

MOBILISING SPATIAL KNOWINGS: Students and higher education spaces

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree:
Doctor of Philosophy [Education]
School of Education
College of Humanities

University of KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa

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2020

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work. It has not been submitted before to any other institution for assessment purposes. I have acknowledged all sources used in this thesis and I have cited these sources in the reference list.



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ABSTRACT

Twenty-five years into democracy, the space of South African higher education is a contested one, with conflicting meanings for students. In 2015 and 2016, student protests [#Feesmustfall and #Rhodesmustfall] swept the country, calling for equitable access to education and improved material realities and rejecting dominant knowledge production systems. What meanings then, were students deriving from higher education spaces, particularly in a context where increasing welfare expectations and responsibilities were being foisted on the sector?

This study contributes to an understanding of *students knowings* of informal campus spaces related to food, accommodation and transport. This study deliberately focusses on students knowings, thereby giving a diverse group of undergraduate and postgraduate students the opportunity to voice their understanding of the significance of informal campus spaces. It employed spatiality, knowing and spatial justice as the lens with which to view students' meaning-making of these informal spaces as well as collaborative and creatively inspired art based approach utilising visual methods for both data production and analysis. Co-produced photographs of students in informal spaces on campus that were meaningful were filtered through a focus group to select images that best reflected being a student in higher education in post-apartheid South Africa. These photographs were then displayed to a broader body of students at an exhibition on campus for further meaning-making. The data was analysed using critical discourse analysis, presentational analysis and the metaphor of 'mobile'.

The study suggests that students' future aspirations for a life outside of campus are very much entangled within their past and present experience of their spatiality of higher education. Furthermore, these spatialities are entangled both within and outside of students and their freedom to act arises from an interplay of relations. Typologies of students and associated actions are proposed as abstracted conceptions of student negotiations of their spatialities on campus. The metaphor of a dandelion is used to illustrate a form of knowings that places the student not as a recipient of external influences, but as an agent of mindful actions. This celebrates students knowings as dialogical, discursive and deliberative.

This research document deliberately debunks conventions in terms of layout in order to be true to the methodology, metaphor and the phenomenon. The mobile metaphor, illustrates that the phenomenon of students knowings of spatialities is constantly interacting and continually in flux, conspiring to enable, dismiss or suspend students' freedom to aspire. This representation emphasises that the form of the thesis should not be divorced from the content, especially when adopting a visual methodological approach which encourages the reader to find new meanings in the data through their own re-readings thereof.

A NOTE TO THE READER

Mobilising spatial knowings: Students and higher education spaces was conceptualised pre-COVID-19 as an experiential hard copy document. However, the thesis had to undergo reformatting to comply with UKZN's digital submission requirements. In reformatting, some of the document's intents were translatable from hard copy to digital, while others were not. This note to the reader serves to make the original form and meaning explicit and to explain the translation into a digital format.

The thesis uses the mobile as a representational and analytical device, and the middle section of the document was to contain diagrams [as leaves of a mobile] which the reader was to pull out and read in tandem with the descriptive text in the body of the document. The pull-out pages were each to represent particular thematic parts of the mobile and were to be printed on tracing paper. The choice of transparent paper was intentional as it would have allowed the reader to see through the pages to the layers of diagrams below.

The aim of this representational strategy was to enable the reader to interact with the thesis through a literal unfolding of the data, thereby potentially invoking further meanings from the reader of the phenomenon of students knowings. In assembling this form of representation, I had chosen to reflect constructing, assembling and re-assembling as a continuous development of the data production and analytical processes. All elements were to become entangled in one another as a deliberative strategy to capture the richness and fluidity of the data.

In the translation from hard copy to a digital format the thesis was conceptualised as two parts, namely, a textual and a graphic component, with the latter containing the diagrams of the mobiles. The visual layering of diagrams over one another was not replicable in the digital format; however, it is hoped that the reader will still appreciate the intent of constructing and assembling a relationship between text and visuals as navigating through the finding and analysis section of the document.

DEDICATION

My father liked to tell tall stories, some true, some not so true. In response to these tales, I would retort, 'fact or fiction, dad?' And so began our banter at every tall tale told.

My thesis, dad, is a little different. It is a fact entangled in a fabrication that serves as a representation of students knowings of the spatiality of higher education.

Therefore, this tale is neither fact nor fiction.

My father passed away in the first year of undertaking my doctoral thesis journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My children, Benjamin and Catrina, became fearless surfers and independent, confident young beings in the four years of my undertaking this study. Their father now shares with our children a deep passion and love for the sea, a bond that will unite them for life. Without their time together in the ocean, I would not have been able to undertake this journey, and I often wonder about what they gained, and I may have lost in the time devoted to the doctoral process.

To Protasia Mbhele the kind and generous woman who kept our household sane and become a second mother to my children. Ngyibonga kakhulu.

To Michael Samuel, my supervisor, who kept unsettling the waters around me, gently pushing me in deeper, to tread harder but not without the concomitant guidance and direction. I don't think I would have tapped into my appreciation of the visual if not persuaded by Michael to try something different.

My Higher Education cohort colleagues, thank you for the support, the probing questions and for the supply of relevant readings. The mentors [Saras Reddy in particular], thank you for motivating us, reminding us of pitfalls and distractions along the way, and for generously giving of your time. I purposefully chose not to undertake the doctoral journey alone, and I will never regret the decision to join the Higher Education cohort.

University Capacity Development Programme research grants enabled lengthy periods to be devoted to the PhD. I am indebted to the University of KwaZulu-Natal for making these grants available to lecturers.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HBU	Historically Black Universities
HE	Higher Education
HWU	Historically White Universities
FAT	Food, accommodation and transport
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme

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SECTION A

Setting up the study

Prologue to SECTION A

The thesis is structured into three sections. The first **section [A]** sets up the foundational knowings for the study, the second **section [B]** is engaging in the field, and the last **section [C]** is an abstraction of data from the field.

Section A consists of three parts. Part one includes the contextual background to the study and an explanation of the phenomenon [*Chapter one*]. Part two includes the literature review and conceptual framework [*Chapters two and three*] and Part three covers the methodology, methods and analytical framework [*Chapters four, five and six*].

Section B consists of a single part, Part four and is composed of three chapters [*Chapters seven, eight and nine*], with each describing and analysing the findings from the adopted methods. **Section C** is composed of Part five and constitutes the thesis of the thesis [*Chapter ten*]. See Figure A.1 on page four for a diagrammatic overview of the structure of this thesis report.

This study deliberately adopts a unique representational form in Section B, defying convention and taking liberties by extending the arts-based methodology to encourage new ways of knowing and drawing the visual methods adopted in the data production strategy within the body of the thesis. The aim of this representational strategy is to engage the reader in the experience of interacting with the thesis through the unfolding of the data, thereby potentially invoking further knowings from the reader of the phenomenon. The purpose is to also invoke a reader response in the construction of the meanings of the thesis.

Furthermore, the font style, layout and graphics that are utilised purposefully evade doctoral prescriptions in order to contribute to my creative expression and the reader's pleasure in engaging with the thesis beyond the text and the arguments it conveys. I made specific design decisions throughout the thesis to enhance the reader's experience and to create an object that is both meaningful and beautiful.

A more exhaustive explanation of the contents of Sections B and C is made preceding the chapters they introduce which readers will discover as they progress deeper into the thesis content. These are noted as *prologues* to each section, serving as designed interruptions that demarcate each section and provide an orientation for the reader as well as an explanation of the architecture of each section. An explanation of the contents of **Section A**, Parts one, two and three follows.

The *first chapter*, in **Part One**, discusses the broader landscape of higher education and the external and internal forces shaping institutions before settling on a contextual discussion of higher education in South Africa. The focus of the study [students knowings] is further narrowed to particular spaces on campus. The particular spaces of HE within this study are delimited to the locus of informal spaces, outside of formal teaching and learning venues: spaces where food is bought, made and consumed; residential accommodation both on and off-campus, and spaces related to the various modes of transport, such as car parks, bus stops and taxi ranks which students utilise daily. Chapter one produces the structuring framework for the thesis by presenting the aims, the critical research questions, the problematic and a justification for the study.

Part Two of the opening section of the thesis is constituted by the *second chapter* which constructs the conceptual framework as three interlinked concepts of [students] knowings, spatiality and spatial justice which together provided the lens through which to view the phenomenon. The inter-relationship between these concepts is further discussed in *Chapter three* within the contemporary discourses on HE informal spaces of food, accommodation and transport. This addresses spatial injustices both known and yet to be known within the informal spaces of HE alongside student agencies deployed to address these injustices.

A trinity of methodology chapters constitutes **Part three of Section A**. The arts-based methodological foundations [*Chapter four*] are discussed along with the interpretivist stance adopted to produce the data. The methods section introduces the site as a historically white but now merged university in South Africa, discusses the difficulties encountered in adopting an innovative data production strategy [*Chapter five*] and highlights the unique means adopted to analyse and represent the findings [*Chapter six*].

I entered the field with a particular understanding of students knowings¹ and with an approach informed by an arts-based methodology. Several aspects of the initial research design, including the spaces focussed on, the methods adopted, and the theoretical aspects informing the study, shifted upon entering the field and in analysing the data. In the shifting of my positionality from a practitioner, in the setting up of the study, to the philosopher, in relation to the argument of the thesis, the prominence of the site of the study receded from the foreground to enable the phenomenon of *students knowings* to come to the fore to be theorised. Section A is thus written true to the original

¹ An explanation of the use of terms:

1. Students' knowings is related to the multiple *personal* [and possessive] levels of knowing – and is hence a plural form.

2. Students knowings as a theoretical *verbal adjective* functioning as a noun [i.e., a gerundive] refers to the *abstracted conceptualisation of the meaning-makings by students as a collective*.

The latter is the term adopted throughout this thesis.

understanding of the phenomenon upon entering the field. Sections B and C introduce further theories and concepts that arose in the process of analysing and theorising the data.

Section A is viewed as setting up the study before entry into the field. **Section B** is then written true to the unfolding and emerging understanding of the phenomenon whilst in the field. Finally, **Section C** presents a synthetic overview of the thesis in terms of insights gained and re-connects its contribution to the broader socio-spatial context of HE.

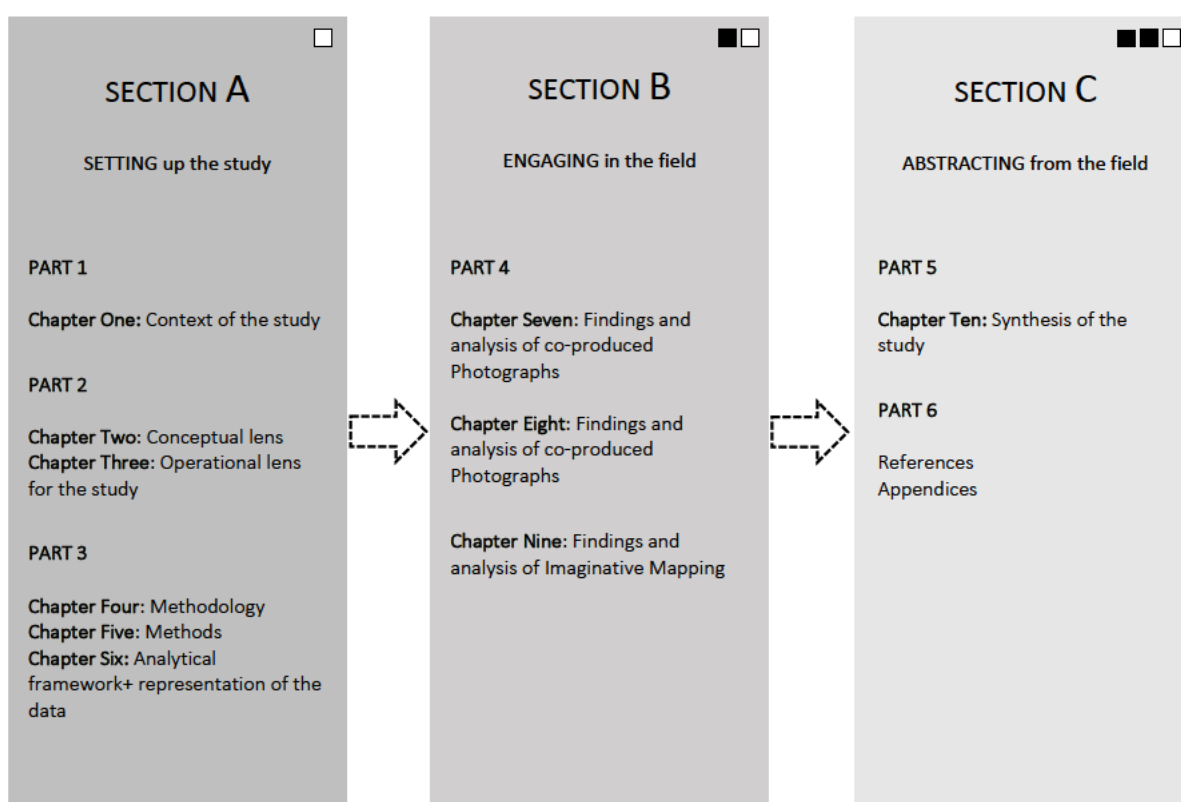


Figure A.1. Structure of the thesis as three Sections, six Parts and ten Chapters

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In his State of the Nation address on 20 June 2019, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa remarked:

*It is hard for you, the student from Sol Plaatjie University who must rely on a thin stipend from your parents to **feed** yourself. Yours are the lived struggles of the people of this nation...I **am hopeful because I have walked** with the people of this country – the nurses and health care workers, our men and women in uniform, the teachers in our schools, the **students who despite their family's hardship** are determined **to succeed and the youth** who are trying to start their own businesses, to **invent and create** and to **rise above their circumstance** [Emphasis author's own].*

Eight months later, in his State of the Nation address on 13 February 2020, he noted that:

*More than half of all **young people are unemployed**. We need to make this country work for young people, so that they can work for our country...The solution to this crisis must be two-pronged - we must **all create opportunities for youth employment and self-employment** [Emphasis author's own].*

The reference in 2019 to the hardships students face in supporting their material needs whilst studying and the tenacity and resourcefulness of the youth in South Africa resonated with me on multiple levels. This is because, firstly, it captures the complex nature of students knowings [as well as the empathetic approach] that this study aimed to explore within the context of higher education [HE] spaces in a historically white university campus in South Africa. Secondly, in grasping the interwoven threads of students' past, their present struggles and their hopes for the future, Ramaphosa asserts that the youth are attempting to change their circumstances notwithstanding the difficulties they endure. Thirdly, in *walking* with students, he declares his intention to share in their everyday lived experiences and expresses his empathetic view of their plight to the nation.

The second presidential address shifts to future opportunities for South African youth. While the first speech portrays students as resolute and unwavering in their efforts to get ahead, at the same time, it acknowledges they face formidable barriers in the future in terms of unemployment. Finally, in Ramaphosa's second address in 2020, the paradox of knowing of the future of the youth and their relationship to serving and being served by the country is illuminated. The youth are rendered as helpless in defining their future without the collective responsibility of the nation to resolve the problem.

Four years prior to these State of the Nation addresses students embarked on protests against rising fees and the prevalence of a western knowledge systems, and demanded change in the HE space. Such change relates to both their personal circumstances through financial accessibility to university and liveability whilst studying and to resolving the systemic injustices black students experience in previously white institutions. In the #Rhodesmustfall protests students denounced the dominant Eurocentric mode of knowledge production that was said by the movement to privilege whiteness through its epistemic architecture (Ahmed, 2019), and demanded material and systemic change in the HE space.

This study explored the significance of HE spaces, particularly those related to students' material needs and the services of food, accommodation and transport within a post-apartheid¹ HE institution. It was framed to explore what students know of these spaces and how these spaces [of material needs and services] enable or constrain their behaviour and interaction with others and other spaces, as well as how students then negotiate or redefine their boundaries to shape their future within HE. It aimed to deeply explore students knowings about being members of an institution and the spatiality of a HE context located in a particular time, place and history.

1.1.1 FROM KNOWING STUDENTS TO STUDENTS KNOWINGS

This chapter is structured as follows: firstly, the study is positioned within the broader contextual landscape of HE in terms of what is known of students and the challenges they face [how students are perceived]. This aims to establish a view of students as both victims of circumstance and as agentic catalysers of change. However, what is *known of students* is not the focus of the study; it merely serves to briefly establish the context in which this study is located and frames the issues of inequity within the context of HE.

The chapter then shifts from what is known of students to *students knowings of HE spaces* and what meaning they are making of these spaces. I thus choose to see students not as passive recipients of HE space, but as actively negotiating the spaces of the HE built environment, navigating the buildings and spaces in-between as they go about their daily campus life. This is the unique aspect of this study. It offered an opportunity to understand multiple readings of HE spaces and their associated meanings so as to explore the relevance of institutional spaces to students.

The last section of the chapter sets out the problematic of the study drawing on recent studies of students and informal institutional spaces. Being a student in HE is more than just knowing of a formal

¹ The term post-apartheid signifies the time frame after apartheid. It does not mean that under the new democratic dispensation that South Africa is free from the relics of its apartheid past.

curriculum; other knowings occur through students' encounters in the spaces of HE which could be useful to their educational journey. This study focused on the informal and in-between spaces [food, accommodation and transport] that students occupy and move through as they go about their everyday lives on campus.² The structure of the research methodology is presented before closing the chapter [See Figure 1.1].

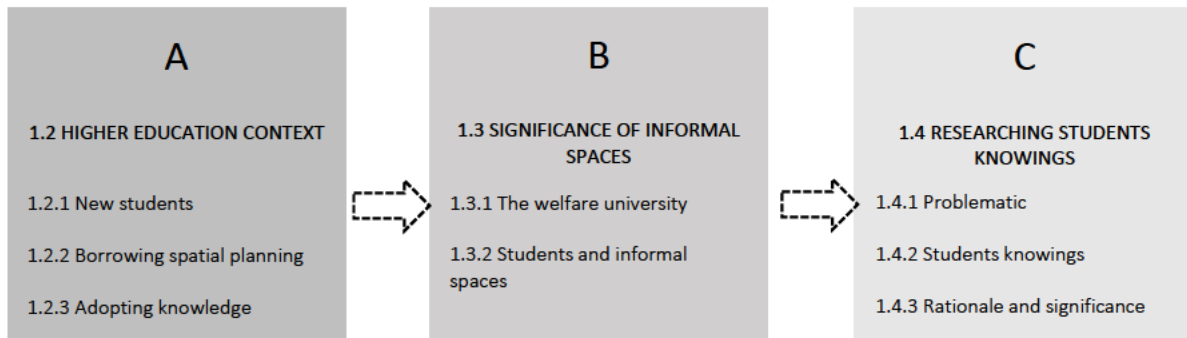


Figure 1.1. Structure of Chapter one as three parts

The overall architecture of the thesis was explained in detail in the prologue to this section, Section A of the thesis. The thesis is composed of three sections, with the prologue to each providing specific orientations to the detailed discursive structure of each section, part and chapter.

1.2 HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

While this study locates itself within a South African context, the discussion below shows that external as well as internal forces are continually shaping HE institutions, the students that access them and the knowledge produced therein. In turn, HE institutions are acting upon these forces. This section addresses three areas. Firstly, it highlights the conception of the 'new student' through increased cross-border mobility, previously marginalised groups' access to university and students transitioning into new territories. Secondly, the physical context of South African HE institutions and their borrowing of British and American models of campus design are discussed. The final sub-section focuses on the adoption of western knowledge systems and addressing inequity across institutions through the knowledge agenda as well as student protests arising from financial as well as epistemic challenges.

² Food, accommodation and transport spaces are explored in depth in Chapter three.

1.2.1 'NEW STUDENTS' – MOBILITY

How has the mobility of students locally, nationally and internationally, framed our understanding of who the students of HE are in the present time?

Internationalisation of education has enabled the mobility of students, staff and curriculum across borders (Guri-Rosenblit, Sebkova, & Teichler, 2007; Knight, 2012). However, access to such mobility is dependent on funding, finances, eligibility and fierce competition for selection within the knowledge economy (Knight, 2012). Knowledge is considered as becoming a globally competitive [must have] asset and access to and production thereof are important in the global HE ranking scales (Majee & Ress, 2020). This has direct implications for students in terms of highly selective admission procedures adopted by institutions that are under pressure to benchmark against international norms (*ibid*). Internationalisation has been criticised as competitive and elitist – benefitting a minority of scholars and academics (De Wit, 2020). It is further critiqued for not focussing on the qualitative aspects of developing good citizenship, preparing work-ready students, improving the quality of research and making a contribution to society (*ibid*).

