them:

P5: Oh yes, I think there are. Personally, I find the Black African learners being quite violent especially when it comes to strikes. My car almost got struck during the Fees Must Fall protests, I find such events quite too violent for no reason. Burning down buildings and all isn't a reflection of genuine grievances but is just mere acts of violence. You barely find White students in the middle of such protests not that we are not concerned by what they will be striking for but we are also concerned about safety. We are often prejudged and people label us as being insensitive to the plight of others but, that is not the case. Not at all! I prefer doing things in a civilised manner that doesn't put myself or others in danger.

P8: ... Then the Black students are more into striking and all that. They are more vocal and usually start all this violent stuff. Then we have the White students who just focus on their own thing more like us. They come to campus, do their thing and leave. And then the Coloured students who are not really worried about their academics, they are less involved academically.

P9: Yes, I have. I just feel that White people think they are too special. They are hesitant to interact with other students to be honest. They are cocooned in their own little worlds that wouldn't want to associate with other students…

The above excerpts depict how the learners held stereotypical perceptions on the other learners. These stereotypical biases have the potential to determine whether the learners would interact with others as these preconceived notions could possibly stand in the way of meaningful interaction. In a way, stereotypical biases that the participants presented reflect how they influenced their patterns of interaction.

The learners' interactional patterns have been unearthed in depth. Furthermore, the different key influencers to these patterns have been explored as they emerged throughout the interview process. The learners highlighted a general hesitance to interact with learners of other races and preferred interaction within their own races. The learner's understanding of race is to be explored in the next section, to understand what they make of race would be crucial in understanding their attitudes to race which are characterised by hesitance to engage with other learners.

4.3 Understanding Race

4.3.1 The 'untouchable nature' of Race

The significance of an awareness of race and the discussions surrounding it based on South Africa's historical legacy and the current movements was sought from the participants. Most of the participants presented to be aware of South Africa's history in relation to race and some of the legislations that have been implemented along racial lines. The importance of engaging in such discussions was derived from the participants:

P4: ...All the time we always talk about race you know...so like in South Africa, race is like the biggest topic. So, you will see in most cases things maybe happening you know, out there and then you come back and discuss this on campus.

P4 demonstrates the significance to engage in meaningful discussions on race. She highlights how race is crucial in most discussions in South Africa, considering its apartheid history and discussions around transformation. It reflects how the course of transformation has been centred along racial lines and also how learners such as P4 find it relevant to discuss such issues. P4 highlighted that race is 'like the biggest topic' which denotes its superior level of significance at present. However, despite such viewpoints on the significance of discussions on race, there is a depiction of hesitance to engage with peers on such issues that is displayed by the majority of the participants. The participants regarded race as an 'untouchable' subject that ought not to be openly discussed upon. The other participants were hesitant to divulge much on race regardless of the interviewer's reassurances on confidentiality. Despite a minority of the participants reflecting comfortability in openly discussing race, most of the participants indicated that they were not in a position to openly discuss race on-campus. This underscores Edwards' (2003) notion on 'race trouble' that is regarded as being discursive in nature, burdened with rhetoric. Therefore; the participants' avoidance of racial discourse could be a clear indication of the reasons behind it's omission; the fear of being deemed to be 'racist'. Apart from the above, it further denotes the participant's internal racist prepositions as argued by Durrheim (2015) that it is imperative for one to have an implicit depiction of what racism is for them to avoid explicitly acting in such a manner. However, there are some participants who openly declared such fear as being the reason behind their non-participation in racial issues on campus. This phenomenon is what Goodman and Rowe (2013) labelled as 'discursive de-racialisation'.

P1: No! I haven't openly discussed any racial topics...I think because everybody has a different opinion of it. It could be...it is probably a fear to address the issue because you

never know how somebody would react to it. Errm, you know, some people, and apartheid is still very much alive within them. But then others, you know, not so much. So, I think if I was not comfortable, I would not bring up the topic of race with anybody in any context.

P5: ...As I mentioned on how the slightest of contributions can trigger so much noise on racism and all that, I would never want to put myself in such a situation where I am labelled racist, when in actual fact I'm not. It is just unfortunate that being white in South African, makes you…Uhmm vulnerable to misjudgement where people just assume that you are racist. So, in such an instance, I can never openly discuss race or make useful contributions with other learners. We are scared even amongst ourselves as white learners, we would rather avoid such topics in our social discussions.

P6: Tjo! My man, that one is too hot. I can never go there. You know…tempers flare once you go there. Especially the Black oaks, they don't even wanna hear anything along those lines. It is like it brings back memories and all. You know us coloureds, we were also affected but I think not as much as the blacks. So, for us, we do not really get touched by it. But, hey…I would never discuss such a hot topic here on-campus. Such conversations are saved for our homes where we are safe to discuss about anything.

The troubling nature of post-apartheid South Africa is the inability to interact freely without race being drawn into the picture (Durrheim, 2017). This is mostly depicted in P5's sentiments on how he is prone to being misjudged of being racist hence, he avoids discussions of such nature. The participants' fear of engaging in racial discussion is explicit as most of them openly declare their hesitation which is centred upon being judged of being racist and 'reopening closed wounds'. There are some incidents that genuinely could have not been racially-driven, even depicted by P5's further sentiments:

P5: Oh yes, I have. There is this one time that I made a contribution in a sociology class based on my thoughts. There is a group of black African students that accused me of being racist based on my contribution. Well, it is high time people think differently and not just hide behind race in all arguments. So, you find when we are constantly attacked, we retract from making useful contributions in class discussions and all as we would want to avoid a…a reoccurrence of such.

However, through the accusations, denials and justifications of racism, the participants seem to be subconsciously drawn into implicit racism. This could further explain the trend in which the participants depicted inclinations to interact within their own race groups. The implicit racism predisposes the participants to prejudicial perceptions of the outgroup as described by Goodman and Rowe (2013), forming negative inferences on the outgroup which later emerges explicitly through non-interaction with members perceived to be of the outgroup; in this case, learners of other races. Whilst avoidance of racially laden discussions could seem to be the short-term remedy towards being accused of being 'racist' as in P5's case, the process thereof of having to negotiate his way through all interactions and actions force him to have a racist frame of reference which he compares his anticipated utterances to and weighs the severity of his utterances or actions before dissemination.

Many of the participants portrayed race to be an 'untouchable' topic that ought not be discussed on despite acknowledgements of the importance of engaging in such discussions. These inclinations question the success of transformative process in post-apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, in as much as racial discussions are crucial to the society; as most transformative agendas are drawn along such lines, it becomes a cause of concern when people fear engagement on such issues which is detrimental to the transformative efforts. There are issues that the learners brought forth that require engagement for sustainable solutions, which they are hesitant to bring forth openly in their individual capacities:

P2: So, it's not easy, it's not easy and I suppose in the mindset of those individuals will be then like, oh! Its 25 years now, come on guys, let us you know…move on. Been there, done that you know, we the born frees. Let us pick up things and liberate for one another, but then once again, you cannot forget the past. But, if I had the means…I would ensure that students have proper means of communication…to communicate. The communication channels, you know I think that was the issue the last time. Besides, just ensure that students have the proper support and facilities they need…to engage in such kind of actions. And I think racial integration in all honesty, it's going to take time.