Cross-border and international mobility of students are not without challenges. These lie in both how international students are received by their host institutions (Majee & Ress, 2020) and their acceptance by the local student body (Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2012). Further challenges lie in how international students' access ultimately contradicts the host institution's need to address equity goals with regard to the local student population. Whilst the need to become internationally competitive has led to the enrolment of more international students in local universities, this could result in a watering down of the core identity of the indigenous contexts of localised institutional spaces.

Within the localised South African post-apartheid democratic agenda, HE institutions are addressing social inequalities through accommodating 'non-traditional students' that were previously excluded from full participation in the system. However, non-traditional students face challenges related to their class, race, ethnicity, gender, and age, as well as perceptions as 'other' and are pathologised as epistemically challenged by institutional gatekeepers (Jama, Mapesela, & Bylefeld, 2008; Read, Archer, & Leathwood, 2003). Furthermore, some students are deemed better suited to vocational training within a more diversified HE systemic offering. This raises questions about what constitute appropriate entry characteristics for access to different kinds of HE. Having been excluded from what are perceived as prestigious forms of university-type academic institutions, HE is often a targeted aspiration of the marginalised (Dhunpath & Vithal, 2012). However, questions have been raised about employability post-graduation from different types of HE institutions (Pauw, Bhorat, Goga, Ncube, & Van der Westhuizen, 2006; Van Broekhuizen, 2016).

In the international arena which reiterates local concerns regarding access and exit graduate attributes and employability, Leathwood and O’Connell (2003, p. 598) derived the term *new student* following increased and broader access to HE institutions in the United Kingdom post 1992 in line with the Labour government’s intentions of a more socially inclusive student community. This would include working-class and minority ethnic groups that were previously excluded from HE institutions in the United Kingdom because of financial or exclusionary policies. Increased access to HE has occurred in tandem with a relative decrease in funding per student and the introduction of student loans and fees. Access has thus come with constraints for already financially strapped students. In post-apartheid South Africa, widening access to HE occurred along predominately racial lines, as the black majority was previously denied access as a consequence of apartheid exclusionary policies.

The financial issues experienced by British students have also burdened South African students and institutions [discussed further in point 1.3.2], resulting in the #Feesmustfall protests that began in October 2015 at the University of the Witwatersrand and quickly spread to other campuses across South Africa. In an attempt to quell the protests, the government announced that fees would not increase in 2016. The violence that accompanied these protests resulted in negative portrayals of students. Professor Jonathan Jansen (2017, p. 193), who was Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Free State at the time, described students as demanding, short-sighted, irresponsible and destructive, noting the “*irrevocable damage being unleashed*” (2017, pp. 208-209). Professor Adam Habib, then Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand (Unknown, 2015), shared similar sentiments. However, the management critique of student protests is debatable. The protests were certainly not uniformly interpreted across the system and its stakeholders. Both advocates for and against the student action critiqued state responses, the police clamp down, and the strategies adopted by the broad range of groups of protesters and their institutional custodians.

Border crossing on the part of students could further be argued to include matters related to transitioning from high school to HE, from being a young person to becoming an adult (Christie, 2007). In HE, students experience new forms of literacies, new social dynamics and new ways of engaging with knowledge within unfamiliar spaces. This transition is particularly challenging for first generation students, who do not have the benefit of siblings or family members who have attended university to guide them through the process of being and becoming a student in HE.

One of the many choices students would have made with regard to accessing HE is whether to stay at home and commute to university or leave home and live closer to campus. Some students, especially within the South African context, have little to no choice; they have to leave home to access education.

The spatial mobility of students in the country includes large numbers of "*non-traditional*" (Jama, Mapesela, & Bylefeld, 2008) "*first-generation Black disadvantaged students*" (Fataar, 2018) coming to university from marginalised communities (Langa, Wangenge-Ouma, Jungblut, & Cloete, 2017). Students residing in rural areas or townships do not necessarily have the choice to stay at home and commute to campus since, under apartheid, most of these areas have limited HE options. The obstacles of distance and unconducive learning environments require that they move closer to campus. Becoming mobile is thus necessary to access HE. These push factors are enabled in part by bursaries and loans offered by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme [NSFAS] to support students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds in their learning and living costs whilst studying.

The notion of students transitioning and shifting border crossings thus takes on varied dimensions including practical, theoretical, social, political, economic, cultural and epistemological factors.

Who, then, is the new student?

In South Africa, the 'new student' is very different to the homogenous predominately white male that dominated the historically white university landscape.³ Both locally and globally, conceptions of the traditional student as a homogenous 18-24-year-old heterosexual male with time on their hands are no more. Many students, particularly in historically black universities [HBU] are working women (The Ministerial Oversight Committee on Transformation in South African Public Universities, 2015). The differences between today's students extend beyond the superficial demographics of race and gender to span differing economic circumstances, cultural backgrounds, abilities, disabilities, levels of flexibility, family responsibilities, mobility, aspirations and lifeworld that shape their experience and achievement at HE institutions.

1.2.2 SPATIAL BORROWINGS

How were South African HE institutions constituted and to what purpose?

Africa may claim the oldest HE institution in the world to be in Egypt based on the Islamic model, yet many institutions on the continent [especially those of the post-independence era] were [re]shaped by colonial influences and the European model of academic organisation (Teferra & Altbach, 2004). The shape of HE institutions is thus deeply embedded in epochs of contestation, recontestation and reformulation. For example, in colonial times, access was limited to produce graduates with the requisite skills to administer the colony, thereby limiting the curriculum to skills in law and

³ The apartheid regime developed separate education systems for white and black people. Student demographics at most HBU have not changed post-apartheid whilst those at historically white institutions have changed, some more significantly than others.

administration and the language of instruction to that of the coloniser (*ibid*). Apart from the academic model, western spatial planning was also embraced. The notion of a community of scholars separate from the city, creating an environment conducive to high levels of intellectual thinking (Hargreaves, 1973) was reflected in both campus planning and building design. This created elite enclaves where the pursuit of knowledge was an inward-facing affair.

This isolationist logic was evident in the design of South African universities and in contemporary times, it has been reinforced through fences and security measures (Combrinck & Nortjé, 2020). Architecture, coloniality and [continued] oppression worked hand in glove.

Differentiation in the planning of South Africa's institutions along racial, language and qualification levels [as technikon or university] is well explained by Bunting (2006). The intention here is not to repeat this explanation but rather to explain the different campus planning models adopted by institutions. Peters (2011) notes that all South African institutions drew to some extent on the Jefferson Academic village model⁴ exemplified by the University of Virginia. It is recognisable in some institutions in a central lawn formed and fronted by individual buildings with a significant building terminating the lawn and directly opposite this an expansive opening out into the surrounding area.

During the apartheid era, the historically white institutions [HWU] were split predominantly along language lines into English and Afrikaans speaking institutions. The Afrikaans speaking institutions built during 1960s⁵ and seventies were of monumental scale whilst the English speaking institutions remained true to their linear street layouts lined with individual classical fronted buildings often forming courtyards to the rear. The campus layout and architecture reflected the institutions' different ideologies. The architectural layout and administration of the Afrikaans institutions were reflective of the Afrikaner 'volk'⁶ in identity, culture and might (Fisher, 1998, p. 5; Klee, 2017, p. 134). The architecture consisted of monumental scale modern concrete buildings either free-standing in the landscape⁷ or enveloping a centralised square⁸ endowing the Afrikaner 'volk' with a modern identity. The English speaking institutions, which were less concerned with visible icons of nationalist strength, were designed as neo-classical pavilions (Dubow, 1967, p. 34) and were more about generating knowledge on par with that of the western world (Bunting, 2006) through elitist enclaves in locations of majestic beauty (Dubow, 1967, p. 30).

⁴ This layout consisted of a central landscaped lawn for social and academic discourse, as well as exercise (Edwards, 2014). Lined with trees, it terminated in a grand university library and was open at the other end for views into the plantations (*ibid*). The avenues were lined by separate department buildings linked by arcades, with each under the tutelage of a professor. The plan could extend in two directions out into the plantations or at right angles beyond the department buildings which was the domain of servants and gardens for growing crops. This effectively represented a grid iron with a central square on a university layout in which mind and body could be developed together (*ibid*).

⁵ Rand Afrikaans University [now the University of Johannesburg] and the University of Port Elizabeth [now Nelson Mandela University].

⁶ 'Volk' is with reference to the Afrikaner people in South Africa.

⁷ The University of Port Elizabeth [now Nelson Mandela University]

⁸ Rand Afrikaans University [now the University of Johannesburg]

The geographical location of HBU is of interest as these tended to be located in vast tracts of open land or within urban areas amongst the population⁹ they were intended to serve (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). Designs were based on the premise that physical distance equated to less potential for student involvement in political and cultural activity that could threaten apartheid structures (Reddy, 2004; Bozalek & Boughey, 2012). The architecture consisted of contemporary and modernist buildings that were low rise, made of cast in situ concrete and uninspiring (Reddy, 2004). The layout tended to include the administration buildings near the entrance of the university, a hall and a main library that enclosed the central square, and a space for students to gather and socialise between lectures (*ibid*). Some distance away from the main campus were student residences and sporting facilities (*ibid*).¹⁰

In the restructuring of 36 institutions of higher learning post-apartheid, Cooper (2015, p. 248) noted an important indicator of social inequality that arose through the mergers in the architecting of the infrastructure. More than half of the HWU as well as one historically coloured university were excluded from the mergers. In contrast, most of what were considered lower status technical institutions and many of the HBU underwent mergers. The latter bore an apartheid-era legacy of being historically underfunded and under-resourced in comparison to the HWU. Cooper's observations suggest that the structures of inequality across the now restructured 26 institutions were already built into the architectural framework of this new system itself via what was merged or not merged.

Cooper (2015) further speculated that at some of the upper band universities [HWU], most students come from middle to upper-income families, while students from working-class and lower-income families are a minority across all race groups. For Cooper, these trends reflect that, in HWU, the system has shifted from reproducing inequality based on race during apartheid to one that in 2012 "*reproduces an equally serious social inequality... on students' 'race-class' position*" (2015, p. 238). In HBU, student racial demographics have largely remained unchanged, with an increased number of students coming from working-class families.

Cooper's (*ibid*) study highlights systemic issues that have perpetuated rather than redressed social inequality within HE institutions. A Council on Higher Education on *South African higher education reviewed: Two decades of democracy* (2016) notes that universities have a long way to go in meeting the NDP¹¹ goals with regard to racial integration. It observes that attempts at social transformation

⁹ During apartheid people were racially and spatially segregated into different areas. HBU in urban areas would have been located in so-called 'non-white' areas.

¹⁰ More recent architectural designs of post-apartheid new South African universities are counterpoints to these trends and are explored later in the thesis.

¹¹ In terms of the student experience of the curriculum at HE institutions, the National Development Plan [NDP] (National Planning Commission, 2011:268) set as a benchmark for 2030: "*The universities should be welcoming and supportive environments for black and female students and researchers.*"

have not led to the integration of the student body. This is supported by the work of academics (Higham, 2012; Cornell & Kessi, 2016; Swartz et al., 2017) whose studies conclude that the student experience of racial exclusion on campus persists despite increasing student diversity.

This raises the question of whether the advantaging of particular institutions [and the respective ideologies inherent in their structure and architecture] during the mergers and emerging differentiation based on class has not further compromised racial integration.

Higher education institutions were formed to serve a particular purpose in terms of knowledge production. This is elaborated on in the next section. What is of interest from this discussion is how the spatial layout of campuses and their borrowing from international planning principles of the time served to institutionalise particular ideologies through the architecture which was perpetuated in the larger scale re-structuring of campus mergers post-apartheid.

1.2.3 ADOPTING KNOWLEDGE AND THE ECLIPSE OF THE KNOWLEDGE AGENDA

Producing new knowledge is one of the primary purposes of HE institutions. How are South African institutions faring in the global space of knowledge production and in support of whose agenda?

It is claimed that African institutions are not positioned as knowledge producers since many tertiary institutions are teaching rather than research institutions (Teferra & Altbach, 2004). During apartheid, HBU focused on training while some of the English medium universities positioned themselves as part of an international community of scholars engaged in the same kind of knowledge production as would be found in the United States or Britain. Historically white Afrikaans institutions had strong links to the apartheid government and produced knowledge for a very specific socio-political agenda (Bunting, 2006; Klee, 2017). This duality of knowledge is also reflective of the consumption of knowledge in the schooling system during apartheid which was based on a racially separate system. Historically black schools offered inferior education, the remnants of which persist in the epistemic under-preparedness of many students entering HE where the language and the culture, at least within HWU, is foreign.

Post-1994 the rhetoric of 'transformation' permeated official discourse to promote "*sociocultural and epistemological redress*" (Majee & Ress, 2020, p. 471) with regard to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The state is of the view that universities have a public duty to take responsibility for the growth and development of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly within an economically fragmented society (Reddy, 2004; South African Human Rights Commission, 2016). Higher education's effectiveness in contributing to change from an individual student perspective and from within in terms of addressing dominant ideologies, practices and knowledge systems was to be challenged. Discourses arising from both students and scholar-activists using the term 'decolonisation'

(*ibid*) championed through the #Rhodesmustfall protests in 2015 and 2016 challenged universities to address systemic injustices within the institutions themselves in terms of the dominant knowledge system, the culture of institutions and the language of instruction (Ahmed, 2019; Hlatshwayo & Fomunyan, 2019). The #Feesmustfall and #Rhodesmustfall student movements demanded change, the former at the level of the individual student, the latter at the systemic level of the institution and structures supporting injustice.

Both movements drew attention to the plight of the student in terms of their individual material needs and the systemic need to change university knowledge systems and structures to address student experiences of oppression and alienation. The university space in terms of the architecture and the open spaces of the campus was not specifically challenged in these protests; rather, symbols of the past such as statues, paintings and other material artefacts were rejected. It is interesting to note that protests over fees have long been a feature of HBU post-1994, but they did not gain media attention until such issues were raised at HWU (Unknown, 2016).

This discussion on the new student who is both, financially¹² and time [flexibility] challenged within old spaces and the desire for new knowledge outside of western canons forms the foundation for understanding the origins of the welfare university.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF INFORMAL SPACES

The rise of the welfare university is a consequence of tertiary institutions attempting to address South Africa's discriminatory colonial and apartheid past. Universities are assuming the responsibility to provide for students' education as well as their welfare needs. Welfare responsibilities are most tangible in the provision of material needs and the spaces that provide food, accommodation and transport for students. These spaces are collectively termed informal spaces. It is within these spaces that the study locates itself, questioning their significance and the learnings therein towards students' personal/individual development as well as their political/collective development as democratic citizens.

1.3.3 THE WELFARE UNIVERSITY

Jansen (2017) uses the term *welfare university* to describe post-apartheid South African universities, as a situation arising out of more than 20 years of growing student numbers, particularly amongst poor students, and their corresponding expectations of HE. Poor students' expectations can be traced to

¹² To be discussed further in Section 1.3.3 of this chapter.

growing up within welfare supported families and the expectation that such support will continue when they attend university. They believe that the many problems [economic, social and educational] they face can be resolved by the state (Ndelu, 2017) that is duty bound to reverse past oppression.

The state's failure to address students' welfare has shifted responsibility to the HE system (Paterson, 2019), with severe consequences for the academic project (The Ministerial Oversight Committee on Transformation in South African Public Universities, 2015) of universities. The knowledge agenda of HE is being eclipsed by social welfare redress matters (Jansen, 2017). As Paterson (2019) asserts,

Higher education institutions meanwhile are buckling under the weight of the new social welfare responsibilities foisted upon them – trying to meet many of the housing, health and nutrition needs of poorer students and provide them with a path to employment opportunities, but without the necessary resources and budget (Paterson, 2019, para. 4).

Paterson (2019) thus notes that expectations of universities post-apartheid are not restricted to providing for students' academic development, but include fulfilling their material needs [such as housing, health and food] and generating work-ready graduates – and doing so without commensurate financial support. However, Jansen argued that, even with university and government support, poor students do not directly *feel* the benefit of welfarised funding (Jansen, 2017, p. 179). He (*ibid*) notes that the NSFAS grant is not sufficient to meet the full cost of studying at university. The three standard costs of tuition, accommodation and books might be completely covered (*though not guaranteed*) by this grant. However, students still need to cover other expenses such as food, visits to the doctor, trips home between semesters and other unforeseen costs.

With the rise of the welfare university in South Africa, particularly within HWU, spaces of privilege are becoming apparent as a consequence of the socio-economic differences across the student body (Cooper, 2015). The spaces this study was particularly interested in were those relating to students' material needs [food, accommodation and transport]. It was assumed that there would be profound differences in access and the use of these spaces due to social, economic and physical discrepancies within and across the student body. Such differences were presumed to arise as a result of how students were accessing the university space using public or university provided transport, arriving by foot or by car. Each mode potentially establishes various privileges associated with access to the university space. Similarly, it was thought that students that could consume food at the university cafeterias and kiosks would have different privileges and benefits of access to certain campus spaces and associated encounters from those who consume food at home, alone or go hungry. The same was assumed to apply to accommodation. It was considered that different privileges, benefits or challenges

would be attached to different typologies of accommodation such as living at home, in residence or in a commune.

The material needs of food, accommodation and transport and their related spaces were presumed to be generating spatialities that could be privileging some groups and marginalising others by affording opportunities that were not available to all. Knowing of these different spatialities was then critical to understand inequity of access to campus spaces. Some of the original questions that catalysed this research study were: what did students know about these spaces? Were students aware of this spatial inequity? Were they doing anything about it?

1.3.4 STUDENTS, INFORMAL SPACES AND INFORMAL LEARNING

The collective name used to describe the spaces that address students' material needs and services in this study was *informal spaces* which included parking lots, bus-stops, socialising spaces, cafeterias, food kiosks, residences and other in-between spaces [outside of classrooms and lecture venues] where students gathered at will. Informal spaces and space use on campus were those spaces that form part of the everyday experience of being a student in HE that did not constitute part of the formal learning spaces. They are spaces in which students interact with others, with such interaction happening by chance or deliberately, and where students and faculty mix, mingle and pass by one another.

These spaces host practices such as studying, collaborating, and socialising (Lomas & Oblinger, 2006), contributing to students' feelings of belonging, personal and professional growth and being part of the intellectual and social life of the university (Gebhardt, 2014). The justification for the interest in these spaces lies in the personal and the political as it is in informal spaces that varying socio-economic groups have the opportunity to interact and encounter other students and become aware of their differences. This potentially exposes students to diverse views, cultures, and sexual orientations and perhaps better equips them to live in a multicultural society and contribute to the engendering of democratic citizenship (Klemenčič, 2015). These spaces outside of the classroom can contribute to developing holistic, well-rounded students. They are spaces in which, as Habib (2020, para. 7) notes, "*the development of soft skills, consolidation of an intelligentsia, and the promotion of a cohesive citizenry*" are possible. Or is this ideal of interactivity also not possible? Is the creation of a holistic student not happening to the extent we would like to believe? These were further questions arising from the interest in this research area.

Informal spaces accommodate the complex mixing of different students and their multiple identities. Rather than being dominated by a single exclusionary identity, they could be seen to be full of internal conflict as different students' identities contest for their use. In informal spaces, different social

relations can come together to construct new forms of social interaction. Such spaces were then seen as dynamic and enabling of practices and relations while at the same time not being immune to forms of oppression or exclusion constructed both from within and elsewhere (Massey, 1992).