P2's sentiments exemplify the numerous viewpoints that emerged from the study which could be instrumental towards championing sustainable social transformation. Sustainable change could be realised if all such views could be openly brought forth, challenging each other in discussion and in the process, changing insights for positive change. The unfortunate element of such viewpoints is the hesitance of students to openly express them based on their

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perceptions of how race is 'untouchable' based on their constructions of the repercussions associated with openly expressing their views:

P5: No, I wouldn't even dare! As I mentioned on how the slightest of contribution can trigger so much noise on racism and all that, I would never want to put myself in such a situation where I am labelled racist, when in actual fact I'm not. It is just unfortunate that being white in South African, makes you....vulnerable to misjudgement where people just assume that you are racist. So, in such an instance, I can never openly discuss race or make useful contributions with other learners. We are scared even amongst ourselves as White learners, we would rather avoid such topics in our social discussions.

P5's sentiments highlight how he is hesitant to engage in discussions to do with race. Despite the acknowledgement that he ought to contribute, as a member of the society towards sustainable change, he fears to openly do so due to how such sentiments can be further put under scrutiny. The participant further brings forth the challenge associated with being white in engaging in any such discussions as he believes that they are exposed to being misjudged as being racists.

However, despite the majority of the participants bringing forth such hesitance to engage in discussions of a racial nature, citing it's 'untouchable nature', a minority of the interviewees based their views on personal lived experiences:

P8: I have personally engaged in a few debates with colleagues but they ended up very bad. It is sad that it remains quite a sensitive topic and emotions are all over the place when discussions on such take place. But come on, how can we move on when we do not talk about it? Otherwise, I am ready to engage others on it although I am picky about who I engage with because you can be wrongly perceived and put into trouble if you are not careful. There are a lot of dynamics surrounding this issue to be honest.

P8 is one of the few participants who highlighted experiences of being 'victimized' by students of other races when he brought forth his viewpoints on race. He makes reference to intimidation by black learners showing how he felt upon freely expressing himself. Such highlights where his hesitance to openly discuss racial issues on-campus emanates from.

On the other hand, most of the participants highlighted that they have never experienced any negative action or utterances associated with openly expressing their viewpoints. This indicates that most of the learners believe that race is an 'untouchable' aspect that ought not

be discussed in fear of negative outcomes although they have not personally experienced any of these negative consequences before. It further brings forth how the participants' hesitation to engage on issues of race is based on others' experiences that they either witnessed first-hand or through the media:

P12: No, I haven't. But, you see we watch the news and all. We always see people who get into trouble because of these issues that are seen as racial in nature. Then of course, you also learn from others' mistakes. That's how I got to learn how dangerous it may be to put yourself in such a situation.

P12's views are representative of how the majority of the students have built their resistance against openly engaging on racial issues on-campus. They have experienced others within the wider society being reprimanded for their utterances or actions that were deemed to be of a racial nature. In turn, the learners construct race along such lines, considering it as an 'untouchable subject' that has potentially adverse repercussions. The learners' view of race is created through an awareness of its negative connotations that continue to arise in the wider society. The learners have built a negative understanding of race, viewing it as an aspect that ought not be discussed upon as a way of avoiding negative consequences. It is through such avoidance of being reprimanded by society that they engage in what Durrheim (2017) posited as 'race trouble' whereby people engage ideas of racism to act in ways that are deemed not to be 'racist' in nature.

Apart from the above, the negative connotations attached to race could be the debilitative factor towards positive social transformation. As discussed in the previous section on learners' interactional patterns, the learners acknowledged the importance of interacting with others and also of engaging in discussions on race for tangible transformation to be realised. However, despite such acknowledgements, the learners reflected being hesitant to engage with their colleagues of other races and this could also be possibly due to the 'untouchable nature of race' that students perceive. This 'troubling nature of race' is debilitative towards sustainable transformation whereby instead of directly engaging on such issues and finding common ground, people focus more on acting in ways that are not regarded as racist in nature whilst implicitly maintaining racist positions as their referral points for socially acceptable actions and utterances.

The hesitance of participants to interact with each other can be further understood from their hesitance to even discuss race. The learners displayed fear towards engaging in any

meaningful discussions to do with race in fear of the negative consequences that may emerge when one is perceived to be prejudicial. The hesitance to openly engage on race is indicative of the status quo, how race continues to play a crucial factor in the learners' day to day lives, just like during the apartheid era. Apart from the above, understanding from the students on what being in their particular race group meant to them was sought. The other learners 'inferences are also infused in gaining a clearer understanding of what it means to be part of a particular race, which further brings forth any racial or prejudicial inclinations that the learners may have.

4.3.2 Being a Black Student

The study had an equal representation of students from the main race groups as indicated by StatsSA (1996). The Black participants highlighted various inclinations that were based on their on-campus experiences. They identified themselves with other Black learners and portrayed a sense of generalisability of experience as Black students. The repetitive use of the words 'us' and 'we' depicted how they not only perceived their experiences on a personal level, but on a group level. There were indications of perceived shared experiences across the Black learners:

P4: *…You know in most cases, you know when there is that NFSAS problems and what not, you find that us black students are the ones who are at the forefront striking you know and what not…*

P11: *…We at times hold back and let it slide. Our voices come out when we are in numbers I think. Individually, we don't have the guts.*

The above excerpts are depictions of how the participants repeatedly referred to experiences as a group in its entirety and not on an individual level. The key issue that emerged from the Black participants was centred upon a sense of being subjected to socio-economic disadvantage despite the various transformative processes that have been implemented to redress the inequalities that were set forth by the apartheid legislations. P4 is a Black female who believes that there are apparent socio-economic discrepancies between Black students as compared to White and Indian learners. She further explains why Black people act in a certain manner especially when it comes to the emergent 'Fees Must Fall Movement' which has turned out in a violent nature on previous occasions:

P4: ...And also, you find that many struggles are faced by Black people. So, in most cases, they are the ones that get violent because at the end of the day, they are the ones that experienced more exclusion. In terms of, if paying your school fess, they are the ones that are unable to pay school fees. But, Indians, White people, I don't think they struggle. They have they fees and all that's why they don't participate.

P11: ...Think it is possible but if only blacks get as much economic privilege as whites have. That is what we mostly fight for. We also want to drive to school, want to eat fancy meals and not worry about fees. If that is sorted, then I think we shall be on the same level. We haven't reached that point as yet but I think that if we keep pushing, government will keep its promises. We are in our land and we are supposed to equally enjoy the benefits of our land.

The above excerpt depicts a sense of struggle that is portrayed by P4. It highlights the severity of these perceived setbacks that are faced by Black learners especially in financing their studies. The participant makes use of the word 'exclusion' depicting feelings of isolation socio-economically. P4's sentiments are based on her experiences as a black student, how she perceives herself and her fellow black students in relation to her Indian, White and Coloured colleagues. The participant engages a justification process where she poses reasons to why they get violent as it is due to depravation. Her conceptions of being a Black learner are centred upon issues of economic lack and depravation. The excerpt below further depicts how black learners identify themselves as being the under privileged and disadvantaged group on-campus:

P11: ...Us Blacks are known for all the wrong reasons, striking and all that. We have valid reasons for our actions but people tend to think that we are plain hooligans. Then the Whites are known for having everything and enjoying the finer things in life. Never in my life at Howard have I ridden a taxi with a white student to campus. Oh, I have once and it was an exchange student. You see they drive cars, they are picked up and dropped off, they don't worry about money and all that we worry about. The Indians too, there are also well off although you find a few that are not. Coloureds are nearly extinct, you barely find them although they are here but they just do their own thing.

P11 who also is a Black learner, further highlights the socio-economic discrepancies experienced by Black learners on-campus. The learner provides examples on the lifestyle differences between the Black learners and the White and Indian learners. The learner then

engages in a process of justification just like P4, highlighting how it is justifiable for them to act in a violent manner due to such socio-economic differences.

However, despite the Black learners identifying themselves along the lines of socio-economic disadvantage and lack, they also regard themselves as being perceived negatively by learners of other race groups. The Black participants highlighted issues of being portrayed as 'violent' and 'hooligans'. Most of such viewpoints are linked to the Fees Must Fall Movement, which they justify as being of a worthy cause. However, such inclinations could be possible indications of internal self-perception as explained by Cameron (2005) as being how one observes themselves based on their actions and thoughts. Despite the negative associations of violence that the students perceive to have attained as a result of the protest action they engaged in, they still hold positions of being justified for their actions:

P4: …, I would think that yes there are differences, in that kind of way. But in us Black people, we are even striking for valid reasons and then we are perceived as violent. And then the Indians and what not, in most cases, they go away, they want to study, and they would do a silent strike.

However, despite the Black learners justifying their actions of being violent, they further brought forth a sense of entitlement which could be the other reason behind their actions. The students highlighted how they are the 'legitimate students' rendering students of other races 'second class students':

P11: …But also, you find that especially us Zulu students, we strongly believe that this is our land so we don't take nonsense from nobody as well. That's why we push to the edge when we want something.

It is noteworthy to highlight how other students also perceive these issues of entitlement as displayed by Black learners. An Indian; leaner's sentiments highlight the black students' actions and how he perceives them:

P8: …You know there are some Black students who act as if this is their own campus. Especially when they want to strike and all. They get into classes, drag people out of their lectures, disrupting everything. They always try to intimidate us and try to impose their views onto us. I personally don't like that. I believe we all have freedom to choose and to express ourselves. But, these guys they just want it to be done their way, which I really feel it isn't good at all. We all can't be barbaric, it is just not in our nature some of us.

The above excerpt from P11 represents an extreme sense of ownership by the participant. The participant openly declares ownership of the shared space which is the University campus. The participant also brings forth such views in such a manner that portrays a shared sense of ownership through the use of the words 'us' and 'we' interchangeably. This could be a possible reason towards the learners' justifications of their actions as they believe that they can 'do what they want'. Most of the Black learners reflected such views of ownership. In such a light, it could be possibly detrimental to the course of transformation as they would regard students of other races as outsiders. It further exacerbates tension along racial lines which delineates the previously discussed hesitance by the participants to engage with learners of other races.

4.3.3 Being a White Student

The White participants in this study presented feelings of fear on campus: the fear of experiencing accusations of being racist and a fear for their general safety. The participants reflected similar sentiments and they outlined how this fear has led to their minimal involvement in most campus activities:

P5: No, I wouldn't even dare! As I mentioned on how the slightest of contribution can trigger so much noise on racism and all that, I would never want to put myself in such a situation where I am labelled racist, when in actual fact I'm not. It is just unfortunate that being White in South African, makes you…vulnerable to misjudgement where people just assume that you are racist. So, in such an instance, I can never openly discuss race or make useful contributions with other learners. We are scared even amongst ourselves as white learners, we would rather avoid such topics in our social discussions.

P7: Yes, I am. I carefully choose whom I engage with because you can be misquoted along the lines and misjudged. I wouldn't want to be subjected to such, so I am specific about whom I speak to and to what extent we engage.

The excerpt above reflects the participant's hesitance to engage in any meaningful discussions on-campus due to the negative connotations attached to race. P5 further highlights how difficult it is being a white student as they are prone to misjudgement from other learners. The participant brings forth how difficult it may be to freely interact without being perceived as racist. This phenomenon underscores Durrheim (2017) notion on race

trouble, accusations of prejudice become the norm in most interactions and where individuals begin to tailor their actions and utterances in specific ways that are deemed to be free of prejudice. Furthermore, the learners are tasked with interacting and conducting themselves in accountable ways that are deemed not to be racist in nature, although this does not imply that they are not racist (Durrheim, 2011).

Apart from the above, such hesitance also elucidates on how positive social transformation could be negatively impacted. The hesitance of the white learners to participate in the shared learning space might further exacerbate racial tension on-campus. P5 clearly states his position in his non-involvement in any positive contributions as being a direct result of such fear. The participant's utterances resemble feelings of exclusion from any positive discussions that are relevant to the overall transformative agenda.

The white participants highlighted that due to previous experiences of such accusations, they were inclined to refrain from any active involvement in campus activities and discussions. The participants highlighted that they could no longer freely engage as they were prone to misjudgement. The excerpt below depicts a white learner who experienced accusations of such a nature:

P5: There is this one time that I made a contribution in a sociology class based on my thoughts. There is a group of black African students that accused me of being racist based on my contribution. Well, it is high time people think differently and not just hide behind race in all arguments. So, you find when we are constantly attacked, we retract from making useful contributions in class discussions and all as we would want to avoid a…a reoccurrence of such.

Apart from the above, the white learners reflected feelings of fear for their safety. The main underlying reason was the student protests that have been characteristic of not only University of KwaZulu Natal, but the wider higher education system, marred by demands for free tertiary education and other basic student needs. The White students do acknowledge the reasons behind such protests and consider them valid:

P10:You find that yes, students have valid reasons for protesting and all that…Not to say that the reasons for protesting are not valid at all. They make sense and yes, they are for a good cause…

P10 openly declares how she finds it justifiable for the students to protest. However, she and the other White participants such as P5 highlight how they are against the implementation process of such strikes which they regard as violent and a threat to their personal safety:

P5: …Personally, I find the black African learners being quite violent especially when it comes to strikes. My car almost got struck during the fees must fall protests, I find such events quite too violent for no reason. Burning down buildings and all isn't a reflection of genuine grievances but is just mere acts of violence. You barely find white students in the middle of such protests not that we are not concerned by what they will be striking for but we are also concerned about safety. We are often prejudged and people label us as being insensitive to the plight of others but, that is not the case. Not at all! I prefer dong things in a civilised manner that doesn't put myself or others in danger.