The power hierarchies that exist in informal spaces tend to benefit some students over others and some spaces over others. Soja (2010) observes that these power dynamics lead to the development of spatial [in]justices, where the spatiality of students' lives can have both positive and negative impacts, enabling, constraining or disempowering them.¹³ Hence, the spatiality of students' lives is considered as having the potential to be just as well as unjust. Spatial justice is further denoted in the impartial and equitable dissemination of socially-valued resources in space and the opportunities for the student to make use of them. These resources include housing, healthcare and education (*ibid*). By contrast, spatial injustice is produced in the patterns of unfair distribution of resources and in the unequal distribution of infrastructure, which Soja (*ibid*) notes are reflected in spatial structures of privilege. Spatial injustice is also reflected in the processes that can occur at multiple scales [macro, meso and micro] leading to the uneven development of some spaces and of some students on campus. Multi-scaler spatial injustices can occur as a consequence of decisions and actions taken at government level, management within in HE and from within the student body itself. This study aimed to explore whether these theoretical worldviews about spatiality took on specific characteristics for students within the context of a post-apartheid South African merged institution some 20 years post the dawning of democracy which spearheaded new formulations and architectures for HE.

The informal spaces of HE were thus not merely seen as containers in which activities took place; they were viewed as active participants in reinforcing subjugation, exclusion and inclusion. The social practices of students operating [at varying levels] to maintain or change the nature of space or spaces, integrating some students into campus spaces and marginalising others, constituted the focus of this study. Inequity was then viewed as being built into the very structures and spaces of HE and was considered as very likely to be differentially experienced across the student body. The aim of this research was thus to reappraise informal spaces of food, accommodation and transport beyond welfarist notions [of providing *for* students' needs] and explore their contribution to spatial justice.

1.4 RESEARCHING STUDENTS KNOWINGS

The spaces of HE were understood to be 'read' in a certain way for a particular student body (predominately white male) during the colonial and apartheid eras. Post-apartheid, this environment

¹³ The range of theoretical conceptions of spatialities is explored further in Chapter two.

is being read and re-read by a more diversified student body. Understanding what this reading is and what significance it has to being a student in HE was part of this study. The intention was to move beyond a passive acknowledgment of space to an active awareness of space and its impact on students' minds and bodies and, consequently, to examine how students act on this knowledge to effect spatial change.

1.4.1 PROBLEMATIC

Three recent studies conducted within HE in South Africa served as both complementary and comparative counterfoils to my research study. All three addressed students' experiences of HE and two specifically addressed HE spaces. The first, a five-year longitudinal study (Swartz et al., 2017) across eight HE institutions investigated obstacles to black students' success within HE such as structural or social factors, intersecting identities, and their corresponding agency to address these challenges. The second study undertaken on the University of the Witwatersrand campus (Ndofirepi, 2015) explored the nature of undergraduate experiences of campus life and how this contributed to their academic achievement. It devoted a chapter to students' encounters and contestations in spaces outside of the classroom such as the library, open spaces, virtual spaces and varying typologies of residential accommodation. The study recommended that social spaces on campus be transformed to create flexible social learning spaces in support of the formal curriculum. The third study (Tumubweinee, 2018) was directed toward policy and institutional practice and reflected on how decisions made at the macro-level are directly experienced at the micro-level by students within campus spaces at the University of the Free State. Unlike the other studies, it problematises spaces' role as a factor contributing to students' lived experiences and the potential for transformation within HE.

A common thread across these studies, including the current study [however differently focussed] is addressing inequality and inequity within post-apartheid HE institutions in South Africa. The first study foregrounds the push towards university support for the emancipation of students, the second towards improving epistemic opportunities for students, and the third towards systemic policy changes. By extension, my study cleaves a space between and outside of these three studies, recognising that institutional spaces *both produce and are produced by the social* circumstances and are inherently fraught with power dynamics. This study did not aim to seek absolute categorical solutions, but to expose the levels of complexities and contradictions in any analysis of spatialities in HE.

The following notions established the problematic for the study:

1. Being a HE student entails more than just acquiring access to formal knowledge or the official curriculum and academic achievement.

2. A different kind of learning/knowing from that related to the formal knowledge system occurs in spaces outside of the classroom – how significant or meaningful is this learning and to what end or purpose?
3. What then emerges at the level of the directly lived everyday reality of students within informal spaces and how are students enabled or constrained by their spatialities?
4. What are students able to do [what actions do they take, if any] with what they have learnt from their encounters in HE informal spaces? What influences students' agentic capabilities? How would their future trajectory affect their actions?

None of these notions is themselves singular or mutually exclusive, and it is these complexities that the study aimed to explore.

1.4.2 APPROACH TO STUDENTS KNOWINGS

This study interrogated how and why students come to know of the spatiality of the HE environment in the way they do. The research interest lay in establishing what meaning students were making of the informal spaces of HE and exploring how these readings have been developed, and whether their readings reflect patterns of social power and inequities. The influences of their readings on the kinds of *knowings* that they gain of the spatiality of the HE environment, and its potential contribution to spatial justice was the underpinning foundational rationale.

An Interpretive stance. The research was qualitative in nature within an interpretative paradigm as it co-constructed meaning with students (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) as to the basis of their 'knowing' of the spatiality of the HE environment. The research had elements of criticality in the analytic phase as this 'knowing' of spatial and social structures identifies and foregrounds discussions around power, privilege and spatial justice. This analytical stance recognises a particular form of criticality in analysis since it acknowledges the existence of what orchestrates these injustices, but does not in the research design itself attempt to change or address these injustices.

The social constructivist approach views knowledge as socially produced (Amineh & Asl, 2015) through tools, language, actions and experiences (Garrison, 1995). This view contributed to understanding coming to know as a process of meaning-making which evolved through the innovative methodology that this research generated. The process invoked multiple meaning-makings amongst the student participants and my role was to interpret, mediate and make sense of these manifestations.

1.4.2.1 SITE OF THE STUDY

The study was located in a HE institution in South Africa that has significant architecture, structures and spaces that originated from a colonial legacy, but also reconstructed or new spaces architected during apartheid and post-apartheid. The colonial legacy of the university as a historically English speaking white institution, whose demographic composition has changed from predominately white to predominately black, were purposive categories for sampling this study site. The study could have been undertaken at any of the four historically white English speaking institutions in South Africa [the University of Cape Town, University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of the Witwatersrand, and Rhodes University].

The site of this study arose from a post-apartheid merger of five campuses in 2004 to form one institution. These campuses historically provided a separate education system and infrastructure for either white, Indian or African students. The institution currently houses four colleges and several schools. Some schools are located across more than one campus, whilst two of the campuses each house a specific discipline. The single selected campus [of the multiple campus-site institution] offers programmes to a diverse range of students studying a broad range of disciplines [humanities, law, managment, engineering] thereby negating the potential for disciplinary bias. The campus on which this study was undertaken opened in 1931 for white English speaking males, and was located on a ridge outside of town in and amongst dense bush. While the expansive views of the city remain, the campus has gradually been encroached upon by middle class suburban homes.

The study further honed into informal spaces within the selected campus [related to food, accommodation and transport]. The significance of informal spaces lay in their potential as producers of another kind of learning, distinct from the official taught curriculum. These spaces are where students interact with one another and the built environment outside of the gaze of management and academics [focussing the learning as between students and spaces]. Finally, spaces of food, accommodation and transport were seen as significant indicators of economic, social and cultural differentiation on campus.

Notable characteristics of the site of the study relative to food, accommodation and transport are the following: the site is fenced and securitised and students can access the campus on foot through controlled access points or with a private vehicle into designated parking areas within the campus. Public transport [and university owned and leased transport to and from residences] lies on the periphery of the campus and students have to leave the campus confines to utilise these services. The inter-campus university shuttles are the only form of mass transport allowed into the campus itself. The institution houses numerous residences on the campus as well as in the surrounding suburban

areas and in the city. The university owned and leased residences all have self-catering facilities. The old student dining halls within the on-campus residences have long been done away with. Food on campus is available through various outlets most of which are centralised in a business concourse and operate during the week with cafeterias, cafes, mini-stores and fast food options. However, some food vendors operate from mobile units and designated spaces across the campus. Food is also sold informally from students' residence kitchens and in various spaces on campus especially after hours and during examination periods.

1.4.2.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Students knowings was researched through an arts-based approach in an attempt to empathetically connect with students. A number of visual methods were adopted to both find participants and to explore with them their present knowings of HE spaces as well as their imagined ideal campus. The approach necessitated a number of encounters with the participants individually and once as a group, as well as an opening up of co-produced data from the study to a broader audience of students to solicit further inquiry.¹⁴ All encounters, other than in students' home spaces were undertaken within the study site of a historically white university campus in South Africa which post-apartheid had radically transformed in terms of race, class and gender representation. The repeated forms of engagement with the students, and with the site of the study were opportunities to delve deeper and to gain a more in-depth understanding of the nature of students knowings of informal campus spaces. They ultimately assisted in deriving a clearer [though not entirely/finitely clear] understanding of students knowings to assist in answering the research questions.

Research Questions:

The critical questions were as follows:

1. What do students know about food, accommodation and transport spaces in the HE environment?
2. What does the knowing of food, accommodation and transport spaces in the HE environment enable or constrain for students?
3. What explains students knowings of food, accommodation and transport spaces in the HE environment?

1.4.2.3 PARTICIPANTS

The eight core participants included students of varying disciplines, years of study, age, gender, race, and socio-economic class. Accessing a diverse body of students in terms of demographics and degree was important to broaden the potential of students knowings. Differences more relevant to this study

¹⁴ A detailed discussion on the research design and analysis processes is presented in Chapters five and six.

were however, how students accessed the university campus, where they lived while attending university and how they socialised if at all on the campus, and whether this intersected with consuming food and beverages on campus. The group reflected differences not only across the group but also within their years of being students living at home, in residence or in a commune, coming to university in a private car or being dropped off by parents, using the university shuttle or public transport or on foot. The intersections of eating habits and social interactions varied from eating alone, only at home or in residence, to occupying university cafeterias and lawns with friends, and wandering the campus alone and eating while in motion. Accessing this core group required the repeated employment of visual and participatory methods on the site of the study campus to gain students' interest and then to invite students to voluntarily participate in the project. The relationship with each student in the development of the core data of the co-produced photographs arose from a fluid negotiated process. In this process the students defined and selected the data to be used for further engagement with other students.¹⁵

1.4.2.4 ANALYSIS AND REPRESENTATION

The data analysis was guided by three key aspects, that of *spatiality* – the interactions of students and space in the production of space and students, *time* – relationships formed over time in space, time as past and future, and time as cyclical and scheduled, and lastly as *capacity* [agency] – reflecting on students' freedom to act or inability to do so. In order to both analyse and represent the findings from the study an artistic device embracing the metaphor of the mobile was adopted. The mobile is a graceful object suspended in space that is reliant on counterweights to both sustain its mobility and the object's perception of balance. I literally hung complementary or contradictory ideas on the mobile to interrogate them as to their consistency and relevance across the data sources. Once their relevance was confirmed the next tier would be reiteratively hung until the mobile reached its last tier and was as complete as the findings of this research could ascertain [I wanted to leave this more open-ended so that there could be more possibilities hung on the mobile]. Swinging freely, the mobile metaphorically suggests the entanglement of students knowings.

1.4.2.5 RESEARCHER'S KNOWINGS AND STUDENTS KNOWINGS

This study is a reflection of finding balance in a negotiated process in order to accommodate both students' needs to represent themselves as they see fit and to find my voice as a researcher. The researcher as knower comes to the fore in the analysis, in the artistic representations and in the theorising and conclusions drawn in the final chapter of the thesis. The how or the *process* of coming to understand students knowings is addressed in Chapters four and five, *what* knowings arise and

¹⁵ For further details regarding purposeful theoretical sampling, see Chapter five.

through or with *whom* are explored in Chapters seven, eight and nine and *why* students know what they do is discussed in Chapter ten.

1.4.3 RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study has important research implications for understanding the spatiality of HE and for understanding it as a site of potential spatial [in]justice. Furthermore, in focussing on students' everyday experiences of HE spaces this study re-contextualises the meaning students attribute to campus spaces by concentrating on the informal rather than on the formal academic spaces. This *suggests that for students, HE entails more than just acquiring access to formal knowledges or the official curriculum.*

Secondly, the research *focusses on students knowings, thereby giving a diverse group of students an opportunity to voice their understanding/meaning/significance of informal campus spaces.* Furthermore, contextualising that meaning within a future or imagined campus space could be considered as suggesting how HE spaces could better meet their aspirational needs [academic as well as non-academic] as students.

Thirdly, this study contributes to the notion of students and space as entangled in and with time – past, present and future hopes, as well as with others through their varying dispositions and actions that leads to a conceptual framework of students knowings. This framework looks beyond preoccupation with the racialised, socio-economic and epistemic under-resourced knowing of students (Taylor, Fleisch, & Schindler, 2007; Morrow, 2009; Spaul, 2013; Hugo, 2016; Swartz et al., 2017). The study therefore represents *students as always on the move negotiating their spatialities through and within HE in pursuit of their dreams.*

Finally, this research posits a counter argument of students knowings, namely, of *students staying put within HE for as long as they can maintain a stronghold on access to services and material needs.* A challenge HE needs to address is to seek alternate ways of provisioning students beyond fatalistic abandonment to students' individual accountability. Instead, the study suggests agentic development of students to realise more fully self-directed, systemic capabilities activated through their action inside and alongside the HE space.

This study could be of benefit to a broad range of stakeholders with a vested interest in students and campus life due to the research crossing the disciplinary thresholds of HE, students and space. Its findings could thus be of relevance to educators, management, human geographers and spatial planners.

1.5 SYNTHESIS OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter set out the motivation for the thesis and the framework for its realisation. In doing so, it noted the influence of international, national and local dynamics in the shaping of South African HE institutions and how this has perpetuated an approach to the space of HE and knowledge production therein. The chapter also discussed the relationship between individual [student] actions and the structural systems [space/architecture/systems/ ideologies] within which these actions take place. The chapters that follow develop these ideas and present the theoretical and conceptual lens for the study.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter argues that the relations of exclusion and inclusion that may arise in spaces are influenced by both micro- and macro-structures, including institutional processes that are negotiated by students within the HE space and are capable of producing and reproducing injustices in HE. These negotiations of campus spaces [as interpreted by students in particular] constitute the lens through which the study was conducted.

Students knowings, where the emphasis for this study lies, is conceptually very different from knowings of students. While the latter is an [hierarchical] interpretation or a perception of students' thoughts and actions made by others [lecturers, management], in focussing on students knowings, this research deliberately channels attention to students' voices.

This chapter argues for students knowings as multiple, contested interpretations that students come to know through their everyday spatial practices and interactions with other students in campus spaces. Students' understanding of spatiality defines not only their actions in space but also how they negotiate, define or redefine their spatial boundaries and relations with others [students, staff and family members].

The chapter is structured [see Figure 2.1] to explore students knowings of spatiality and its relationship to spatial justice. The three interlinked concepts of **[students] knowings**, **spatiality** and **spatial justice**, are explored individually in terms of their philosophical and theoretical contribution to the study as well as how they are understood and utilised to develop the conceptual framework for this research.

The students knowings are discussed first with a specific interest in Dewey's (Dewey, 1930; Dewey & Bentley, 1960; Simpson & Liu, 2007) seminal work that outlines formal educational spaces as a terrain for exploration, as well as more contemporary authors in HE literature who address non-academic knowing (Marsick & Watkins, 2001; Jansen, 2009; Jackson, 2010). These conceptions of knowing do not support a limited notion of individualistic academic success but aim to probe an understanding of the purpose of the HE space as engendering more holistic and multiple educational experiences. The emphasis on students' interpretations [pluralities of viewings] in this thesis is thus directed towards a collective and more holistic pursuit of students knowings.

Spatiality is discussed in terms of the components of space and spatiality. Space is explored theoretically in its broadened perceptions of Lefebvre's (1991) unitary theory of space, and spatiality as per Massey's (2005) understanding of space as relational and always in the process of becoming. This

activates the idea that both students and space change and adapt, reinforcing the notion that both are dynamic and thereby countering dominant conceptions of space in HE as a passive backdrop to the lives of students. The argument aims to present a conception of the student as an active participant in producing and reproducing particular behaviour and responses within which they are embedded and which they activate. Processes that emanate out of the spatiality of the HE space have power implications, enabling some users while constraining others and therein highlighting the potential for injustices within the HE space.

Spatial justice and injustice are discussed within the context of the informal spaces of HE [the selected delimitation of this study]. These informal spaces are framed as liminal or in-between spaces where diverse bodies of students have the potential to interact and contribute to the engendering of democratic citizenship (Klemenčič, 2015). This chapter argues that injustices in HE space are usually framed with reference to race, sexual orientation, gender and nationality. However, discourses that expand the focus on the social demarcations towards elaboration of the spatial aspects of injustices and the inherent systems and structures that produce and reproduce them constitute the primary focus of this study.

Each of these constructs is percolated individually and reflected upon cumulatively so as to influence the design of the temporary lens for the study. The chapter concludes with the key contribution each construct makes to the study of students knowings.

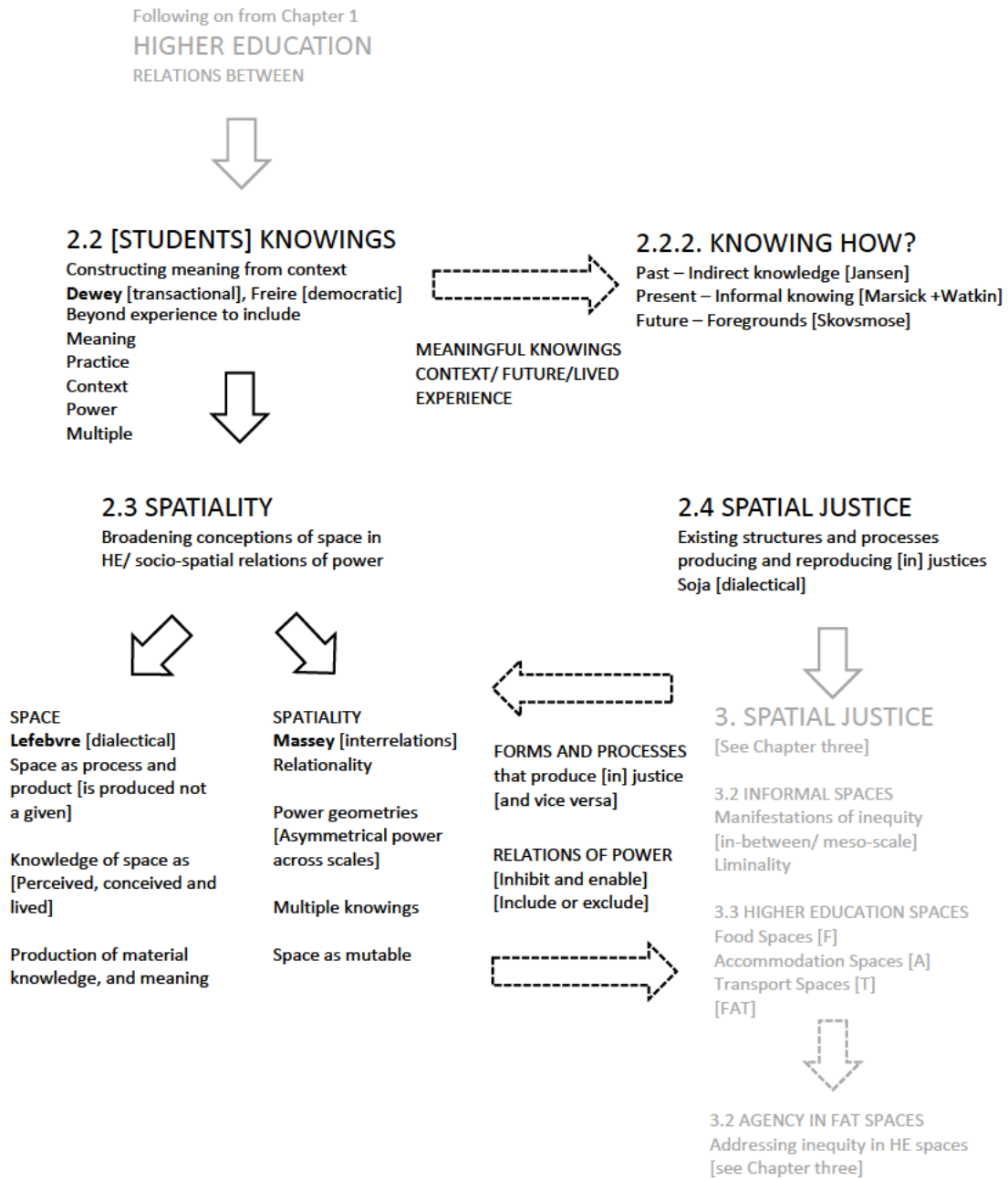


Figure 2.1 Overview of Chapter two organisation
 [Chapter one and three in grey]

2.2 FROM KNOWER TO KNOWINGS: *THE PROCESS OF COMING TO KNOW*

Knowing is explored as the many facets of how students come to know in the world. The purpose of the exploration of knowings is to illustrate how knowing can eclipse student experiences of campus spaces by potentially contributing to *meaning* and *actions* when related/embedded within a context (Dewey & Bentley, 1960; Simpson & Liu, 2007). This suggests a potentially far more liberating view of students, presenting them not as passive recipients of the extrinsic factors that act upon them in their experiences of campus. Instead, students are reconceptualised as knowing subjects who are reflecting on and deriving meaning from their experiences and choosing to act [or not] upon these experiences.