P10: The implementation is what I dislike the most so I would rather mind my own business. Much safer that way.

The excerpts above resemble how the participants fear for their personal safety. However, despite the learners depicting empathy towards the black learners, their non-involvement in protest action as part of the student body could be a possible indication of the economic advantage that they enjoy as compared to the learners of other races. P4, a Black learner tries to make sense of their non-involvement and also highlights how the white learners participated in a strike when the issues affected them:

P4: Yes, most of them they, they have money. And also, you find that many struggles are faced by Black people. So, in most cases, they are the ones that get violent because at the end of the day, they are the ones that experienced more exclusion. In terms of, if paying your school fess, they are the ones that are unable to pay school fees. But, Indians, White people, I don't think they struggle. They have they fees and all that's why they don't participate. Cause I remember the silent strike was not about, it was not. It was the biggest strike, it was not about financial aid. It was like some internal conflict within UKZN. I can't remember clearly what it was but it wasn't NSFAS. And then that's where like they intervened because for them, it wasn't a money problem, whatever but, it was something that was happening within. Oh! It was about the… the, when the students…Apparently UKZN didn't pay some res which was outside, which was off campus. The students were thrown out of campus and then they had to be put in a hotel with prostitutes or something. So, within that particular space. There

was also Indians so that's why they intervened because it was a problem that was faced by everyone and not necessarily financial problems, exclusion or anything of that sort.

The above excerpt depicts a Black learner trying to make sense of the White learners' non-involvement in protest action. The participant highlights that the White learners enjoy economic advantage hence they are not interested in joining the other students when engaging in such protests. Despite the speculation by other learners, the White learners do acknowledge that they have the financial privilege to cater for their education and other related needs:

P10: Well, I cannot speak for others… I am fortunate that my parents can afford to pay for my studies. So, I would help in the protests if I could but I feel it is too dangerous for me to be a part of it.

Apart from the above, the White learners reflected feelings of being excluded from most vital activities and programmes through affirmative action legislature such as Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003. The learners indicated feelings of anxiety towards their future. Furthermore, they highlighted how they felt excluded from future mainstream economic activities as a result of Affirmative Action legislature:

P7: At present, I do not see that day to be honest. It seems people are enjoying where they are, I mean the Black learners where they get privilege and all that. I am not saying it is a bad thing, but, opening afresh page would be something they are not willing to do. They would rather keep peeling the wound to keep it fresh, preach about how bad White people are and enjoy the benefits of such crusades. It is an interesting dynamic, that seems to be the norm nowadays. If we are to be an equally integrated society, then no one should be at a privilege. You know, I even dread to think of the struggle that I shall go through to get employment after my studies.

In addition, the White learners reflected experiencing explicit prejudice on-campus. The participants reflected that they would experience prejudice either directly or indirectly on-campus. The White learners presented to experience explicit prejudice of all the participants in the study:

P10: …Besides that, you find some black learners who have so much hatred towards us, they would openly call us names and all at times. They think that we don't understand their language but we do hear a few words especially the derogatory ones that they call us. It is

quite annoying that people seem to be quite backward and just try to fit in racism whenever they get the chance…

The excerpt above exemplifies what the White learners reported to experience on a regular basis on-campus. This could also explain the reasons behind the hesitance of students to interact with each other as discussed earlier in this chapter. These feelings of being treated in a hostile manner could build attitudes that exacerbate racial division on-campus and limit possible chances of positive social transformation.

4.3.4 Being an Indian Student

The majority of the Indian participants reflected inclinations towards maintaining interactions within their race. The Indian learners highlighted how their identity is mostly drawn along religious lines:

P8: I was brought up in an Indian community, and our religion connects us. It is much easier to talk about issues on religion and all that because we would understand one another. We have the same belief system, I mean me and my friends. You find that us Indians we have different belief system but the way in which we do most of our things is equally similar.

The Indian learners reflected more individualistic inclinations as compared to all the other participants. They mostly highlighted that they were focused on the main purpose of attaining a qualification and any social interactions would be deviant from their main goals. Most of the Indian learners highlighted that their main interactions with learners of other races were centred upon their academics:

P1: That would be all of us getting that degree. Does it go further than that? I don't think so! It usually stops there, probably depending on the level of friendship you have. Because your social spaces are different, you don't have mutual hangouts, you don't have mutual spots or mutual activities that you can do together. So therefore; in campus, you have a mutual goal, which is obtaining your degree. Does it go further than that? I don't think so!

Apart from the above, the Indian learners did not identify any racial differences with other races. They rather portrayed themselves as 'inbetweeners'. They presented to be comfortable with the status quo as compared to the black and white learners:

P8: Yes, there is. You see, us Indians, we are more conservative. We don't really poke our noses into other people's business and we just do our own thing. Then the Black students are more into striking and all that. They are more vocal and usually start all this violent stuff. Then we have the White students who just focus on their own thing more like us. They come to campus, do their thing and leave. And then the coloured students who are not really worried about their academics, they are less involved academically.

The above excerpt reflects the participant's stance in being reserved and not being proactive in the activities within the university setting. However, despite the students reflecting a neutral stance, their inclinations were unearthed. The Indian students depicted feelings of superiority and prejudice to the black learners, despite their efforts not to depict it:

P1: ... Then you get the Black community...for example, they just accept it, they remain passionate about certain things like fees and stay strong together, but when it comes to the quality of education, they let it slip by. Then you get the Indians and the Coloureds who seem to be more in-between, it is very rare that you would find one of them standing up with regards to the levels of education compared to the White students. However, when it comes to other issues like fees, living conditions and things like that, then you see the Black race group coming up, that could be due to their struggle, that they make sure they fight for their needs because they can and they watched it happen before, like during apartheid. And it could be because the white race group is so used to certain quality of life and certain quality of education that they know when they have been robbed and when they have been cut short. As compared to the black race group, whom many of them attending university being the first in their family, the first family member to actually get a tertiary level of education. They don't know better, therefore, they accept what they are given with regards to their level of education. But for a White person for instance, they have...you know, three or four generations prior to them attend university, they know what standards they should have, they know what they deserve. Hence, they are more aggressive in their approach.

P1's sentiments as depicted above reflect the deeper inclinations of the participant which are laden with disdainful rhetoric. She carefully chooses her words so that she maintains a 'neutral stance' although at the same time, her actual position is brought forth. The participant's utterances portray Black learners as being backward and receptive to anything of lower quality. The participant's utterances underscores Van Dijk's (1992) notion of

contemporary racism which he posited to be laden with repudiations, vindications, reversals and other discursive devices which engaged in hindering inferences of negative nature towards a particular outgroup. P1's utterances depict such a process, whereby she discursively tries not to pass on explicitly negative inferences towards the black learners.

4.3.5 Being a Coloured Student

The Coloured learners depicted to be neutral in their interactions. They reflected not to have any racial preferences in on-campus interactions. Furthermore, the Coloured learners did not portray any prejudicial inclinations in their utterances. The Coloured participants reflected more objective viewpoints as compared to all the other participants:

P12: The dynamics here are quite messed up because you find that there are a lot of Zulus here. Zulus think that this is their native land and they own it so that is why they behave like everything is theirs. They do not consider other students at times. Then also you find Whites who have come from a history of dominance and all that power. So, I think there is a struggle for power that is hidden within. Then we have the Indians, by the way who make up the largest Indian population in South Africa. It becomes twisted as most have those ideologies of being the owners of the university and all. It is a twisted dynamic but with time I think it shall all come to an end…

…Go check out the SRC and tell me if you see any other races. But, isn't the SRC supposed to be representative of the student? Aren't us Coloureds students? The Indians? And the Whites? I believe too much power is corrupting, it has to be regulated.

The above utterances from a Coloured participant reflect a more objective inclination that has minimal bias. In understanding the participant's utterances, one can notice a holistic understanding of the dynamics on-campus and how they in turn affect relations. The Coloured participants reflected having the lowest prejudicial inclinations as compared to all the other races.

An understanding of what race is and what it means to students has been unearthed. The students' perception of race is based along the lines of it being a sensitive topic that ought not be discussed. The learners reflected hesitance to fully elucidate on what they make of race in an attempt not to be portrayed in a prejudicial sense. However, despite the learner's efforts in avoiding being portrayed as being prejudicial, their inclinations were brought forth during the

course of the interviews. It underscores Durrheim et al.'s (2016) notion on how the lack of prejudicial discourse is equally important in understanding its omission and in the process, understanding one's reason for such omissions. The overall on-campus racial climate shall be explored in relation to the learners' perceptions. The various incidents which the learners perceive to be of a racial nature shall be sought in bringing forth the current on-campus racial climate.

4.4 The Racial Climate

The racial climate is an overall understanding of the current dynamics and issues that are within the university campus. In terms of the racial demographics, the majority of the participants highlighted that Black students were the most in the student population. The participants further highlighted that there were more Indian students and white and coloured students. The participants highlighted that it seemed as if since the Black student population was growing bigger, most white learners were leaving the Howard College Campus for Westville and Pietermaritzburg Campus:

P2: No! I think it's now majority black. So, I suppose if you like compare to the Westville Campus, it is quite different from Howard.

P4: But as you know, there are a lot of Black students more than White learners and it seems that the white students keep leaving UKZN because more black learners have been granted access. It's mostly White people if you go to Westville or Medical School.

P5: Well, yes. There is a form of racial diversity although you find that it is mostly Black African students that are on campus. Perhaps it is due to the fact that most of them come from the wider KwaZulu Natal Province. There are fewer White students especially at Howard and I don't really know why it is so as compared to Westville and Pietermaritzburg.

P7: Yes there is racial diversity on campus. You find a mixture of all the races although Indian learners and…Black learners seem to be in their abundance as compared to us White learners and Coloureds.

Therefore; despite the differences in the proportions of students of various races, there are certain dynamics that resulted as such. These issues were brought forth by the participants which could also be potential focal points in ensuring successful social transformation.

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4.4.1 The 'Invisible' Barriers

The legislative manoeuvres to abolish barriers to access in tertiary education were successful in that there has been increasingly higher enrolment of previously disadvantaged learners (Meier & Hartell, 2009). However, the authors argue that despite such changes in tertiary education, desegregation does to lead to meaningful attitudinal changes. This brings forth a key issue that emerged from the study which points out how learners have set 'invisible barriers' against themselves, internally drawing divisions where the ideology of shared space is clouded by principles of disintegration based on race. The majority of the participants reflected that they utilised particular spaces that were relative to their race. In this case, the students occupied certain spaces on-campus based on their race:

P3: ...Like in each and every lecture, you find a lot of...there will always be that corner with a lot of Africans on the left side, in the middle, and especially in the front side there will be like a lot of White students. So, there will be groups and groups of people. These people haven't gotten used to the other races. So, there's still certain groups, there's still that division.

P4: ...I would say that you find individuals in their own corner, White people in their own corner and Black people in one corner. Do you remember that at UKZN there was the White Café and the Black Café you know? Even events in most cases, you would find that the events were Black dominated according to me.

The above excerpts depict how space is divided on-campus based on race. It elucidates Meier and Hartell's (2009) argument on how desegregation does not entail a change in attitudes. It is apparent that students are disintegrated which further questions whether transformative efforts have yielded tangible results or whether it has exacerbated racial tension.

Apart from the above, P4 sentiments on the 'White Café' and the 'Black café' are an indication of these apparent 'invisible barriers' that have been set forth along racial lines. Upon further enquiry, it was established that these places were informally named by the students. It is a depiction of the apartheid era that was characterised by principles of division based on race which is consistent with Alexander and Tredoux's (2010) findings which indicated informal segregation on South African universities. The irony behind the naming of such places is apparent and P9 further explained the reason behind such:

P9: You see the White Café, it was labelled that because these White students would only hang there in their own groups and you find that food was much more expensive there. Don't you think it's a barrier to prevent the students whom are less fortunate from hanging around that area? Then you find the Black Café, way much cheaper so definitely the less fortunate students would be forced to buy there and hang there.

P9 tries to explain these informal barriers to access that remain apparent despite transformative implementations that are in place. The participant further dissects into the issues of 'invisible barriers' that are laden with socio-economic disparities that remain ostensible in the current university setting. P9 further outlines how the university's management has failed to handle such issues which he feels that are likely to recur in the future and a detrimental to the overall campus environment:

P9: Yes, it is very much existent. The White Café was once burnt down last year during the protests, but they have managed to rebuild it. I just wish they shouldn't have, you see, it reminds the other learners of apartheid. The wounds are still open because of such to be honest. For us Indians, it is not as much as the Blacks, the contrast is just too apparent, and it shall take time if the university doesn't address such. These issues are just ignored as if they are non-existent, but I am sure, they know about them.

The above excerpt depicts the tension associated with such 'invisible barriers'. It depicts the resultant events that emerge when tension is unresolved. The participant believes that such issues have a likelihood of recurring as they are not addressed properly. However, the 'invisible boundaries' that were unearthed are not only based on shared spaces but also on governance, academics and extramural activities.

A section of the participants highlighted their feelings of exclusion in decision making. The participants acknowledged the importance of empowering previously disadvantaged students in decision-making but also felt that they were being excluded from participating in the governance of the university, particularly through the Student Representative Council (SRC). The argument was centred upon the multi-racial environment of the university against equal representation of all the races within the SRC. It was established that the SRC was representative of Black students, whilst side-lining students of other races:

P12: ...Besides that, the Blacks enjoy too much power at the moment. Go check out the SRC and tell me if you see any other races. But, isn't the SRC supposed to be representative of the

student? Aren't us coloureds students? The Indians? And the Whites? I believe too much power is corrupting, it has to be regulated.