Knowing as a relationship between the knower and the known – what is being known [product] and how it is to become known [process] – is the focus of this section's deliberations (Carlgren, 2020). In educational literature, the knowing relationship is expressed as that between the teacher and the student where the curriculum is the known and pedagogy is the process of imparting the known (Barnett, 2007). This is not a neutral process, as inherent power dynamics are involved in both the choice of what is to be known and how the knowing is transferred. Knowing is also understood in education as student formation through the process of knowing (*ibid.*). It is this complex interactive, subjective and liberatory potential that Paulo Freire (2005) argues ought to be the rationale for education as a process of gaining knowledge that is simultaneously educational [in its broadest holistic conception] and emancipatory [in its sociological and political conceptions]. This pedagogy shies away from oppressed and capitulative forms of habituated schooling and aims instead to contribute to students generating conceptions of themselves as knowing beings constituted and involved in the processes of becoming, and not simply conforming to the normative expectations of the social system within which they reside. Students can selectively choose to be a knowing subject that actively participates in their knowledge construction or a passive recipient, merely capitulating to dominant external expectations of what their actions should be (*ibid.*). A more elaborate conception of education would entail awareness of the realities that shape students' lives, and the conscious decision to activate the capacity to change, which establishes the foundations of *knowing subjects*.

I chose to explore whether students knowings are sufficiently activated within the processes of informal learning through their everyday interactions in campus spaces. I was interested in whether students' prior knowings and their present *knowns* or established ways [habits and rituals of HE formal spaces] assist in activating what they come to know of self and their relationship with others in campus spaces. The questions that lie at the core of this research are thus: What meanings are students making of their relationships in and with space? How do their interpretations/meaning-making affect their actions? And why do they make these meanings in the way they do?

2.2.1 KNOWING IN THEORY AND IN PRACTICE

Dewey and Freire provide the theoretical basis for understanding the construct of knowings. This section distinguishes knowledge from knowing, explores the two theorists' individual contribution to knowing, and lastly clarifies how I, as the researcher interpreted them to extend and develop the construct of knowings. Knowings then constitutes one component of a trilogy that establishes the conceptual framework for this thesis.

Amin's (2008) doctoral thesis on teachers' knowing of students refers to knowing as pre-knowledge and knowledge as post-knowing, where knowledge is understood as precise and knowing as tentative. This echoes Eisner's (2008) interpretation of knowing. Eisner (*ibid.*) refers to knowing as a verb in contrast to knowledge as a noun, with knowings' emphasis on process and tentativeness as opposed to certainty. Knowing is referred to as a "*process of inquiry made in pursuit of a problem that will not yield to a set of rigidified procedures*" (2008, p. 4). Eisner's conception of knowing as through experience is derived from Dewey (1930).

2.2.1.1 KNOWING-KNOWNS [DEWEY]

Dewey's (1960) conception of knowledge as a term is that it is both unclear and part of an ongoing process (Bulle, 2018) with which he rather associated the word knowings. Knowings, denoted as plural as opposed to singular and in so doing reflective of multiple or many, is further defined by Dewey to be tentative and partial and in response to a behavioural inquiry¹ (Dewey & Bentley, 1960). Dewey (*ibid.*) denounces epistemological knower-known relations in favour of the conjoined knowings-knowns. He viewed the relationship between knowings and knowns as inseparable, which he refers to as transactional as opposed to interactional, which serve to distinguish the knowing from the known. Dewey's focus is on the process of coming to know in the development of the knowing self (McDermot, 1974) as the following notes [**bold for emphasis**].

*The transactional is, in fact, that point of view which systematically proceeds upon the ground that **knowing is co-operative** and as such is integral with **communication**. By its own processes it is allied with the postulational. It demands that statements be made as descriptions of events in terms of durations in **time** and areas in **space**. It **excludes** assertions of **fixity** and attempts to impose them. It installs **openness and flexibility** in the very process of knowing. It treats **knowledge as itself inquiry**—as a goal within inquiry, not as a terminus outside or beyond inquiry (Dewey & Bentley, 1960, p. 97).*

Not only is knowings-knowns transactional; so too is Dewey's (Dewey & Bentley, 1960) conception of space-time. Dewey (*ibid.*) defines space-time as being, behavioural [human and environment

¹ Knowing through human experience or what Dewey terms as existence.

interaction] and mutable. This is interpreted to mean that the happenings that define our individual beings have both spatial and temporal characteristics although we are not bound to and are able to transcend both time and space (Garrison, 1999).

Dewey further argued for knowing as both theoretical [mind] and practical [body] in his theory of Practical Reasoning (Garrison, 1999). He valued inquiry through action and rejected the dualism of mind and body. Thinking, he postulated, blends with feeling in the body and with the "*context of action*" (Garrison, 1999, p. 303) to enable the knower to act. The mind is not only connected to the body; it is also connected to an environment which encompasses other people, objects, things and nature. The relationship between self and environment is formulated in Dewey's holistic Learning Theory as a relationship between the micro and the macro. The micro-perspective includes the individual's "*mind, sensations and movements*" (Simpson & Liu, 2007, p. 571) and the macro-perspective the broader environmental context with no barriers between the micro and the macro. In the micro-context, the individual [self] dominates while in the macro-context, the teacher comes to the fore in mediating the relationship between micro- and macro perspectives. Learning is thus the interaction between self and context, mediated by the teacher, with the potential to transform both self and context in the process. Once woven into the fabric of everyday lived experience, learning is rendering meaningful in Dewey's conceptions. Meanings, Dewey concludes, emerge from the process of inquiry and are a consequence of collective shared action (Garrison, 1999).

Dewey's theories are related to formal classroom learning where a particular curriculum [theoretical knowledge] is imparted as a process of engagement between the teacher and the student. The student is located within the micro realm and the teacher sits in the macro and facilitates the process of knowing the curriculum. The relationship between knower, knowing and known could be interpreted as the student being the knower, the knowing the pedagogy and the known the curriculum. However, in Dewey's transactional conception the curriculum and pedagogy [knowings-knowns] are connected in that what needs to be known relates very much to how one knows and this is embedded within a particular context in time and space. Within this worldview, students are not passive recipients of knowledge in order to become more knowing students. They are not just imitating what they have learnt from their teachers in order to display engagement in *intelligent action* (Ethell & McMeniman, 2000). Instead, students are making decisions as to how to address particular situations by combining both their theoretical and practical knowledge.

Dewey's (1930) work makes several contributions to formulating the construct of knowing as encompassing experience, meaning-making, and being collectively and environmentally informed. The first is his contribution to practice as a form of knowing, in advocating for worthwhile knowledge arising

through action, not just through intellectual pursuits. The second is that students' learning only has meaning when related to their individual lived experience (Mulcahy, 2007). The last is the focus on student knowings and placing students at the centre of the knowing process both informed by and informing the broader context. The above studies therefore support my own study's intent to find authentic students' voices through students knowings of campus spaces – and their understanding thereof.

My study extends the learning from Dewey of the construct of knowing. I choose to move away from the learning of the formal curriculum and focus on how informal learning² that takes place in everyday situations outside of the classroom in HE spaces related to food, accommodation and transport also contributes to the knowing student. I elaborate further [See 2.2.2] on the choice and definition of informal learning as well as the selected areas for exploration³[See chapter three]. In terms of the knower, known, knowing relationship, the known addresses students' practices in spaces [spatialities] and the knower relates to the students, as plural as opposed to singular. How these knowings or processes of inquiry could occur in the HE context is discussed further in the following section [See 2.4]. In the context of this study, knowings-knowns is the process of learning of spatial practices on campus. Furthermore, I extend the notion of the relationship of knowings to include the facilitator between the micro-[self] and the macro-perspective [context] which is not restricted to the teacher and his/her student, but includes the HE systems, structures and processes that enable or constrain the relationship between students and the contexts in which they find themselves.

Tentative questions that arise from this formulation include: If the relationship of knowings-knowns is transactional and transformative, in what way can students transform their environment or be transformed by their environment [human nature and nature/environment]? How is space-time understood in relation to knowings-known? Where truth is uncertain, how does knowing affect the distribution of power and who has power? How this is likely to impact on students' lived experience, then becomes the subject of my research exploration.

2.2.1.2 KNOWING AND POWER [FREIRE]

Paulo Freire's (2005) discourse in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* communicates a process of coming to know that is implicated by the distribution of power. He refers to a contradiction between the oppressor and the oppressed and how this socially unjust relationship can be overcome. The oppressed in the knower, known, knowing relationship sits on the periphery of the known and the knowing process

² Informal learning is also associated with experiential learning which has strong ties with Dewey. Although learning through experience encompasses an aspect of my interpretation of informal learning, my use of the term is more to distinguish it from formal learning of the curriculum towards learning through everyday interaction.

³ The demarcation of the selected areas for exploration is addressed more specifically in Chapter three as the informal spaces of food, accommodation and transport.

with the oppressor as knower defining both what is known and the process of knowing [pedagogy]. Freire (*ibid.*) states that education is never neutral. It can serve to unquestionably inculcate the dominant views of the oppressor or the oppressed can be liberated by encouraging critical reflection and taking action to initiate change towards a more just and equitable society (Taylor, 2007). Transformation in both society and self brings the oppressed from the margins to the centre and social justice to the fore in aiding the learner to achieve a reawakening of their power (Taylor, 2007). Freire's focus, is, however, less on the individual and more on the process of transformation to a more politically and socially just society.

Evans and Prilleltensky (2007, p. 347) interpret Freire's thoughts on the relationship between education and knowing as follows:

Education is not about knowledge per se, but about ideas; it is about engaging in dialogue to generate thought, explanation, and understanding. It is a way of knowing.

Dialogue for Freire contributes to the process of coming to know in order to develop a better understanding of what the object of knowledge could be [what is known]. Knowledge thus emerges as a process of inquiry which is socially constructed in and with the world.

As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators. In this way, the presence of the oppressed in the struggle for their liberation will be what it should be: not pseudo-participation, but committed involvement (Freire, 2005, p. 69).

I draw three possible contributions from Freire's work for my study. The first is that knowing has power implications; the second is that the empowering of students in the knowing process shifts the social justice aspects from the periphery to the centre; and the third is the potential of many knowledges or many knowings in a process that is socially constructed.

My research extends Freire's notions of knowing and its relationship to social justice. It asserts that if knowing has social justice implications, then [through the centre-periphery relations that Freire describes] it is very likely to have spatial justice⁴ implications.

Tentative questions that then arise from Freire are: What powers will the knowing process elucidate both implicitly and explicitly in campus spaces? Furthermore, what social injustices are likely to be brought to the fore in the knowing process?

⁴ Spatial justice is discussed more specifically in section 2.4.

Foucault (1975) provides a brief digression from these two theorists by making a valuable contribution to the physicality of knowing and the power relations that are reproduced through form. Via his exploration of the panoptic machine,⁵ he argues that institutions help to enforce dominant knowledge systems [and overtly power relations] through their form, not necessarily just through institutional processes. The panopticon was viewed as a mechanism of distributing power through its concentric form enabling surveillance of all and in so doing instilling discipline. Foucault believed that this principle could be applied in many situations as a mechanism for social organisation where a task or a behaviour needed to be imposed on a number of individuals. The panopticon, Foucault alleged, could be used to organise hospitals, schools, prisons and even university lecture theatres. Foucault's contribution to the relationship between form, knowledge and power dovetails with the discussion on the construct of spatiality [explored further in section 2.3].

To close, the theorists' contributions are as follows: Dewey provided the important realisation that knowing is meaningful if connected to context, Freire that knowing has social justice implications and Foucault that knowing can be enforced through form. The possible processes of coming to know are elaborated further below.

2.2.2 THE MANY WAYS OF COMING TO KNOW ON CAMPUS

In the context of this research study which is located outside of formal teaching and learning spaces, the lecturer is not considered as a fore fronted player in the learning process and knowings are gained through other means. It is also recognised that prior knowledge may already have shaped how students come to know through their experience of campus spaces and that further processes of coming to know are occurring within these spaces. Three knowing processes as socially constructed are discussed, through prior knowing as *indirect knowledge* adopted from Jansen's (2009) *Knowledge in the blood*, *informal learning* as learning taking place as part of everyday activities and lastly as *Foregrounds* in relation to students' hopes, dreams and aspirations (Skovsmose, 2012).

2.2.2.1 INDIRECT KNOWLEDGE [JANSEN]

Jansen (2009) reflects on conversations with students at the University of Pretoria⁶ during his tenure as Dean of the Faculty of Education. He observes that white students entering the university do so with a powerful knowledge of a "*traumatised and personal*" (Jansen, 2009, p. 50) apartheid past. This knowledge of the past is relayed through generations through closed circles of influence in school, church groups and sports clubs. This intergenerational learning is passed on from adults [parents,

⁵ The panopticon is an idea that was developed by Jeremy Bentham and repeatedly interpreted by others. Based on the premise of being observed from and controlled from the centre, Bentham proposed a circular layout for his factory. The unskilled workforce on the periphery could be watched over and managed by a skilled supervisor in the centre.

⁶ A historically white South African university in which Afrikaans was the medium of instruction until 2019.

church leaders, teachers] as senders to children as receivers of the knowledge. Jansen refers to this process as acquiring indirect knowledge "*where circles of socialisation reinforce single messages of white superiority and black domination*" (Jansen, 2009, p. 264). He claims that students enter university with powerful understandings of their past, present and future. Although this knowledge was not acquired through personal experience, it is as intensely felt as if they were 'there' and has social and individual consequences for how students live, know and see the world (*ibid.*). Furthermore, this knowledge is firmly attached to their many identities – religious, cultural, political, language – and is mental, emotional and partial. Bringing their social and political knowledge to campus has consequences for students. Jansen claims that it renders white Afrikaans students "*incapable of competent cross-cultural communication*" (Jansen, 2009, p. 265), limiting their potential to benefit from the diversity that the university experience offers and contributing to feelings of being "*isolated and fearful*" (*ibid.*). However, Jansen's account assumes that students are passive recipients of this intergenerational knowledge and incapable of forming their own truths.

Jansen's contribution to this research lies in how students knowings of their social and political past can advertently or inadvertently permeate the present confines of the HE space, particularly in informal spaces where students live and relax together. A question arising from this understanding of indirect knowledge is how the political past of a diverse body of students [not just one racial group] affects their present knowings of campus. This is directed towards working with a diverse group of students as the chosen sample for my study.

2.2.2.2 INFORMAL LEARNING [MARSICK & WATKINS]

Learning can also be classified into formal, non-formal and informal learning. Formal learning is about receiving the content in a structured manner as prescribed by the curriculum. In contrast, non-formal learning is connected to planned learning activities and is intentional. Finally, informal learning takes place as an unintentional part of daily activities such as eating, sleeping, learning and moving between spaces through interacting with people and context. It is defined by the European Centre for Development Training as

[l]earning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is mostly unintentional from the learner's perspective (Cedefop, 2009, p. 74).

Further characteristics of informal learning are that it happens by chance, is connected to the learning of others and is an inductive process of reflection and action (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). The fact that informal learning arises inadvertently does not imply that it lacks purpose or is of less importance than formal learning. The literature on informal learning also addresses learning for collaboration (Pettenati

& Ranieri, 2006), critical thinking (Kuh, 1993) and personal development through invisible knowledge and skills (Cedefop, 2009; Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Informal learning is viewed as an important component in contributing to lifelong and life-wide learning (Jackson, 2010).

In the course of their daily navigation of campus spaces such as residences, corridors, cafeterias and lawns, students have many opportunities to practise informal learning of others. Marsick and Watkins (2001) propose a model [See Figure 2.2] for informal learning at the individual level which is of interest to this study in terms of its connection between context, understanding, action and meaning-making. The personal, social, and cultural context for learning plays an affective role in how students might interpret a situation, in terms of the choices they might make, how they act, and the learning gained. The model suggests a progression of meaning-making as students make sense of a particular situation. Furthermore, it is not linear, but reiterative in that insights gained may necessitate a return to question previous understandings.

The questions that arise from these studies on informal learning, and specifically, Marsick and Watkins' (2001) model, are firstly, what informal learning[s] occurs collectively within the shared spaces of an institution. The second question is with regard to interactions that occur within online communities and the potential for informal learning in virtual spaces.

The interpretation of informal learning that this study adopts includes learning of social and spatial practices [seeing, interacting and observing others] but extends to include a deeper understanding of the self and others. Informal learning is not understood in this study as experiential learning contributing to formal learning of the curriculum.

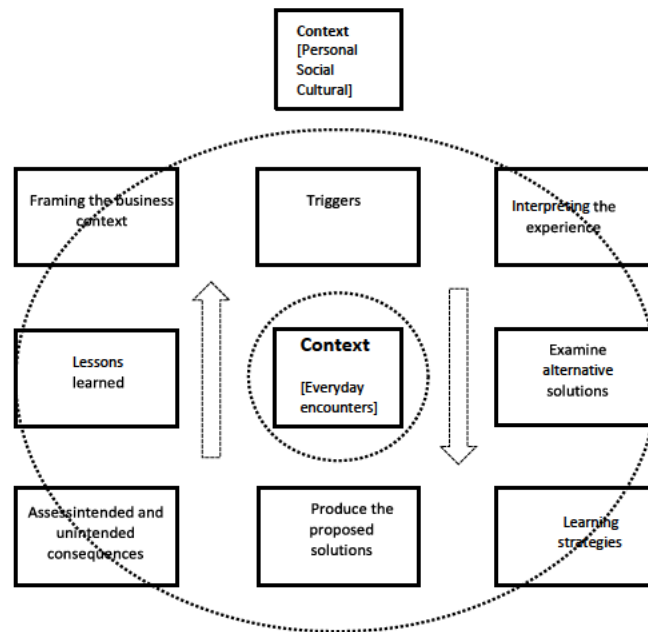


Figure 2.2 Marsick and Watkins' Informal and Incidental Learning Model
(Marsick & Watkins, 2001)

2.2.2.3 FOREGROUNDS [SKOVSMOSE]

The final process of knowing discussed in this chapter is that of “Foregrounds”, a concept developed by Skovsmose (2018) in his field of mathematics education to explain learning obstacles. These obstacles are stumbling blocks in the path to students reaching their Foregrounds which are essentially their hopes, dreams and aspirations.

Foregrounding takes into consideration the temporal, spatial and political dimensions of students knowings and indicates that their actions are as much guided by their propensity to meet aspirations as by how the context supports or disables these aspirations. Being born into a particular context establishes patterns of opportunities with regard to schooling, life expectancy, poverty or affluence. These factors form part of the structuring of the foreground. Foregrounds can be both ruined and reconstructed. They are intrinsically bound up with meaning production, in that meaning for students is constituted when the process of knowing addresses their foregrounds. Skovsmose was referring to formal learning and connecting students’ foregrounds to the knowing process within the context of the mathematics classroom.

Skovsmose adds a further dimension of foregrounds, or future aspirations to make knowing meaningful. This extends Dewey’s learning theory of knowing of students’ context in order to be meaningful. I draw from both theorists in exploring how the context of HE contributes to or disables students’ foregrounds

or, at worst, ruins such foregrounds. Furthermore, what actions are students taking [or not] to maintain or change their foregrounds based on their knowings of campus spaces?

The learnings from exploring knowing are that knowing is meaningful when related to students' context, their lived experiences and is remediated in relation to what they choose to constitute as their foregrounds. Knowing then intimately connects to students' past, present and future. It is further connected to power and in bringing the student voice as knower to the centre of the discourse [See Figure 2.3]. As researcher, I also take account of how social justice considerations infuse the process of students knowings. This enables questions to be posed as to the knowns that would emerge if student centredness in the knowing of campus spaces is foregrounded.