P12's sentiments resemble the skew in the demographics of students within the decision-making system of the university. In as much as transformation is good, it should not be implemented in such a way that exacerbates racial tension.

Apart from the above, there was an indication of 'invisible barriers' set forth socio-economic disparities. It emerged that the Black learners continue to face financial difficulties that hinder progress in their education. Despite the efforts of inclusion through the abolishment of barriers to access, the Black learners continue to face such a barrier that is hidden within financial issues. This is further depicted by the 'Fees Must Fall' Movement which was brought up by the majority in the study as students continue to demand free education from the government. It is apparent that there are learners who have been side-lined from attaining education by these 'invisible boundaries' set forth by the system. Apart from the above, Black learners highlighted how lack of access to quality resources such as study material jeopardised the quality of their education:

P11: Yes. Think it is possible but if only Blacks get as much economic privilege as Whites have. That is what we mostly fight for. We also want to drive to school, want to eat fancy meals and not worry about fees. If that is sorted, then I think we shall be on the same level. We haven't reached that point as yet but I think that if we keep pushing, government will keep its promises. We are in our land and we are supposed to equally enjoy the benefits of our land.

The different 'invisible boundaries' that students are faced with have been explored as they emerged in the study. It is noteworthy to understand how these boundaries affect not only a particular race but, are spread across the entirety of the student population. It is equally important to understand hostility based on race that has emerged in the study.

4.4.2 Hostility

Every (2007) argues on how modern race talk is strategically organised to deny racism. There were instances of hostility and prejudice that was entwined in the participants utterances. Despite their attempts not to sound prejudicial, their actual inclinations were unearthed through active engagement throughout the interview process as explained by Goodman and

Rowe (2013). Most of the non-black participants reflected feelings of hostility towards their Black colleagues. The participants cited various reasons behind such hostility. The main reason cited was based on protest action, particularly the 'Fees Must Fall' Movement which ended up in a violent manner. The participants acknowledged that the reasons behind such protests were genuine but, the protests jeopardised the safety of most of the students which has resulted in resentment towards the black learners as being violent:

P5: ...I find the Black African learners being quite violent especially when it comes to strikes. My car almost got struck during the fees must fall protests, I find such events quite too violent for no reason. Burning down buildings and all isn't a reflection of genuine grievances but is just mere acts of violence...

P8: You know there are some Black students who act as if this is their own campus. Especially when they want to strike and all. They get into classes, drag people out of their lectures, disrupting everything. They always try to intimidate us and try to impose their views onto us. I personally don't like that. I believe we all have freedom to choose and to express ourselves. But, these guys they just want it to be done their way, which I really feel it isn't good at all. We all can't be barbaric, it is just not in our nature some of us.

P10: You know, I used to think that the campus was very safe. But with what has happened in the past few years, I no longer think so. A building might be burnt whilst you're in it. I no longer feel safe. The other time, I had to run through the back of the buildings to dodge rubber bullets and teargas that was all over campus. I wasn't even part of the protests but was caught in the middle, minding my own business. So, safety is not something that I would speak of when it comes to this campus?

The above excerpts are indicative of the reasons behind the hostile feelings that were portrayed by the non-black participants. The participants highlighted that they no longer felt safe on-campus. However, hostility towards Black learners was not only based on protest action. Other participants highlighted that the black learners displayed a 'sense of entitlement' in their actions which in turn influenced their attitudes towards others:

P8: You see, most of the Black students here think that they own the land and they own this place. Some you find them talking loudly on the phone in the library, going against rules and all. You see, they just think that they can do whatever and wherever. So, tell me, how can transformation happen in such an environment. No one should be above another person I

think. If we all behave and treat each other equally, we will then reach that point. But from what it looks like, there are some people who think that they are above others.

P8's resentment towards black learners is apparent. The participant describes his experiences with Black learners on-campus which could have possibly formed such a hostile attitude towards the Black learners. Apart from the above, there also feelings of hostility that were displayed by other learners towards the white learners. The non-white participants regarded White learners as being economically advantaged, individualistic and hostile towards others:

P9: Yes, I have. I just feeling that White people think they are too special. They are hesitant to interact with other students to be honest. They are cocooned in their own little worlds that wouldn't want to associate with other students.

P12: I just still think that Whites enjoy too much advantage academically. They are just perceived as being academically gifted before they even prove it. That results in biases in the grading of students by lecturers…

The excerpts above exemplify the hostility towards white learners. P9 is an Indian learner who confesses hostility towards White learners based on his perception of them. Such a depiction is of significance as it defies the conventional black-white contrast which is usually laden with biases characterised by matters of the past; apartheid regime. It brings forth a more objective insight although it is laden with hostility towards his White colleagues.

Furthermore, there is a single instance of explicit hostility that emerged from the study. A Black participant, particularly P4 openly declared her resentment towards White learners:

P4: Yes. I don't like White people [giggles] ja I don't like them. I think like in most cases we are just like all like the same…

…I would say… you know I personally don't like White people. I wouldn't mind keeping it this way and sticking within our own spaces [laughs]. You know…I don't like White people.

The above excerpts from P4 are clear indications of hostility towards White learners. The participant further highlights how she would not tolerate any transformative initiatives that would integrate students of various races. Moreover, the majority of the students highlighted to be comfortable with the current stratified student population despite their knowledge of the status quo not being the ideal. Such a trend has been previously highlighted through the participants' hesitance to engage with learners of other races. It is equally important to have

an understanding on whether transformative implementations set forth by the government have been successful.

4.4.3 The Current State

The participants highlighted that despite the various efforts from the South African government and the university management, they believe that the university has not yet transformed fully, characterised by racial division and inequalities that replicate the apartheid regime:

P1: … you know, some people, race and apartheid are still very much alive within them.

P2: I mean, its 25 years since apartheid and we have never really healed from there. So, people still hold on to a lot of those things, that happened. So, I think for me, I would say like with the new generation, not even us, not even the born free! You know like the generation after, maybe 25 to another 30 years I would say.

P7: Other than that, I just think that there is still tension between students of different races. You know this apartheid thing, people really like talking about it and all. I actually think that the phase ended, and we have opened a new chapter but you see people still try to mess up the new chapter…

The above excerpts depict the how the status quo remains immersed in issues of race and prejudice. It is apparent that ideal transformation has still not occurred. The learners portray to be divided along racial lines as outlined by the participants. Academic life continues to be centred around issues of race. Moreover, the learners' actions and interactions continue to be dictated by race, as they carefully choose the words they say and tailor their actions as explained by Durrheim et al. 's (2015) notion of 'race trouble'.

Apart from the above, 'race trouble' is characteristic of the current university campus as explained by Durrheim (2017) whereby individuals engage in ways that are perceived to be non-prejudicial in nature as a way of suiting societal expectations. A majority of the participants highlighted their inclinations towards acting and speaking in ways that are regarded as being 'politically acceptable':

P5: … As I mentioned on how the slightest of contribution can trigger so much noise on racism and all that, I would never want to put myself in such a situation where I am labelled

racist, when in actual fact I'm not. It is just unfortunate that being White in South African, makes you… vulnerable to misjudgement where people just assume that you are racist. So, in such an instance, I can never openly discuss race or make useful contributions with other learners. We are scared even amongst ourselves as white learners, we would rather avoid such topics in our social discussions.

P5's sentiments portray not only an inclination towards acting in ways that are perceived to be free of prejudice, he also brings forth the other characteristic of 'race trouble' which is laden with accusations and denials of prejudice.

In addition, it is equally significant to note how transformative agenda could be single-sided which could further exacerbate racial tension:

P10*: From what I see it, it is now Blacks who are in control of everything and anything. I just feel that us Whites are now marginalised to the extent of frustration. I can no longer freely talk or act because I am scared of what people will say. That is an infringement on my rights in a way. There is freedom of expression, but I doubt if there is freedom after expression. We just watch and see, what else can we do?*

P10's sentiments depict how legislative implementations might have marginalised specific racial groups. These dynamics have been apparent on-campus, as the SRC is black dominated. The over-emphasis of a single race ahead of all others could be a possible limiting factor towards the overall transformative efforts.

4.5 Conclusion

An exploration of the learners' interactional patterns managed to unearth their implicit inclinations and prejudices based on race. The learners brought forth the importance of language in identity and how their interactions were in turn influenced by such. In addition, the learners' experiences as being members of their respective racial groupings were explored in understanding their constructions of race. The hesitance towards actively engaging on racial issues was discusssed and the reasons towards such hesitance which were largely based on 'race trouble'; the fear of being regarded as being prejudicial through careful alterations of utterances and actions, whilst maintaining implicit ideologies of racism as points of reference towards 'appropriate behaviour' (Durrheim et.al., 2015). Lastly, an understanding of the

current racial climate was brought forth through extraction of the insights from the learners as they experience it.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This chapter offers an overview of the key findings of this study and provides recommendations that are necessary for establishment of sustainable interventions, formulation of strategic policy and further research. In addition, the key limitations in the research process are to be discussed.

5.1 Summary of Main Findings

The main aim of the research was to explore learners' attitudes and perceptions on race based on their on-campus interactions and experiences. The study was based on a Social Constructionist paradigm, guided by four comprehensive research questions which include: how tertiary learners narrate their experience of race, how they understand and communicate about race, their views on race and lastly, how they understand the implications or consequences of their particular views. The data analysis process was done through a thematic analysis, which provides a more comprehensive and flexible approach to qualitative data analysis.

The study unearthed learners' perceptions and attitudes to race from a constructionist perspective. The participants' narratives were utilised in understanding how they construe race and their attitudes towards such constructions. The aspects of identity and agency, and their underpinnings were also embedded in the participants' interactional patterns. Furthermore, the influencing factors, particularly perceptual biases, were also analysed in relation to the participant's narratives, in understanding the various justifications that were brought forth in relation to 'race trouble' in South Africa.

An apparent finding; learners' hesitance to openly engage on race highlighted how race remains a sensitive issue in the current society which was regarded as 'the untouchable nature of race'. It brought forth issues surrounding participants' hesitance to be regarded as being racially prejudicial as explained by Durrheim's (2017) understanding of 'race trouble'. Furthermore, despite the learners' inclination towards 'socially acceptable' utterances throughout the study, their prejudicial positions were unearthed. It brought forth a

contemporary form of racism which is characterised by talking and acting in non-prejudicial ways according to societal norms whilst maintaining implicit ideas of racism.

Furthermore, the learners' denials, accusations and justifications of prejudice were further unearthed. They characterise part of contemporary racism, where ideas of what constitutes to be prejudicial in nature is socially constructed, as individuals engage in conversations that are laden with such accusations, denials and justifications. It further unearthed the debilitative nature of race as individuals engage in such conversations, constructing what racism is and what it's not, further destabilising tangible efforts on social transformation.

Apart from the above, the learners highlighted the importance of language in identity formation and how most of their interactions were based on identity. The participants indicated how their experiences on-campus differed, based on race and how such influenced their interactions. Contradictions emerged in the participants' narratives, which were further explained by various perceptual biases that were discussed.

In addition, an understanding of the perceived racial climate was derived from the learners. The learners' highlighted the various barriers to social and academic inclusion that were implicitly prevalent in the university's system. Furthermore, feelings of racial hostility emerged and were explored in relation to the participants' experiences. Above all, an understanding of how the participants perceive race to be a sensitive issue that ought not to be openly discussed, their interactional patterns and the reasons thereof, their experiences as students of different racial groupings and the perceived on-campus racial climate were derived from the study.

The following discussion summarises the key findings in context with the themes and subthemes that emerged.

Learners' On-campus Interactional Patterns

I. Interactional Choices

The participants acknowledge how highly racially diversified the campus is. However, despite such acknowledgements, the learners portray an inclination towards maintaining interactions within their respective racial groupings. The learners highlight hesitance towards interacting with learners of other races and cite language as a crucial factor in their

interactional choices. This process whereby individuals engage in justifications of their actions is characteristic of Van Dijk's notion on deracialized discourse that is laden with repudiations, vindications, reversals and other discursive devices which are engaged in deterring inferences of negative nature towards a particular outgroup. On the other hand, there are learners who depict willingness to interact with learners of other races regardless of language or any other barriers. It further questions whether interaction is a matter of choice or whether it is overridden by external factors, in this case; language as highlight by the participants. The learners' prejudicial inclinations are brought forth in the process, despite their efforts to present themselves as neutral beings, free of racial prejudice as explained by Durrheim et, al.'s (2015) understanding of 'race trouble' that is characterised by individual's actions and utterances being dictated by race as they try to act in ways that are seen as being free of prejudice.

ii. The Language and Identity Factor in Interaction

Through an understanding of the learners' interactional patterns, language is cited as a determinant factor in their interactions. The role of language in shaping the learners' identity is brought forth. However, despite the majority of the participants highlighting language as a key identifier, a minority reflects receptivity to communication despite language barriers. A contradiction emerges throughout the study as most of the participants highlight discomfort in using any other languages besides their 'mother-tongue' are interviewed in English and such 'discomfort' is unnoticeable as they fluently speak and even highlight their willingness to participate in the study using English language. Despite the genuine reasons of language being a key component of identity, determining the people the learners engage with, language is also used as an excuse in this instance, towards the learners' non-interaction with other races. This underscores Durrheim's (2017) notion on race trouble; how individuals carefully avoid remarks that would be considered to be laden with racist connotations through using language as an excuse for lack of interaction with learners of other races.

iii. The Role of Perceptual Biases on Patterns of Interaction

The majority of the participants highlight specific perceptual inclinations towards other races. These inclinations in turn influence their patterns of interaction. The majority of the participants attributed their lack of interaction with other students outside their race. This phenomenon is best explained by Heidler's (1958) Attribution Theory which maintains that individuals offer explanations as to why certain occurrences take course and is largely based

on an individual's perception rather than the underlying reality of events. Furthermore, the different perceptual biases were discussed in relation to the learners' narratives, highlighting how they influenced their on-campus interactions with other learners.