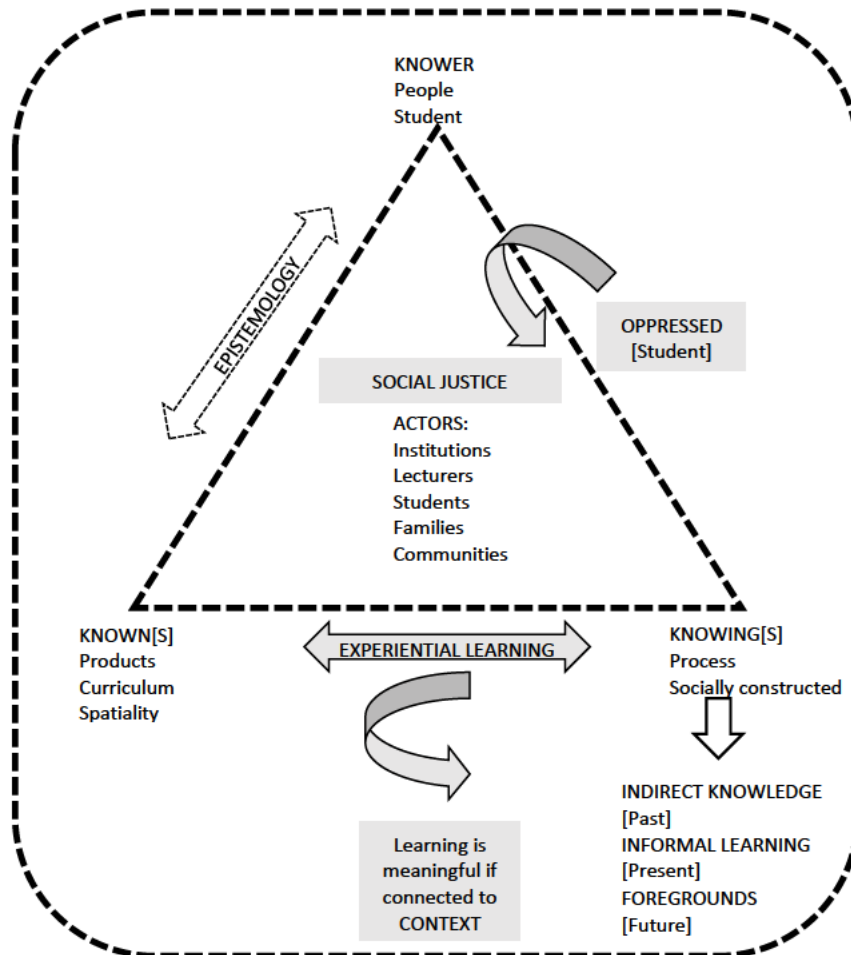


Figure 2.3. Model of knowing

2.3 FROM SPACE TO SPATIALITIES: *WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT SPACE?*

This research study makes use of the concept of spatiality⁷ as it acknowledges space as more than just mental, physical or social but as an interaction between all three. The students' reading of the HE environment through the lens of spatiality can contribute to a deeper understanding of how students make sense or find meaning in/of the spaces of HE. It also offers opportunities to understand multiple readings of spaces and their associated meanings so as to explore the relevance of institutional spaces and the potential linkages between spatiality, power and knowledge.

'Space to spatialities' is structured into two parts that delve into the theoretical understanding of spatiality as relevant to this thesis. The first is a discussion on space as understood by Lefebvre (1991) in *The Production of Space* and the second relates to how spatialities are fluid, always in the process of becoming and capable of producing power geometries (Massey, *For Space*, 2005).

This section concludes by discussing Lefebvre and Massey's conceptions of space and how these have extended understanding of the relationship between knowing and space. Dewey's conception of space suggests that it is an already given construct. He does not overtly imbue this space as embedded with explicit power dynamics. By contrast, Lefebvre and Massey argue overtly that knowing is understood as invoking power dynamics present in space and that space is produced; it is not a given.

2.3.1 SPACE: *PROCESS AND PRODUCT*

Lefebvre's theory of space has been used extensively in educational literature to explore various social relations with educational spaces. Examples include an exploration of issues of injustice in schools (Schmidt, 2015), place-making practices in informal spaces in high schools (Fataar & Rinqest, 2019), addressing gender and learning spaces in HE (Moss, 2004) and students' perceptions of campus spaces (Yu, Bryant, Messmer, Tsagronis, & Link, 2018).

Lefebvre wrote *The Production of Space* following violent student protests in France in May 1968. These protests arose in response to class discrimination and the political bureaucracy that controlled university funding. Starting in a suburban university which was close to an informal settlement, they spilled over into the streets of Paris where the sister urban campus was located. The violent protests lasted for a month, with workers and school-goers joining the university students in solidarity. The protests are of significance to this research in three ways: firstly, in terms of bringing the lived experience of students' struggles regarding inequity of distribution of funding to the fore; secondly, in terms of how these protests started to inform understandings of the relationship between space,

⁷ Spatiality is a term used to describe the social production of space and the meaning made of it (McGregor, 2004, p. 13).

society and power; and thirdly, in upending dominant conceptions of where power in the urban space lay, if only temporarily.

Spatiality, or space that is socially produced, is a concept that is evident in Lefebvre's (1991) *The Production of Space* in which he argued for a unitary theory of space to guide a more holistic understanding of space as physical [nature, the cosmos], mental [logical and formal abstractions], and social (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 11). Lefebvre was concerned with a knowledge of space, the space of social practice and the space occupied by sensory phenomena, including that which is produced from our imagination such as projects, symbols and idealistic places. The sources of Lefebvre's knowledge of space lie within both an understanding of language, in developing an underlying spatial code similar to the purpose of syntax's ordering of words to give meaning, and an exploration of the everyday lived experience through phenomenology (Schmid, 2008).

Lefebvre developed an understanding of space as in a dialectic relationship, meaning that it is in conflict and contradictory. Central to his conception of space is that it is bound up with social reality and is produced; it does not exist in and of itself (Schmid, 2008). Space, Lefebvre asserts, is divided into three facets, all of which are interconnected processes, namely, spatial practice, representation of space and space of representations. He also referred to spatiality as perceived, conceived and a lived space.

In terms of developing a language of space, Lefebvre generated a three-dimensional analysis of spatial production as follows (Schmid, 2008, pp. 36-37; Lefebvre, 1991, pp. 38-39):

- *Spatial practice* is the everyday social activity and the network of interactions that occur in the social space of everyday life. These practices produce or reproduce social relations.
- *Representation of space*, which Lefebvre associates with production, order, knowledge and verbal signs. It is the realm of those who make decisions about space that affect others such as architects and engineers and includes representations such as maps, plans and drawings.
- *Representational space* is linked to the underground of social life and is associated with the arts, non-verbal signs and symbols. It refers to space as lived, as the space of the users, as dominated and hence passively experienced space which the imagination tries to alter and appropriate.

Lefebvre's phenomenological references are related to the conceptions of perceived, conceived and lived space, which denote both individual and social processes (Schmid, 2008, pp. 39-40).

- *Perceived space* relates to all the senses and refers to the material elements that constitute space. Perceiving space through the senses is a component of everyday social practice.
- *Conceived space* is an act of thought linked to the production of knowledge – space needs to be conceived of before it can be perceived.
- *Lived space* refers to the world as experienced by human beings as part of their everyday life.

Lefebvre's conceptions of space are of the social production of thought, actions and experiences. Space is also at once perceived, conceived and lived and these facets exist in dialectic tension with one another in a state of uncertainty. Schmid (2008, p. 41) provides a synthesis of Lefebvre's theory on space, concluding with [Emphasis authors own],

*The core of the theory of the production of space identifies three moments of **production**: first, **material** production; second, the production of **knowledge**; and, third, the production of **meaning**. This makes it clear that the subject of Lefebvre's theory is not "space in itself," not even the ordering of (material) objects and artifacts "in space." Space is to be understood in an active sense as an intricate web of **relationships** that is continuously **produced and reproduced**. The object of the analysis is, consequently, the **active processes of production** that take place in time.*

Space is produced; it is not a given. Lefebvre emphasised that thoughts and actions in space contribute to a space's becoming and that space, in turn, shapes these social processes, which in turn convey meaning. Space is shaped by and shapes social processes and is hence both a product and a producer (Milgrom, 2008). It is thus continuously being produced and is therefore unfinished. Space in itself is conceived as a knowing of the varying interconnected facets that make up its production. These facets expand space beyond its physical or mental characteristics to include the social aspects thereof. Lefebvre connects knowledge of space to power and consequently to its impact on social relations in space. Meaning is produced by the relations and activities that occur within space and by the imagined possibilities of space. Schmid's (2008) interpretation of Lefebvre begins to stitch the production of *space* into a relationship with *knowledge and meaning* building on these relations as developed in the previous construct of knowing. However, this does not assume that the relationship between knowledge, space and meaning lies within the same social bodies. Within Lefebvre's theory, the realm of lived space is where space is made meaningful as this is where space is experienced, yet it is not where knowing or the knowledge of space lies. Such knowledge of space is within the conceived space. Theoretically, this embodies a space that is usually associated with those in power who are able to think of and change space. Knowledge of space and meaning of space are then divorced from each other, with the one having the power to think and change space, and the other merely to experience it. This has the potential to bring knowledge and power to the users of space so as to conceive of their own space and not perpetuate its re-production. The re-constitutive agenda to produce new space was of interest to my research. I was interested in exploring the use of Lefebvre's theory of space to explain why campus space is both produced in the way that it is, and why it produces social relations in the way that it does. My study aimed to utilise the three facets of perceived, conceived and lived space as a means to explore the various relations that constitute an understanding of HE informal spaces as they are presently produced.

The adoption of the Lefebvrian triad by an architect [Lucien Kroll] in the production of student housing (Milgrom, 2008) offered the potential to relook at the theory. Students at a university in Brussels demanded Kroll's involvement in their housing as a response to management's proposal of a modernist building that segregated functions with an aesthetic that the students felt was alienating and overwhelming. Kroll flipped the conceived understanding of Lefebvre's triad as the space of the architect and instead of siding with management to conceptualise a design that was in keeping with their image of the institution, he opted to work with the end-users, the students. This gave students a voice and the means to contribute their own knowings and meanings to space based on their lived experience of being a student. This example illustrates the potential of social processes to change the lived experience of the student so as to be 'freed' of the dominant conceptions of space. The end-user playing an active role in the conceptualising of architecture is not new in practice and is explored further in Chapter four [4.3.2.1] as co-production. The theorisation of *students conceiving of campus spaces to meet their foregrounds* was regarded as an interesting perspective on a discourse which tended to focus on students' present experience (Cross & Johnson, 2008; Ndofirepi, 2015; Swartz, et al., 2018) of campus spaces. Chapter five explains the method adopted to explore students' imagined campus space.

2.3.2 SPATIALITY: RELATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE AND POWER

Massey (2005; 1992) drew inspiration from Lefebvre's conscious discourse on what is meant by 'space' to unpack the influences on the dominant thoughts on space and focus on the process of imagining space [Emphasis authors own].

*Moreover, and again as a result of the fact that it is **conceptualised as created out of social relations**, space is by its very nature full of **power** and symbolism, a complex web of **relations** of domination and subordination, of solidarity and cooperation. This aspect of space has been referred to elsewhere as a kind of **'power-geometry'***

(Massey, 1992, p. 81).

Massey views space as a product of social interrelations infused with inherent power dynamics. These asymmetrical⁸ relations of power manifest physically in spatial form [power geometries] or in the imagination and work within and across varying scales⁹ (Massey, 1992). Thinking across scales is of interest in the educational realm where spaces are designed and structured by government policies [macro], managed by administration [meso] and lived at the micro-scale by varying social groups. All these agents exert influence over campus spaces in the various ways that they structure or appropriate space over time.

⁸ Asymmetrical refers to unequal distributions of power.

⁹ Massey's conceptions of scale are far broader than the institutional scale that I adopt and include the global to local scale.

Massey suggests a multiplicity of relations between these different players and the need to discover where the power might lie between entities and how these relations play themselves out in physical space. Her work thus introduces the concepts of relationality and power geometries to this research.

Massey liberates space from meanings that associate it with being static, closed and representational. Instead, she argues that spaces are open, diverse and full of life and are always in the process of becoming (Massey, 2005). Space is conceived as always under construction, in the process of forever being made, which implies a continual openness to the future (Warf, 2008). This is an encouraging and positive view of space as not historically doomed to reproduce existing power geometries and relations; instead, it embeds potential for change.

Massey uses the example of the location of institutions relative to the community they serve to explore relations and power geometries in space with knowledge production. She criticises institutions that, by their spatiality and exclusivity [distancing], separate the knower from the known. Massey suggests, *the need to ponder the elitist, exclusivist enclosures within which so much of the knowledge production of what is defined as legitimate knowledge still goes on* (Massey, 2005, p. 75).

Physically, socially and epistemologically, Massey is asserting that institutions are distancing the knowledge they profess to produce from those that would benefit most from access to it. She calls for an opening up of the understanding of space as more than one dimension rather than as a polarised binary in terms of being in power or outside of power [of the oppressor and the oppressed] (Rodgers, 2004). Her view calls for the possibility of understanding multiple trajectories and histories in space that acknowledge the many knowings that exist in space, not just the singular story (*ibid.*).

Massey's contribution to this research is connecting space more directly to asymmetrical power relations and how these can work across scales to affect campus space. The potential for space and the social relations therein to be in flux offers opportunities to view the diverse body of students that engage with one another and the campus space on a daily basis in a much more fluid relationship in which multiple knowings are possible.

Massey's notions of spatiality have been interpreted by various researchers in the field of education to address a number of relational issues such as power relations in school spaces (McGregor, 2004), the political dimensions of place (Gruenewald, 2003), relations of communal living, learning in HE (Card & Thomas, Student housing as a learning space, 2018) and diversity (Samura, 2016). Building on this learning of the field of education through Massey, questions arise as to what these multiple knowings could be, how they could differ across a student body, and how they are interrelated or interconnected

to students' experiences and foregrounds. Furthermore, within the spatial structure of the campus, could HE be continuing to perpetuate the exclusion or inclusion of students? This last question begins to lead towards the spatial injustices that could be perpetuated within the interactive spatialities of the campus. This multiple interpretive spatiality is discussed in more detail in the following section.

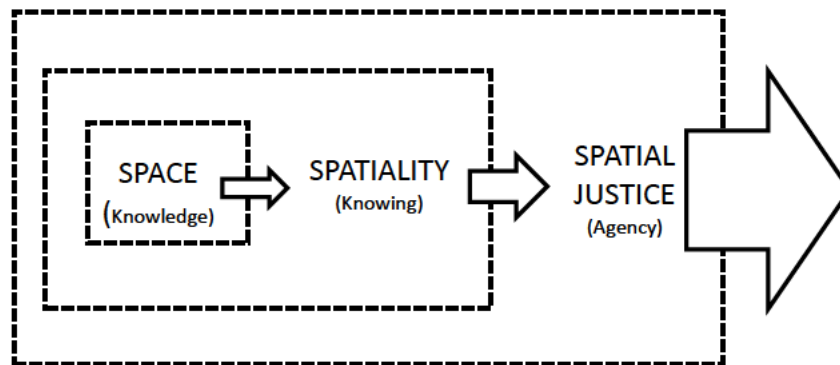


Figure 2.4 Model of space to spatial justice

2.4 FROM SPATIALITY TO SPATIAL JUSTICE: *STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES OF INJUSTICE*

The literature on injustices within HE is usually framed within a social justice discourse, with discussions concerning race (Swartz, et al., 2018), class (Bowers-Brown, Stahl, Morrison, & Lacey, 2017), disability (Snyder, 2005; Moriña & Morgado, 2018), gender (Department of Education Republic of South Africa, 2008; Enochs & Roland, 2006) and foreign students (Naidoo, 2018). My research expands these notions of injustice to include how spatial aspects construe other forms of injustices, specifically when read against our colonial and apartheid legacy. Soja (2008) argues that colonial geographies of social control are experienced as spatial structures of privilege. This notion is legible in the urban fabric of the South African city where apartheid planning not only segregated different racial groupings from one another, but located particular racial groups far from the city, its services and work opportunities.

Soja builds on the tripartite spatiality of Lefebvre, on the power of thinking spatially, using the idea of the social-spatial dialect to not only show how social processes shape and explain geographies, but even more so to discern how geographies shape and explain social processes and social action. Soja develops this idea further in *The Spatial Turn* (2008, p. 31-32) and speaks of '*spatial justice*'¹⁰ and the spatial aspects of justice and injustice. Soja's discourse on spatial justice initiates this discussion and in so doing

¹⁰ Spatial justice draws from the social justice issues of access, privilege and resources and applies an urban spatial causality.

frames the understanding and interpretation of the term *spatial justice* within the context of this research.

2.4.1 SPATIAL JUSTICE IN THEORY [SOJA]

Soja's (2009, p. 2) critical thinking about spatiality is founded on three key principles that are essentially an elaboration of Lefebvre's theory of space:

1. We are all spatial, social and temporal beings
2. Space is socially produced and adapted by social intervention
3. The spatial and social dialectically shape each other

The consequence of these principles is that the spatiality of our lives can have both positive and negative impacts for us as human beings, enabling, constraining or disempowering us. Hence, the spatiality of our lives has the potential to be just as well as unjust (Soja, 2009). These ideas form the basis for understanding the causal relationship between spatiality and justice and the embedding of injustice within spatiality and spatiality within injustice.

Soja argues that spatial justice is both a product and a process. As a product, it is denoted in the impartial and equitable dissemination of socially-valued resources in space and the opportunities to make use of them. These resources could include housing, healthcare and education (Soja, 2009). Spatial injustice can thus be reflected in the patterns of unfair distribution of resources and the unequal distribution of infrastructure [spatial structures of privilege].

Spatial justice can be understood as part and parcel of the multi-scaler lived spaces of our lives from the localised and intimate to the city, regional, national and global level (Soja, 2010). Soja suggests three interactive and embedded scales of operation: the macro-, the micro- and the in-between or meso-scale. The macro-scale is characterised as the politically-imposed decision-making [top-down] processes of creating and defining electoral districts, while the micro-scale refers to discriminatory decision-making at the level of the individual or company and arises from internal action [bottom-up] which could, for example, transpire where harmful industries are located. In-between the macro- and the micro-scale or the global and the urban is the regional or meso-scale, which Soja (2009; 2010) associates with uneven development. Uneven development refers to spatial geographies that give preference to one community over another and in so doing, enable certain areas and their people to develop faster. This meso-level scale is also where Soja proposes that top-down [global] and bottom-up [local] social actions meet (Soja, 2010). I return to the significance of the meso-scale at the end of this chapter and again in Chapter three.

In reference to these scales, Soja is also arguing that the spatial process can shape and inform social relations – dialectically as opposed to deterministically – and furthermore, that we can act to change these multi-scaler geographies of uneven development through political and social action. Soja further understands justice as the raising of “*collective political consciousness*”, crossing divisions of race, gender and class to “*create a sense of solidarity based on shared experiences*” (2010, p. 21). He is advocating for awareness of the collective struggles that people face within their daily lived experience [particularly in cities] as a consequence of injustice that could be occurring at multiple scales. However, Soja unquestionably assumes that social action is possible even when uneven power hierarchies exist and that the collective good is for the individual good.

Soja’s contribution to this study is that of the spatial inequity through uneven development that is collectively experienced and recognisable in the physicality of the world. Another contribution is the idea of collective or social action to change these injustices for the common good, and the last is that spatial justice can function at multiple intersecting geographical scales. Soja’s discourse raises several concerns as to how we identify and understand the underlying processes producing unjust spatialities within the HE environment – where are these injustices manifested in space, and at what scale are they most notable?

The meso or in-between scale is of interest in this research as it is the scale in which various powers essentially meet in the structuring of uneven development. This research study transfers Soja’s scaler notions from the broader geographical scale to the institutional, with specific interest in the meso-scale. The *macro* is reframed as the institution's decision-making processes that inform campus planning and relations with its surrounding context [the city]. The *micro* lies at the level of the individual student and personal preference to occupy some spaces over others, and how this shapes their experience of HE. The *meso*-scale is at the level of the student community or collective and the uneven development of some spaces on campus, leading to the privileging of some groups of students over others. This pattern of privilege plays itself out in the informal spaces of the campus, such as the cafeteria and the car parks, which are for the benefit of a limited body of students who can access these facilities. It is access to these spaces and interaction within them that distinguish student groups from one another.