Understanding Race

i. The 'Untouchable nature' of Race

The learners highlight the importance of openly engaging in discussions on race in achieving a non-racial society that is free of racial prejudice. However, despite such acknowledgements of the importance of such conversations, the learners portray their hesitance to engage in such discussions mainly due to the fear of being accused or portrayed as being prejudicial or 'racist'. This phenomenon is what Durrheim and others (2016) posits as the 'troubling nature of race' in South Africa, where race shapes people's actions and words, as they fear being portrayed as prejudicial, whilst holding internal inclinations of what racism entails as referral points for 'socially acceptable behaviour.' The majority of the participants reflect non-engagement in any racial discussions on-campus in their university experience despite acknowledgements on the importance of such discussions in ensuring a non-racial society.

ii) Being a Black Student

The learners portray a sense of generalised experience as Black learners. They mainly highlight issues of socio-economic disadvantage as compared to their White colleagues. Furthermore, the learners believe that they are perceived negatively by other students mainly due to protest action, particularly; the 'Fees-Must-Fall' Movement which they believe is backed by valid reasons. The learners portray a sense of entitlement towards the university space as they regard themselves as the 'rightful owners' of the space. The single instance of an explicit prejudicial inclination based on race is portrayed by a Black participant in the study through an open declaration of dislike towards White learners.

iii) Being a White Student

Narratives of White learners are analysed in relation to their on-campus experiences. Most of the White learners portray hesitance to engage in most activities and discussions on-campus as they fear being accused of prejudice. Furthermore, issues of marginalisation of the white learners emerge as they are excluded from the main discussions and in decision making. In

addition, the learners highlight fears of their personal safety in the wake of the 'Fess-Must-Fall' Movement. However, despite such fears, it is unearthed that the majority of the White learners enjoy financial stability as compared to students of other races

iv)Being an Indian Student

The majority of the Indian participants reflected inclinations towards maintaining interactions within their race. The Indian learners highlighted more individualistic conceptions as compared to all the other participants. They highlight predisposition towards maintaining interactions within their race. Despite such predispositions, feelings of prejudice towards the black learners were unearthed.

v) Being a Coloured Student

The Coloured learners depict to be neutral in their interactions. They reflect not to have any racial preferences in on-campus interactions. Furthermore, the Coloured learners did not portray any prejudicial inclinations in their utterances.

The Racial Climate

i)The 'Invisible' Barriers

The participants highlighted various barriers that remain existent in the current university system that are based on race despite the government's legislative efforts to abolish them. Meier & Harteel (2009) argue that despite such changes in tertiary education, desegregation does to lead to meaningful attitudinal changes. The learners highlight how the university space was still defined along racial lines, exemplified by the 'Black Café' and the 'White Café' on campus as indicated by the participants. It is consistent with Alexander and Tredoux's (2010) study on informal segregation at a South African university unearthed apparent racial segregation on-campus. Furthermore, a majority of the participants highlight the socio-economic disparities that remain exist amongst the student population, as the less affluent learners, mostly Black learners are restricted financially. In addition, the White, Indian and Coloured learners portray feelings of marginalisation and exclusion in most co-curricular activities and decision-making processes as they highlight how transformative agenda has bypassed their existence.

ii) Hostility

There were instances of hostility and prejudice that was entwined in the participants utterances. Despite their attempts not to sound prejudicial, their actual inclinations were unearthed through active engagement throughout the interview process as explained by Goodman and Rowe (2013). Most of the non-black participants reflected feelings of hostility towards their Black colleagues. The main reason cited was based on protest action, particularly the 'Fees Must Fall' Movement which ended up in a violent manner. There are instances of hostility towards white leaners as well

5.2 Intervention and Recommendations

Firstly, it is believed that sustainable social change in terms of the racial divide is hindered by the inability to communicate openly about race and issues surrounding it (Moguerane, 2007). The main question is centred upon the possibility of finding viable solutions when there are not any meaningful engagements taking place. Furthermore, whilst individuals find ways of avoiding 'race talk', they implicitly hold ideas of racism and their attitudes are drawn from such implicit inclinations (Shutts et.al., 2011) Therefore, it is pertinent to openly engage in such conversations without fear of being judged. If race remains an 'untouchable issue', then how will social transformation occur? Open communication within the university surrounding such discussions have to be fostered especially within the learning environment. Training models have to be designed in such a way that race is addressed, considering its historical legacy in South Africa, it is relevant for such open discussions, to demystify such misconceptions that have been created on race, and in understanding that race is a mere human creation that lacks scientific backing.

Furthermore, it is suggested that integration measures should be administered to the student population. Whilst desegregation measures have been employed, it is not a guarantee of a change in attitudes. The learners present to withhold to attitudes that are laden with racial division which is detrimental to transformative agenda. The learning space can be utilised for such, where discussions are encouraged. In addition, there needs to be a more inclusive extra-curricular programme, that is accommodative of students and that encourages participation regardless of race. Furthermore, there needs to be attitudinal change programmes, to foster integration and curb issues of hostility and entitlement. There is need for attitude change to be fostered as it seems that despite legislative efforts to destabilise explicit segregation, leaners uphold their implicit prejudicial inclinations which hinder integration.

Whilst empowerment of previously disadvantaged students should remain a priority, other learners should not be left out in activities that affect them. This limits room for racial tension which seems apparent based on such manoeuvres. Although it is agreeable to give opportunity to more Black learners in decision making, other races should also be included. Furthermore, the university environment must encourage collaborative efforts in social change. Therefore a more collaborative student body has to be ensured, one that is based on principles of unity and harmony, free of hostility, violence and prejudice.

5.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The study lacks generalizability due to the limited sample size and the setting. However, the experiences of the participants are sufficient to draw inferences from the particular participants. There could be other key issues that could have been derived from a larger sample size. Future research should be based on a larger sample size and also on more university campuses across South Africa which could possibly enhance generalisability of findings.

Apart from the above, despite assurances on confidentiality, the learners presented responses that reflected to be of a socially desirable nature, as understood by social desirability bias whereby one ought to act or talk in ways that they perceive to be socially acceptable (Kaminska & Foulsham, 2013). The participants presented to tailor their responses which could have possibly hindered dissemination of key information that could have been beneficial to the study. Future research should perhaps focus on a holistic research that encompasses a mixed method approach of data collection whereby observation in naturalistic setting and interviews are engaged collaboratively to draw inferences.

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