This research positions itself within the meso-scale [See Figure 2.4] where the power geometries of spatiality can play out within the liminal,¹¹ in-between or transitional informal spaces which also serve as interfaces between different student groupings. Informal spaces within campus are understood as liminal spaces (Tarini, 2015) located in-between the macro- and micro-scale, between formal and non-

¹¹ Liminal space is described in the literature as either a physical space that is moved through, that has no real purpose as a destination in itself, or the psychological space of uncertainty, or moving between one state and level of consciousness to another. For the purpose of this research, I embrace both the physical and mental aspects of liminality.

formal spaces, between spaces that are highly regulated such as the lecture theatre and those that are self-regulated, as spatially betwixt and between spaces that students share with others (Gideon, 2019). Furthermore, liminality for students is interpreted in this research as a process of knowing in and through informal spaces with and of others. Liminality is also a mental space of uncertainty (Barnett, 2007) that students experience while at university and is associated with students' actions of resistance, agency and capitulation (Wood, 2012).

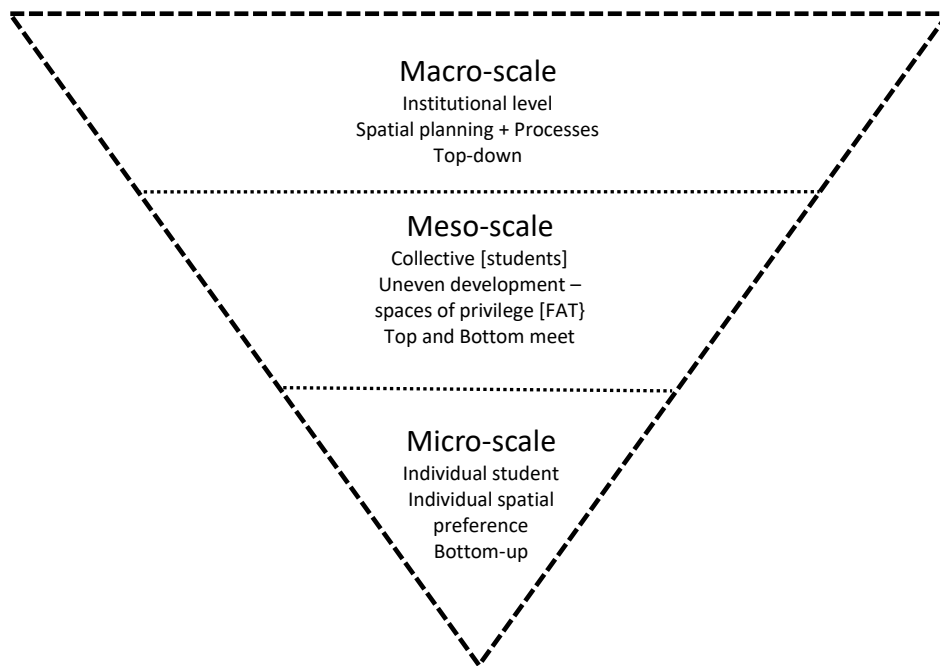


Figure 2.5 Scales of Spatial Justice within higher education

Informal spaces are also where the welfare [as discussed in Chapter one] responsibilities of the institution co-exist with a diverse body of students. Manifestation of this on campus occurs in the physical structures and processes to support students in terms of providing food, accommodation and transport that could unknowingly be perpetuating further inequality. Spatial injustices within the informal spaces of food, accommodation and transport are discussed further in the following chapter.

2.5 INTERIM CONCEPTUAL LENS FOR THE STUDY

To conclude this chapter, the three constructs that constituted part of the conceptual lens with which I entered the field are understood more specifically as follows:

The construct of *knowing* is understood as a process that is relational and uncertain. Knowing becomes meaningful if related to students' lived experience and to their foregrounds. Knowing can sometimes be debilitating if related to only students' past. Knowing is further related to power and as such has social justice implications.

The construct of *spatiality* is understood as space that is socially produced; therefore, space is always in the process of becoming. It is not static, nor is it a given. Asymmetrical relations of power play out in space. Knowledge of space is related to the cognitive domain of the imagination which is associated with those in power, whilst meaning is attached to the lived experience of space, from which multiple knowings of space are possible.

The construct of *spatial justice* is understood as both a process and a product operating across many scales, which for the purpose of this research is the in-between or meso-scale relating to the unfair distribution of resources in space as well as to spatial structures of privilege.

Knowing, spatiality and spatial justice all in some manner or form address relations of power and produce meaning. The intention of this research was to understand how the knowing of spatiality based on students' lived experience of campus space, and their foregrounds [future aspirations] can contribute to spatial justice within a post-apartheid era.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I explained Soja's meso- or in-between scale of spatial justice as reimagined within the institutional space. Spatial injustice is explored further in this chapter in terms of how it can manifest in the in-between or transitional spaces where hierarchies of power may be less clearly defined between student peer groups within the informal spaces of food, accommodation and transport.

The chapter begins by explaining informal space and how it is understood within the context of this research. This is followed by an exploration of spatial injustice within the spaces of food, accommodation and transport through discourses in the literature. Students construct an understanding of self and others through and within these spaces and in so doing, develop spatialities that can be inclusive or exclusive and inhibiting or enabling for other students.

However, not all students are passive recipients of the spatiality of injustices they encounter in HE space: some are agentic in tackling adversity to address issues they may be facing. Others capitulate. The current discourse of student agency in relation to food, accommodation and transport spaces is explored as means to assess the actions taken by students to address spatial injustice within informal spaces, thus formulating this study's contribution to understanding the potential of informal spaces as both divisive and inclusive. The chapter closes after having argued for knowing the relationship between spatiality and the injustices that it may engender for students in food, accommodation and transport spaces.

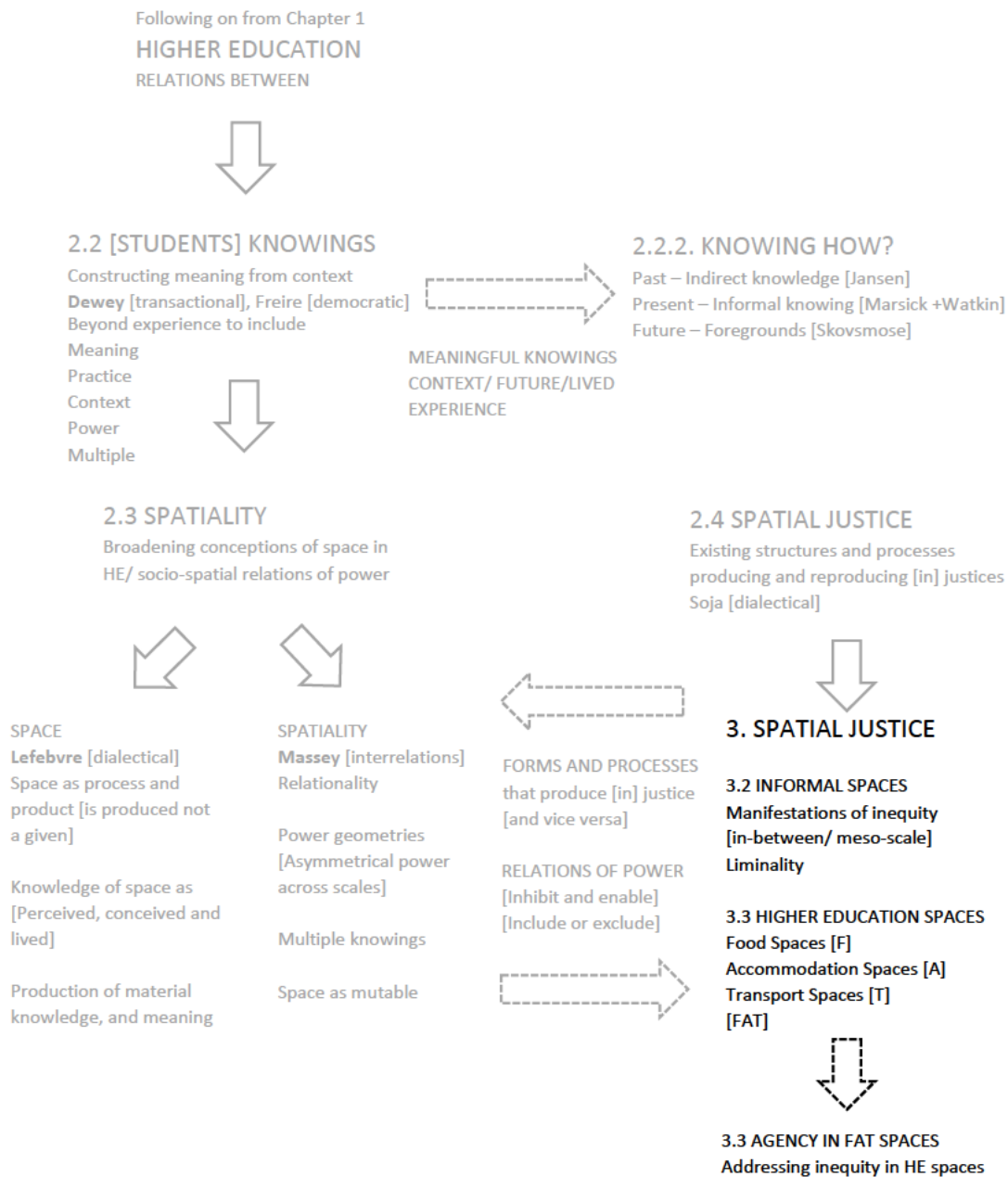


Figure 3.1 Overview of Chapter three organisation
 [Chapters one and two in grey]

3.2 SPATIAL JUSTICE IN INFORMAL SPACES

3.2.1 INFORMAL, FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL

Chapter two referred to three kinds of learning: formal, non-formal and informal learning. I noted that this study chose to focus on the less explored area of informal learning, particularly in informal spaces. Informal learning relates to the learning arising from interacting with other students and people within students' daily lived experience of campus spaces. Formal spaces are represented by classrooms and lecture theatres where the primary content is delivered. Non-formal spaces are represented by LANs, studios, library spaces and informal learning spaces¹ which support the content, and expectations from the engagement with content in the formal spaces. By contrast, informal spaces constitute spaces that students move through or interact in as part of their daily lived activities such as eating, sleeping or leisure.

The intent of this study is not to deterministically bind particular kinds of learning to specific kinds of spaces; rather, the relationship between informal learning and the informal spaces serves to demarcate the focus of the study. This research study focussed on informal spaces and the learning of self and others, and less so on relations with the formal curriculum and formal spaces of learning.

3.2.2 INFORMAL SPACES

As noted in Chapter two, informal spaces are understood as transitional, liminal or in-between spaces where different groupings of people have opportunities to interact spontaneously. Both the urban and institutional use of the construct of informal spaces are explored below to explain how informal spaces were operationalised within this research.

Informal spaces within the urban context are undervalued, have no legal ownership, and are perceived as unregulated and unplanned spaces, with no official use or occupancy (Shaw & Hudson, 2009). They are often occupied by marginal groups, who appropriate these spaces to suit their own needs and imagination (*ibid.*). Within the context of the university, the informal space discourse is somewhat differently understood. Informal spaces are noted as being located outside of the formal classroom or lecture theatre, positioned between buildings (Gebhardt, 2014; Maina, 2017) and linking students and faculty between one function and the next. The spaces are characterised as being dynamic, flexible,

¹ The focus of this study is the relationship between informal learning and informal spaces and not the currently very topical discussion of informal learning spaces. Awareness is growing that students are learning about their formal curriculum in spaces outside of the classroom, making the provision of informal learning spaces in institutions popular, particularly in the UK, Australia and America. Informal learning spaces as a term combines the concepts of informal learning and informal spaces but loses the inherent meaning of what I study in its reformation. It refers to a purpose-built, flexible space or facility for students to learn collaboratively with others or on their own. This study's interpretation of informal learning extends beyond learning from social and spatial practices (seeing, interacting and observing others) through a deeper understanding of others' values.

not subject to many regulations (Hunter & Cox, 2014), and having agency and community. This means that students can choose with whom they wish to engage and in which informal space based on their preferences (Alexander & Tredoux, 2010).

Informal spaces encourage social interaction by chance or deliberately, and are where students and faculty can mix, mingle, pass by one another and interact should they choose to do so. These spaces are also associated with academic or social functions (Lomas & Oblinger, 2006), contributing to feelings of belonging, personal and professional growth and the intellectual and social life of the university (Gebhardt, 2014). The practices that students perform in informal spaces are many and include studying, collaborating, and socialising amongst peer groups, faculty members and other student bodies.

The use of the term informal space in the educational literature is often in reference to informal learning spaces or informal social spaces which tend to be purpose-built facilities for students to learn individually or collaboratively. However, understanding informal spaces as liminal spaces that can vary in scale and degree of enclosure (Maina, 2017), opens up the possibilities of campus spaces to include a broader range of spaces such as student housing as in-between space (Card & Thomas, 2018; Holton, 2017; Owolabi, 2015), circulation spaces such as corridors and stairways (Popenici & Brew, 2013; Anggiani & Heryanto, 2018), student gathering spaces such as student unions (Brooks, Byford, & Sela, 2016), commercial spaces (Andersson, Sadgrove, & Valentine, 2012), green spaces (Speake, Edmondson, & Nawaz, 2013), social spaces (Maina, 2017), cafés, cyber cafes and informal learning spaces (Hunter & Cox, 2014).

The literature on students knowings of informal campus spaces, in terms of the meaning students are deriving from these spaces rarely extends beyond individualistic pursuits of self-development and academic success (Owolabi, 2015; Card & Thomas, 2018; Burger & Naude, 2020) or experiential discourses (Andersson, Sadgrove, & Valentine, 2012; Dominguez-Whitehead, 2015; Ndofirepi, 2015). This raises the question of what students are learning about others in these informal spaces.

This research explored what students come to know of one another through informal spaces, what knowings are arising from their experiences of these spaces, how these knowings might be contributing to an understanding of spatial justice on campus, and what student actions are arising as a consequence of these knowings.

However, I chose not to address all informal spaces on campus but to focus on the informal spaces of food, accommodation and transport. This is in response to the rise of the welfare university² in South Africa (Jansen J. , 2017) where the spaces of privilege are becoming more apparent and knowledge or knowing of their spatiality is critical for understanding spatial [in]justices on campus to advocate for spatial change. The growing welfare responsibility of the South African university (Department of Education Republic of South Africa, 2008) is reflected in the ever-increasing residential community (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011) both on and off-campus, the distribution and location of food spaces on campus and transportation patterns arising from the mobilising of students between campuses and between residences and campus spaces. Food, accommodation and transport spaces constitute part of students' everyday lives which they produce and are in turn produced by that lived reality.

3.3 SPATIAL JUSTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In the dialogue that follows, I discuss food, accommodation, and transport spaces individually in terms of their socio-spatial relations on campus. The injustices or inequalities that students might experience and how they respond to these are discussed thereafter. Students are viewed as active agents in the construction of their spatialities and agency is understood as a process in which students have the will, the power and the resources to effect change individually or collectively through actions and interactions (Klemenčič, 2015).

In reviewing the literature, I was consciously looking for material on socio-spatial relations, power dynamics within these spaces and spatial justice issues both explicit and implicit, and less so the material and service delivery aspects of food, accommodation and transport. For the most part, the review draws on insights learnt from South African universities to contextualise the study.

3.3.1 SPATIAL JUSTICE IN FOOD SPACES

Food is a basic material need (Dominguez-Whitehead & Whitehead, 2014) that contributes to students' physiological development along with sleep and clothes. These fundamentals need to be met, otherwise they affect other priorities (Dominguez-Whitehead, 2015) such as students' knowledge acquisition (Munro, Quayle, Simpson, & Barnsley, 2013).

² A term used by Jonathan Jansen (2017) to describe post-apartheid South African universities in his book *As by fire: The end of the South African University*. He suggests that, increasingly, the knowledge agenda of HE is being eclipsed by the need to address social welfare redress.

Acquiring and consuming food on campus is an everyday spatial and social practice that can be undertaken individually or collectively in a number of spaces. More specifically, the practice of selling, eating, exchanging and producing food for personal consumption is associated with campus restaurants, food preparation spaces in student accommodation, student unions, cafeterias, kiosks, campus open spaces, lawns and dining halls.

The literature raises issues of food insecurity in South Africa universities (Munro, Quayle, Simpson, & Barnsley, 2013; Sabi, Siwela, Kolanisi, & Naidoo, 2018; Dominguez-Whitehead, 2015) and how this is affecting both students' self-development and their relationship with their fellow students. Food insecurity is noted as compromising students' academic performance and rendering tenuous their potential to engage in practices of eating together as a means to build a sense of community and belonging. These studies also highlight asymmetrical relations between those students who are food secure and those who are not and note that these groups cannot engage in equitable social encounters let alone share the same spatial settings (Dominguez-Whitehead & Whitehead, 2014, p. 65). This highlights the limitations of the university space to broaden conceptions of informal learning by bringing students of different backgrounds and socio-economic groupings together. Perpetuation of the academic advantage of the formal learning of wealthier students, who do not experience food insecurity, is also noted (Munro, Quayle, Simpson, & Barnsley, 2013). Students experiencing food insecurity are thus doubly disadvantaged with regard to both their formal and informal learning on campus.

However, students who are food secure also lose out on the potential to engage in a richer educational experience. Studies on campus food spaces also highlight racialised appropriation of spaces by particular groups such as the coffee shops on a campus, which signifies to students this racial group's higher potential spending power (Pattman, 2007). An observational study on campus cafeterias noted localised segregation in students' choice of seating arrangements (Clack, Dixon, & Tredoux, 2005). This study employed the concept of *illusory contact* (*ibid.*) wherein perceived racial integration underlies micro-segregation. Instead, localised patterns of space use tell of inferred boundaries separating race groups (*ibid.*). However, Clack, Dixon, & Tredoux's (2005) study did not engage students in the exploration and explanation of their appropriation of the space and relied on inferences from observed spatial patterns.

3.3.1.1 AGENCY AND FOOD SPACES

There is limited research on how students are agentially choosing to address issues of food security or how university support is mediating the socio-spatial relations between the haves and the have nots. However, the literature suggests that students are reluctant to access food schemes because of the

negative perceptions associated with meal vouchers and food parcels (Sabi, Siwela, Kolanisi, & Naidoo, 2018). Students are, however, opting to steal from the fridges of other students in residence (*ibid.*), avoid expensive eating spaces, share food, prepare meals together, go home to get food [assuming the home is not too far], or eat less food or fewer meals per day (Rudolph, et al., 2018). Even with these coping mechanisms to address food insecurity some students' aspirations to be associated with a particular social status cannot be disconnected from their food choices – and consequently, specific food spaces. Students are thus choosing more expensive food choices, even though they can ill afford them, for the social status this is perceived to confer (*ibid.*).

3.3.1.2 LIMITATIONS OF STUDIES ON FOOD SPACES

Existing studies on food and food-related space on campus primarily address food as a material need or the lack of diversity of encounters with others in the consumption of food. Food, how students acquire it and the complexities associated with obtaining food as part of students' everyday campus existence have not been discussed in previous studies. Some of these complexities are raised in the temporal nature of food acquisition as at the beginning and the end of a semester when financial aid has not kicked in or is running out and by students' preference for catered residences where food is not only readily available, but is also convenient (Dominguez-Whitehead, 2015). Furthermore, the complexities with regard to transport off-campus to access alternate and cheaper food spaces, sometimes even going home to do so, are not discussed in any detail. All of the above referenced studies engage discretely with the issues of food, accommodation and transport but do not intimately explore the relations between food spaces, transportation, location of accommodation, scheduling of time and the interaction with other students on campus.

The literature also assumes that not addressing food security issues will constrain students of different backgrounds from interacting on a social level in a post-apartheid society. The studies discuss students' experiences of food spaces but not what they are learning from their experiences about others. The everyday lived experience of the campus is not explicitly discussed in terms of how food spaces are conceptualised by university management and policy and whose interests they are serving.

3.3.2 SPATIAL JUSTICE IN ACCOMMODATION SPACES

A diverse range of accommodation options is available to students that varies in terms of quality, availability, the infrastructure provided [serviced, catered or not], management [privately owned, university-owned or university-leased], room occupancy [single or shared] and location [on or off campus] (Holton, 2017).

As viewed in the literature, accommodation is a binary discourse between staying at home or moving away from home to go to university. Research studies, mainly British and American, tend to privilege going to university (Patiniotis & Holdsworth, 2005) and spending more time on campus over staying at home (Christie, 2007). The discourse on student housing that tends to position self-development and academic development as the core benefits of living in residence is contested as being individualistic and dismissive of the positive aspects of staying at home for family good (*ibid.*). This discourse sets up tensions between home and campus residences. Students might stay at home for any number of reasons from material comforts, to financial and family ties, friendships and community and the potential of these environments to provide stability and emotional support in the transition to HE. Socio-cultural rather than physical distance (Pokorny, Holley, & Kane, 2017) can thus, be the issue with regard to successful integration into the campus of students that stay at home. If living in residences and spending time on campus is associated with successful integration into the campus, how are students that choose to stay at home integrated into the university environment? What spaces and spatialities on campus enable their integration?

Living in residence raises several issues that have both spatial and social justice implications. The most prominent, within the South African context, is the lack of housing options for students and the condition of housing which have been key grievances of student protests over the past few years. University-leased accommodation is a growing phenomenon in response to the demand to house students with government-funded loans or bursary schemes [NSFAS], which in some institutions can be up to 50% of the student intake (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011; Council on Higher Education, 2016). These conditions are sometimes not ideal (Council on Higher Education, 2016) and students have spoken out loudly and sometimes violently to express their discontent to management. Their concerns include safety and security (Gopal & Van Niekerk, 2018) of person and property alongside the material concern for quality and hygienic environments (Radder, 2009; Govender, 2019).

Students are not only affected by their mobility to campus but, through the process of studentification,³ can also affect residential communities surrounding universities by changing both the culture and the physical landscape. Some argue, however, that studentification not only impacts on such communities; students themselves are also negatively impacted by the *spatial geography* of our apartheid past (Mzileni & Mkhize, 2019). The historically white university campuses tend to be located in more affluent areas in which private landlords define the market value of rentals and in so doing capitalise on growing student housing demand. Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds can be adversely affected if they are both not able to access student residences and unable to pay these private rental prices. They

³ The process of social, environmental, cultural, economic and physical change as a consequence of a large body of students entering or living in a geographical area.

are effectively priced out of the area surrounding some campuses and forced to commute from home or find more affordable accommodation further from campus.

Students are essentially thrown together in residences and managing relations with others, and access to specific spaces within incidental co-living arrangements can prove difficult, especially for marginal groups. Residence spaces can inculcate a culture of habituated practices that serve to alienate or suppress the participation of students of particular race groups (Jansen, 2009; Department of Education Republic of South Africa, 2008), sexuality (Vaccaro, 2012) or religious affiliations (Hopkins, 2011). These social issues play themselves out in various spatial responses from creating boundaries (Card & Thomas, 2018) to segregation of space use or temporal changes in space use or occupancy. Such issues are exacerbated in residential accommodation where the trend of maximising bed space is at the expense of *communal space*, thereby limiting students' potential to interact more fluidly in their daily activities of eating, cooking or studying.

3.3.2.1 AGENCY AND ACCOMMODATION SPACES

Students are active agents in drawing attention to poor quality spaces through deliberate protest action (Govender, 2019). Within the residential space, students also actively manage their relations with other students through actions at a micro-scale. They negotiate behavioural relations with other students spatially through engendering boundaries and borders to enable formal learning within their residential space (Card & Thomas, 2018). Independently or collectively, students also try to make a home space within their shared communes or residences. The making of a home is seen through changes to the configuration of their space and the arrangement of their possessions (Holton, 2017), which aim to create spaces that students not only feel comfortable in but also support their academic development.

3.3.2.2 LIMITATIONS OF STUDIES ON ACCOMMODATION SPACES

The discourse on students opting to stay at home, especially within the South African context, is limited. Accommodation located off-campus, such as communes, postgraduate living arrangements or leased accommodation (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011) is not prevalent in the literature. One would think that this would be a fertile research area considering the large proportion of the student population accommodated in different off-campus residential arrangements.

The literature on spatial injustices within accommodation raises unexplored areas regarding housing provision and allocation thereof institutionally. Further questions that arise include: What becomes of those students that cannot access university-owned or leased housing; where do they find affordable housing? What are students' spatial expectations of university-leased or owned residences? How does the spatiality of on-campus and off-campus, leased accommodation impact differently on students' self-development, academics and relationships with other students?

3.3.3 SPATIAL JUSTICE IN TRANSPORT SPACES

The ability to be mobile and access the campus space is a critical factor in engaging in campus life (Kenyon, 2011), which includes attending classes and accessing on-campus learning resources (Allen & Farber, 2018). Studies on students' mobility to campus have directly linked access to student achievement and poor access to compromised learning, social and other campus-related activities (Kenyon, 2011). Getting to campus is thus critical. Many students commute daily from their place of residence, navigating enormous time pressures and transportation barriers to get to campus (Allen & Farber, 2018). The routes students opt to take to campus, and the modes of transport available to them are also reflective of their personal preferences, time pressures, weather patterns and individual level of affordability.

Students in South African universities have access to several transport mode options, including free transport from the university to other campuses and residences, car-pooling options in their friendship and family networks, public transport and walking. Transport spaces are thus broadly understood as being inclusive of the varying mode options [walking, car, taxi, bus or university shuttle service] and the spaces where students wait or are dropped off [bus rank, taxi rank] or their vehicles are parked [parking lot].

Transport spaces also encompass the spatiality of the mobility between campus and residences and between campuses. Waiting to become mobile and mobility itself between spaces generate differing spatialities, both in the physical moving across space and in the mental or cognitive space of moving between spaces. Most notable is the mental shifting of identities as a response to contested and challenged relations between home and campus (Bangeni & Kapp, 2005). This is a knowing which many students may already have experienced as school learners moving across the city, interacting with other commuters, other spaces and other students, to what were perceived as better schools outside of apartheid enforced racial enclaves (Fataar, 2015, pp. 70-71). For such learners, this meant moving into schools whose cultural practices were not theirs, where they were subject to identity formation and reformation contingent with the cultural orientation of the school and relationships with their fellow learners. Students effectively become distanced from the lived space of the home that they returned to at the end of the day. Schools and their corresponding spaces thus become distanced from the communities in which they are situated as their student body is not of or from the immediate neighbourhood. The social and mental distancing of both the school from its environment and the learner from their home environment is similar if not more polarised when coming to HE. This is noted where students have to leave home to go to university, in some instances effectively severing their ties to home for extended periods.

Students that choose to stay at home and commute long distances to campus risk the physical distancing reinforcing mental distancing (Horowitz, 1987). They remain emotionally and economically dependent on their parents in that they "*go to college intellectually but psychologically and culturally remain at home*" (Horowitz, 1987, p. 64). A more recent study (Mbara & Celliers, 2013) notes that, the distance and time spent on the road can have a negative impact on students living off-campus as it limits opportunities for social contact with other students. The authors (*ibid.*) claim that social contact is important for enhancing students' formal learning and development.

Cars were noted amongst the wealthier student community as a response to a perceived poor public transport system. The car was also imbued with associations with safety, being fast and saving time (Luke, 2018) in contrast to public transport, which was seen as unsafe and unreliable.

3.3.3.1 AGENCY AND TRANSPORTATION SPACES

Student agency associated with transportation was negligible other than protests (Mitchley, 2020) over the quality of the service and transport allowances (Mlangeni, 2019), thereby identifying a major gap in understanding how transport itself could be contributing to spatial injustice as well as how students might be addressing these spatial injustices passively or actively. In reviewing this limited information, I understood it to mean that getting to campus is an expectation of students that remains unquestioned and unchallenged by management or students alike [on and off-campus]. Being able to access campus is a given and overcoming this is necessary to attain an education.

3.3.3.2 LIMITATIONS OF STUDIES ON TRANSPORT SPACES

The literature on transport and transport spaces tends to focus on mode choice and the quality or efficiency of the service or the spaces' perceived safety (Ngabaza, Bojarczuk, Masuku, & Roelfse, 2015). Transportation studies tend to address specific aspects of a transport mode's performance (Mkwanazi, Mbohwa, & Nemarumane, 2015; Mbara & Celliers, 2013) with limited engagement with the broader relations formed as part of students' everyday lived experience in moving between home or residence and campus. Furthermore, the inequality of transport as experienced by students with disabilities (Snyder, 2005; Moriña & Morgado, 2018) is explored, but not in terms of the inequalities experienced across varying transport modes for non-disabled users. The possibility that some modes could be advantaging or disadvantaging students, needs further exploration. Spatial distancing and living far from university and commuting are viewed negatively in the HE literature. However, little is said on how students overcome spatial [and consequently social] distancing, and what actions are taken to do so.

3.4 INTERSECTIONS OF SPATIAL JUSTICE AND FAT⁴ SPACES

The key insight gained from the discussion on spaces of food, accommodation and transport is that these spaces are essentially interrelated with one another and students' everyday life. Furthermore, informal spaces have potential as spaces of interaction across socio-political lines and of integrating students into campus life, but are often associated with merely providing a service or as a service space.

The agentic contribution of space and students in the production of socio-spatial relations in informal spaces is, for the most part, absent in broader discussions of campus spaces. Injustices in space are seen as perpetuated by other students or are a consequence of the limited provision of particular resources or services, not space itself. Space is not adequately problematised as contributing to the injustices that students are experiencing, nor are the relations that students engender in space problematised.

Chapter two concluded with three of the constructs that formulated the conceptual lens of this study, namely, knowing, spatiality and spatial justice which all in some manner or means address power relations between students and learning, students and space, and students and justice in informal spaces. This chapter concludes by defining the operational lens by adding the further three constructs of food, accommodation and transport spaces. The operational lens focusses the study on particular spaces on campus where students engage with other students and in which they are either enabled or inhibited from changing the spatiality of the situation in which they might find themselves. This concludes Part 2 of Section A. The next set of three chapters [Chapters four, five and six] develops the methodological foundation for this research. In the analytical phase of the thesis [chapters seven, eight and nine] further theories are drawn from to assist in interpreting the data.

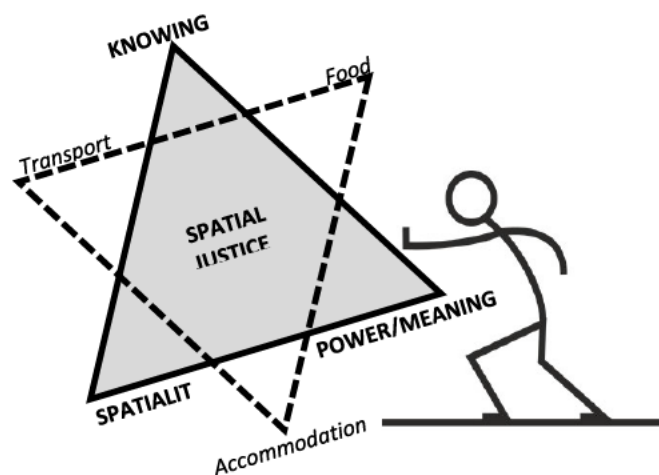


Figure 3.2 Inter-related lens with which to enter the field

⁴ FAT is the acronym for Food, Accommodation and Transport.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The opening chapters of this thesis [Chapters one and two] established the contextual background, and the theoretical and conceptual roots of the study. They provided the motivation for conceptualising a study on students knowings of HE spaces. These chapters argued that *students knowings* and experiences of HE are more often documented in relation to their academic performance or their ability to assimilate into the campus culture. Moreover, these studies tend to foreground students' engagements with the *formal* teaching and learning environments, and their official curriculum. Little focus is directed to students knowings of spaces outside these public realms of the official spaces of universities. This study contributes to shifting the focus towards exploring students' interpretations of the *informal spaces* on their campuses. I was interested in how and why students made meanings of these informal spaces in the way they did. I wanted to establish how these "*students knowings*" contributed to their overall experiences of HE and whether or not these meaning-makings of informal campus spaces influenced their understandings of the purpose of HE. This study aimed to portray students as active agents in relation to the spaces they inhabit. The objective was to explore HE spaces as not simply containers or neutral backdrops in the everyday lives of students.

Chapter four is the first of *three chapters* that present the methodological approach and strategies adopted to explore the phenomenon of students knowings of HE spaces. It explores the *theoretical selections* I made in terms of choosing an appropriate methodological approach to explore this phenomenon. It justifies my paradigmatic approach which constituted a combination of an interpretative and a critical disposition. The chapter highlights the potential I saw in drawing on an *arts-based methodology* which resonated with my personal training as a designer of imaginative, creative building spaces as a professional architect and teacher/lecturer in this discipline within the HE institution in which the study was conducted. Its relevance in promoting participative engagement with the participants on a deeper level is also acknowledged. I narrow down my focus on *visual methods* and how it was applied to yield deep and meaningful insights, by first exploring the potential of *photography* [4.4] and *imaginative mapping* [4.5] as a research methodological approach and method.

Chapter five outlines in a narrative form the chronological timeline of the specific *data production field methods* used to produce data for this study. I came to recognise this research journey as an iterative process of simultaneous doing and learning. The chapter explains how the research methods were adapted, and evolved and unfolded in synch with the realities on the ground. Taken together, Chapters four and five reflect my deepening and evolving understanding of the process of interpreting the phenomenon and getting to know it iteratively. While Chapter five explains the *specific methods* adopted in my unfolding fieldwork, **Chapter six** explores how I made sense of the data produced in the

field. It outlines the *analytical framework* for the primary data sources of photographs and imaginative mapping exercises. The diagram [See Figure 4.1] provides a structured view of the following three chapters linked to the selection of an innovative research approach *theoretically* [Chapter four], *practically* [Chapter five] and *analytically* [Chapter six]. The box with a dashed outline defines what is discussed in Chapter four.

Firstly, I discuss my *position and positionality* [4.2] in relation to the research topic. Secondly, I address the *paradigmatic choice* which was deliberately positioned as interpretative in data production and critical in the data analysis phase. Thirdly, I explain how the concepts of student knowing, spatiality and spatial justice are reflected in the paradigm choice and finally, why arts-based research is argued to contribute to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of students knowings of HE spaces.

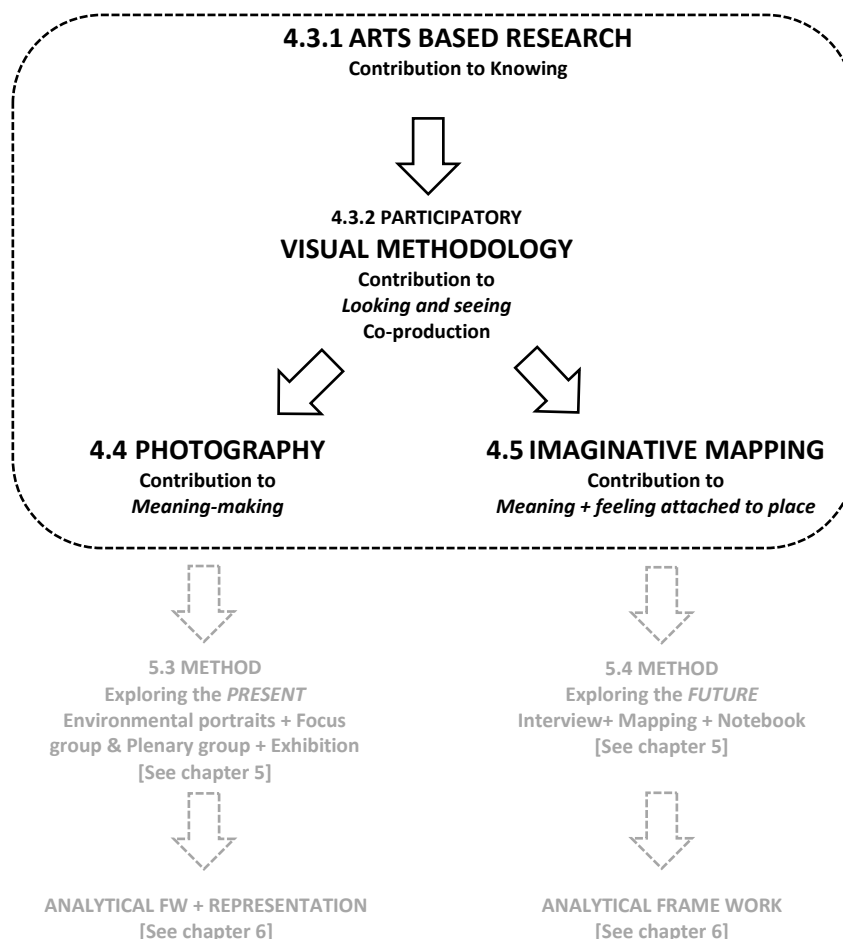


Figure 4.1 Overview of Chapter four organisation
[Chapters five and six in grey]

4.2 POSITIONING MYSELF IN THE STUDY

‘Positioning myself in the study’ speaks to both the moment that led to the formulation of the research question as well as my biography and how it informed my approach to the research.

4.2.1 SILENT VOICES

South African students’ voices as reproduced in the media over the period of #FeesMustFall,¹ and during data collection [2018-2019] for this research, reflected a view from a particular sector of the student body about *students knowings* of the university, its space and property. The view of the university expressed by the student body during the #FeesMustFall movement was one of dissatisfaction (Hall, 2016). While universities [both historically white and historically black] have improved formal² access for students that is more reflective of South Africa’s racial and gender profile, especially those that were disadvantaged during apartheid (Jansen, 2003, p. 292), this was not necessarily accompanied by financial support. Dissatisfaction with this state of affairs resulted in protests (Baloyi & Isaacs, 2015) that sparked a countrywide movement [beginning in 2015 and every year since then]. This was portrayed in print and social media in the burning of university property and the destruction of furniture and equipment perceived to be of inferior quality (Govender, 2019) or a reflection of a colonial past within the #RhodesMustFall³ movement (Ahmed, 2019). Since 2015, these protests have led to students being locked out of some institutions, disruption of classes and suspension of the academic programme in others. All students have become equated with the moving bodies participating in protest action, their voice represented by the rhetoric of student leadership, leaving no space for that of the student body which remained silent through non-representation or non-participation.

Although some academics showed solidarity with students regarding #FeesMustFall (Pather, 2016) and the decolonisation of the university curriculum (TransformUCT, 2015), in principle, they did not agree with the destructive methods deployed by students (Tau, 2016) or the brutality inflicted by the police (Swart, 2016) to manage the protestors.

My experience of the #FeesMustFall protest, the unsettling emotions thereafter and the questions it induced are shared below,

¹ The #FeesMustFall student movement emerged in 2015-2016 and spread across all HE institutions in South Africa demanding free, quality education. This movement has persisted every year since in fighting for free education.

² Formal access refers to increased access to students from disadvantaged backgrounds post 1994. It is a response to government policy [Green Paper on Higher Education Transformation 1996 and the Education White Paper 3 1997] to address inequality through the massification of South African HE (Jansen, 2003).

³ #RhodesMustFall was a movement that sought to decolonise the university, and started at the University of Cape Town in response to institutional racism and patriarchy in 2015 (Ahmed, 2019). It sought to address epistemological content of the curriculum (formal and informal) which made students feel excluded - as if they did not belong and that their worldviews, cultures, biographies and perspectives were not recognised.

The sound of the exploding firecracker dropped into a concrete dustbin within the empty concourse was deafening. The boom ricocheted off the walls to magnificent effect, quickly catching the attention of the Mi7⁴ and police who strategically moved through in waves with protective shields and headgear – looking for the “trouble makers” – the balaclava cloaked students. More firecrackers, more police, and then the cloud of tear gas came. In its wake clearing out on the ground floor and then rising into our offices three floors above the concourse. The cloud of gas sent academics and admin staff out of their offices in coughing fits. Spluttering for clean air we congregated in the corridor lamenting the state of our institution.

Before this scene, our Law library (in September 2016) had been unceremoniously burnt – an act heavily chastised in social media. It is these incidents on campus that made me wonder what do the spaces both built and unbuilt meant to a student, what they understand about, feel, or know about these spaces on campus.

It was this moment that made me begin to wonder about the agency of students and how they used space and action in space to gain a voice, disrupt, assemble and encourage participation. But I stopped there realising that focussing on the protest and protesters themselves seemed like a rather one-sided, possibly extremist view of what campus spaces meant to students. [Reflective diary notes B. Horner 2016]

As a lecturer at a HE institution, I was confounded as to why the very thing students were fighting to be assimilated into would become the object on which they exercised their anger. Questions that emerged from this observation gave rise to this thesis, including *what, if anything, did this campus space mean to a diverse body of students?* And in knowing this, *what did this knowing enable or constrain for students?* These questions were formulated in response to the three related aspects of space as physical, mental and social described in Chapter two, in Lefebvre’s spatial triad. This triad invokes an understanding of space as more than its physicality or materiality, including the meaning it imbues and the social interactions facilitated therein or through the making thereof.

It was not the intention of this research to contribute to the pathology of the student nor to engage fully in their duality as both as victims of circumstance, or perpetrators of violence and destruction on campus. The intention was to give a voice to students in general, through participatory visual methodologies, to better understand how they navigate the campus spaces in the way that they do and the meanings they attach to these spaces. The objective was to more fully comprehend students’

⁴ Private security company hired by the university.

experiences of coming into HE, being in HE spaces and expectations of HE spaces to prepare them for their future becoming.

4.2.2 RESEARCHER'S VOICE

My biography has contributed to how I understand *space and society* and consequently defined the approach to this research project. My experience is multi-layered: I trained as an architect where space is perceived as an object of aesthetic beauty and as a container to enable human activities. Space is conceptualised in the mind and is manifested through a reiterative design process as a series of drawings and models before it can be realised as a physical object. Trained in Space Syntax methodology during my Master's studies, space was viewed as a *set of relations* [spatial configurations] which shape the forms of social interactions. The premise is that space has a social logic to it that is intelligible, where relationships among occupants of space and between occupants and other people outside of the space are enabled or disabled in part through the spatial configuration itself. This means that space is primarily perceived as fluid and relational except where disrupted by the architecture of walls and doors that create borders and thresholds that separate the insider from the outsider.

As a lecturer in Architecture for the past ten years teaching students about making space, my approach to space-making has evolved. I now view space-making as more of a *collaborative process* of learning from the end-user of the space to understand their needs, and less as the divine conceptualisation of the architect. Designing space evolves as a joint process of mutual learning through a creative process for both teacher and student in engagement with the end-user.

I also came to realise that PhD research can be a creative process in and of itself and that this process was as much about developing my own research identity as it was about articulating and formulating a rigorous body of research which would grant me the credibility to be acknowledged as a researcher. Harrison (2008) notes in his new identity formation as a researcher that, "*dissertation research is a liminal practice situated in between pre- and post-doctoral worlds, and the dissertation research text itself is literally a transitional object*" (Harrison, 2008, p. 246).

I too often found myself betwixt and between two worlds, one of the potential of what this journey meant as a doctoral candidate but at the same time knowing that I did not quite have all the requisite skills to get there just yet. I had to trust in the process to reveal itself along the way.

In entering the field, I was interested in imagining other ways of conducting research and representing findings that would push my knowing and boundaries beyond what I knew. I was particularly interested in those forms that would enable knowing differently about the phenomenon, to know out of curiosity,

to learn collaboratively and to learn without knowing exactly where it would lead. This is not to say the research would be directionless; rather, the intention was to be open to possibilities.

My biography has shaped my multiple views of space as a physical object generated through a creative process, as informing social interactions, and that space can be collaboratively produced. Furthermore, in working collaboratively for several years with the discipline of Drama, I have gained an understanding of the limitations and constraints of arts-based research in terms of participants' adoption of [and sometimes resistance to] other forms of knowing with which they may or may not be familiar (Horner, Young-Jahangeer, & Dhunpath, 2016; Young-Jahangeer & Horner, 2019).

4.1.2 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

The research focus was to understand and explore the general students knowings of the university space and to do so in a manner that incorporated aspects of my positionality which were influenced by my prior creative research experience and current collaborative teaching practice. In this sense from the outset, the research paradigm was deliberately interpretivist in the data production, with the intention of co-constructing meaning with students (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) as to the basis of their 'knowing' of the spatiality of the HE environment.

The premise of this research as extrapolated from Chapter two's discussion on *knowledge and knowing*, is that knowledge is not only socially constructed⁵ through discourse (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) but that, in the re-production and dissemination thereof, it is also transformed through interaction (Van Leeuwen, 2008).

Furthermore, multiple knowings could be derived of a phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) and knowing is grounded in social practice (Dewey, 1930). What we do in space, our interactions with others in and across spatial settings and the temporality of these relations with others and space itself contributes to our understanding of the world (Van Leeuwen, 2008). The research concepts set out in Chapter two of *student knowing, spatiality and spatial justice* as well as reflection on how students derive meaning from the world through their experience of it assisted me to make appropriate methodological choices. These concepts support the shift in this research from an interpretivist paradigm in the data production phase to criticality in the analytical phase. The 'knowing' of spatial and social structures became important in advocating for spatial change; hence the deployment of a more critical lens (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) in Chapters seven, eight and nine which foreground issues of power, privilege and spatial justice. The intention was not to solicit change from the students

⁵ Derived from social constructivist theory, where meaning is co-constructed in interaction with others and Bernstein's notion of knowledge being recontextualised through dissemination.

themselves but to recognise these issues to more expressly highlight students knowings of HE as differently experienced.

To conclude, as a researcher, I drew on personal experiences to shape my methodological thinking. I viewed coming to know as a creative, collaborative process in which multiple knowings were possible. The process of coming to know would require both myself and the participants to be actively involved in the co-production⁶ of the data. However, I was opening myself to the field that steered me to understand that these knowings could not be distanced from students' own interpretations of power, privilege, alienation and marginalisation.

4.3 THEORISING THE METHODOLOGY

The arts-based research, visual methodology and the form of the methodology, photography and imaginative mapping are theorised in this section towards an understanding of their contribution as a series of interconnected building blocks in the research design. Their contributions to theory-building are noted through the concepts of *knowing*, *looking and seeing*, and *meaning-making* which are embedded in all of the methodological choices. Nevertheless, they are discussed individually so as to elaborate on their separable, yet inter-connected relations within the hierarchy of the theory-building. Arts-based research claims to enable *knowing differently* (Liamputtong & Rumbold, 2008) and to provide new and valuable insight into the study of a phenomenon (Eisner E. , 2008). The visual methodology is discussed with the emphasis on the *ways of looking and seeing* (Prosser, 1988; Berger, 1972) and how this contributes to knowing the social and spatial [spatiality] relations (Harper, 2002) that are produced and reproduced through co-production of the visual (Winton, 2016). Furthermore, relationships of power between the *researched and the researcher* are discussed in the production of the visual representations of themselves (Switzer, 2018). The visual representations utilised in this study include photographs and imaginative maps. A dedicated section of this chapter [4.4] reviews photographs as carrying the potential for meaning that can be read and differently interpreted by particular audiences. Imaginative mapping is explored [4.5] as contributing to *meaning and feeling attached to a place* and more specifically to students' constructions of the future space of HE.

4.3.1 ARTS-BASED RESEARCH: A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS KNOWING

This section discusses arts-based research and the theoretical background for its adoption. Its methodological contribution towards knowledge building is also reflected upon in terms of its significance to this research.

⁶ Co-production as understood in this research is discussed later in this chapter.

Dewey (1930) advocated for a review of how and what we understand knowledge to be, to avoid valorising specific ways or forms of knowing over others and at the same time argued for other diverse forms of inquiry [knowing] that might contribute towards enriching our lives. Dewey argued for knowing [as opposed to knowledge] as a process of inquiry in contrast to knowledge as a product or absolute certainty. At the hearts of Dewey's *knowing* is experience and the role of the human body through the senses, feelings and emotions to contribute towards understanding and knowing (Johnson, 2011).

The crux of Dewey's view is that the locus of human being is a series of continually developing organism-environment transactions which, although always changing, nevertheless, manifest certain stable patterns that we can become aware of and guide our actions by (Dewey, cited in Johnson, 2011).

Dewey foregrounded art as experience and how, through the process of inquiry, it contributes to research. Dewey's argument on how art gives rise to knowledge (Johnson, 2011) and art as research (Goldblatt, 2006) has been well-documented by others (Eisner, 2003) and is not repeated here. I use these arguments as a springboard to methodologically launch the research into the realm of what is known as arts-based research.

Arts-based research has been referred to as an approach that utilises various art forms⁷ to learn more about and uncover certain aspects of social phenomena (Chapell & Barone, 2012). However, critical arts-based enquiry is described as "*engaging a radical, ethical, political and aesthetic qualitative inquiry useful in addressing social inequities*" (Finley, 2000).

Art-based research, as understood within the context of this thesis, sits somewhat in-between these approaches as a consequence of both the interpretivist and critical paradigms in which this research is situated. While both paradigms are concerned with understanding social phenomena in the data production phase, the critical paradigm focuses on revealing social imbalances in the data analysis phase.

It has been argued that arts-based research, particularly in educational research (O'Donoghue, 2011), is a valid form of knowing (Eisner E. , 2008). As noted by O'Donoghue,

[t]he idea that art and art-making are forms of knowledge production and sites of knowledge in and of themselves underpins the theorization of art practise as research (O'Donoghue, 2011, p. 640).

⁷ Art forms could include narrative, performance and visual arts [film, photography].

O'Donoghue argues that the process of inquiry [knowledge generation] through the making of the art, in the art itself and the dissemination thereof, are valid research practices. In an arts-based approach, validity lies in recognising the multiple conceptions of meaning that could be generated through producing and experiencing an art form, all of which need to be critically reflected upon in order to create a compelling understanding of the whole social phenomenon. Validity is discussed further in Chapter five [5.5] and the art forms themselves later in this chapter [4.4 and 4.5].

Arts-based practices provide valuable insights (Chappell & Tom, 2012) to enhance understanding of social phenomena that is more difficult to achieve through other more conventional forms of knowing [interviews, focus groups, archival research]. This is not to negate these forms of knowing; indeed, the traditional interview is often the starting point for enquiry about a phenomenon in an arts-based research process.

Eisner (2008, pp. 10-11) identified three key contributions the arts make to knowledge, which broadens our understanding of the human condition and how people make sense of the world. I discuss these contributions with reference to the choices made for this research. A critique of these claims is presented in Chapter five [5.6] as to the potential and limitations of the methodology.

Firstly, the arts are claimed to offer the potential to **reveal a world** we may not have noticed and the opportunity to address that which is "*subtle but significant*" (Eisner E. , 2008, p. 11). Numerous local and international research studies⁸ have been conducted on the experience of HE space (Ndofirepi, 2015; Cross & Johnson, 2008; Burger & Naude, 2020) most of which used more traditional methods of inquiry such as interviews. In the hopes of uncovering understated or overlooked significances of students knowing of HE spaces, I deliberately opted for an alternative arts-based approach.

The second contribution is the potential to provide a **fresh perspective**, a new way of looking at a phenomenon. I was already an insider to the HE space that I was researching which came with certain preconceptions of the space and the students therein, necessitating the adoption of a methodology that would enable myself and others to not only look at HE space in a new light but more specifically through the eyes of the participant. This research project purposefully employed creative methods to encourage imaginative ways of perceiving students knowing of HE spaces. Furthermore, the use of the arts-based process of inquiry proved to be a positive means of engaging with the participants and sustaining them through the many stages of the data production process. The creative approach further resonated with my desire to know differently.⁹

⁸ These research studies on the space of HE are addressed more specifically in the literature review in Chapter two.

⁹ The creative aspect of the process is also what drew students to this research in the first place and needed to be sustained in order to retain their interest. The photograph became a tangible outlet for creativity and a medium for meaning-making for both myself and participant.

Thirdly, it is claimed that arts-based research generates an **empathetic feeling** to better understand the experience of others and in so doing reflect on our interior landscape. It thus potentially entwines paradigmatic approaches of deepening understanding of the phenomenon and criticality in self-reflection. The process of art-making offered unique insight into students' lived experience of HE spaces, and at the same time, the art itself empowered participants and viewers of this research [including myself] to reflect more in-depth on the perspectives raised.

The arts-based research form adopted was the visual arts (Rose, 2012; Mitchell, 2012) through the method of photography and mapping. These methods¹⁰ were selected as a means to explore students' meaning-making of the spatiality of the HE environment (Weber, 2008, pp. 43-47). Visual arts provided possibilities of expression (Liebenberg, 2009) and insight (O'Donoghue, 2011) which would not be easily achieved through verbal or written forms. The visual was chosen over other forms such as narrative inquiry, poetry, music, performance, dance or movement as these methodologies were already very much part of student life and contemporary culture.

I also felt that visuals would be a more accessible art form that was less likely to create technical challenges or performance anxiety for myself or the participant. As a researcher, this form was something I was familiar with and that I knew with some practice I could get better at, as opposed to the other art forms [except drama] in which I had no prior experience. Arts-based research was thus adopted due to its contribution to knowing through practise/making and enabling others [students] to be part of the process, specifically co-production of the data.

4.3.2 PARTICIPATORY VISUAL METHODOLOGY: A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SEEING

Visual sociology and visual anthropology embed the idea that by observing, analysing and theorising visual manifestations of society, we can gain authentic insight into a society or culture (Pauwels, 2011, p. 3). The visual manifestations I was interested in are visual images. I was, however, not concerned with examining the visual images themselves but with co-producing them (Rose, 2012, p. 10) and then analysing the meaning-making derived through or from looking at the image. The emphasis of this research is the *looking with images* rather than the looking at images, meaning that the content of the image is of less interest to myself than the meaning-making derived from the reading of the image.

Within this nexus, however, are certain understandings of how and why we look at objects, people and places in the way that we do, and what this tells us about the relations formed in the production and

¹⁰ The reason for selecting these visual art forms and their contribution to spatiality is discussed under 'Photography' and 'Imaginative Mapping'.

viewing of the visual. This section focuses on the power relations formed in co-production of the visual. The relationships discussed concern the researcher and the researched.¹¹

Visual methodologies claim to **reduce the hierarchy** inherent in the research process and to enable the research participants to have **greater control** (Gubrium & Harper, 2013, cited in Switzer, 2018, p. 193) of the outcome of the process and how they wish to be **perceived by an audience**. Production and discussion of the visual are further claimed to **reformulate** the hierarchical **one-way flow** of information (Switzer, 2018, p. 193), where the visual is merely a representation rather than an objective statement, thereby enabling more in-depth enquiry into what is seen and not seen, and why. These claims offered promise in addressing some of the inherent power dynamics I anticipated in the research process.

4.3.2.1 CO-PRODUCTION

If visual methodologies were to define the medium [form] and the method [what], then co-production would define the practice [how] of producing the data for the research study for one of the two methods proposed [the photography component]. Co-production occurs when the researcher and the researched are responsible for production of the data. The second method, imaginative mapping, adopted an existing methodology in which participants were solely responsible for producing the data independent of the researcher.

Co-production was then viewed as the vehicle to drive the photographic component of this research, based on the premise that **knowledge is dispersed** throughout society and that practices of co-production can empower co-producers and challenge academic norms (Bell & Pahl, 2018). It was regarded as a deliberate destabilising mechanism which would upset academia's privileged positions as the site of knowledge production and dissemination.

As noted in the literature, co-production draws on the knowledge of local communities to inform town planning, public art (Bell & Pahl, 2018; Zebracki, 2018), or public service delivery (Verschuere, Brandsen, & Pestoff, 2012) through the utilisation of participatory practices. These practices are often associated with different art forms as a means to encourage engagement across multiple role-players (Durose, Beebeejaun, Prees, Richardson, & Richardson, 2012). In the process of co-production, research is done *with* the researched not *on* the researched. The co-producers' contributions are valued, and the process is meant to be **empowering** (Verschuere, Brandsen, & Pestoff, 2012).

¹¹ The terms researcher and researched are used to identify the different role players in the research process.

I further denote that albeit there being co-production of data, our roles in the process are distinct.

The term participants, refers to participation in the data production and data selection, not in the research design.

I use the term student to bring to the fore students' understanding of HE as differently and independently conceived from my view as lecturer.

Co-production can occur with varying levels of engagement, with co-producers having a say in the research design and knowledge production, location and dissemination. However, equality and non-hierarchical divisions between the researcher and the researched should not be assumed as these are not always entirely done away with in the process of co-production. Even though these processes are considered more **socially inclusive**, hierarchies are likely to persist. The research intended to develop a greater degree of horizontal sharing between the researched and the researcher; however, it is acknowledged that it did not wholly negate hierarchies. The study was ultimately designed and driven by the researcher, while the researched contributed to the location, knowledge production, data selection and in part, to the strategy for dissemination of its findings. It should be noted that students were involved in the *co-production of the implementation* (Brandsen & Honingh, 2018, p. 15) *of the design*, but not in the design of the research process itself. Within this construction, the co-production agenda has acknowledged boundaries.

I was consciously aware of what encourages and impedes participants to co-produce within a research process, and this served to sustain constant vigilance of both our roles in the co-production process across the various phases. A number of motivating factors encouraged participation of the participants. These included extrinsic [self-motivated], intrinsic [altruism] social [interacting with other people] or normative [influence, participation, democracy] interests (Verschuere, Brandsen, & Pestoff, 2012). Ease of involvement and relevance were further motivating factors for students taking part in the research.

As much as co-producers' participation can contribute to the success of co-production, the researcher can be a crucial barrier (Durose, Beebeejaun, Prees, Richardson, & Richardson, 2012). I acknowledged the advice offered by these theorists about being reflexive with regard to examining my practices, presumptions and research practise and how this may have influenced the process of co-production. I realised that the researcher cannot assume business as usual in a co-productive relationship with the researched. In reflexive practice, contradictions and tensions, as well as a sense of insidersness and outsidersness, need to be highlighted and considered (Orr & Bennett, 2009, p. 99). An ongoing reflexive practice is noted within the methods section in Chapter five, where the researcher-researched relationship is reviewed at each step in the process of data production.

Co-production went beyond generating an artistic product, although this was part of the output, and was ultimately about engendering relations, addressing inequality and reciprocal knowledge production. The relationship between researcher and researched in the co-production of knowledge as practised in the field is discussed further in the following section.

4.3.2.2 OUTSIDER-INSIDER

The insider and outsider relations that were prevalent within this research were complex due to the fact that the campus setting was both where I worked and where I intended to conduct my research. Aspects of my identity, age, race and socioeconomic status made me mindful of the fact that I did not share, or could profess to share, the same life history as the students at the institution I was researching. I was an outsider to the student backgrounds and foregrounds, hopes and desires [mental space].¹² I was also an outsider to many of the spaces [physical space] students occupy on a daily basis on campus as well as the social practices [social space] that occur therein.

As an academic, I was, however, an insider to the university space in terms of how the systems therein work and an insider to some of the social practices that occur between academics, management and administrative staff. As a lecturer and academic, I also represented an authoritative persona, which I was conscious of when interacting with students.

None of the students that formed part of this study was known to me before the study. This was an intentional decision to minimise power dynamics that might be attributed to my status as a lecturer at the same institution in which I was conducting my research. However, this is not to say that I remained a detached observer of the lives of these students. I enjoyed the interaction with the students and empathised with the issues we discussed and this, in turn, made me more sympathetic to my own students when teaching in the architecture programme. But it also perpetuated a deficit mode of seeing students as disadvantaged which Smith (2012) describes as contributing to,

employing a deficit mindset to frame student difficulties which acts to perpetuate stereotypes, alienate students from higher education and disregards the role of higher education in the barriers to student success. In the process, universities serve to replicate the educational stratification of societies (Smith, 2012, p. 378).

Even though I could not relate to them, I was cognisant that I needed to be reflective of both the backgrounds of the students and their foregrounds and how the institution itself could be contributing to keeping students at a disadvantage, especially considering that this research was about university spaces and the social practices that occur therein.

The research process was about co-constructing meaning with students, with the inherent pitfall being my misinterpretation of their 'meaning-making'. I was well aware that as an 'outsider' to current student lives, what I might see as 'unusual' might be 'normal' student practice. I had hoped to alleviate

¹² In referring to mental, physical and social space I draw from Lefebvre's *Social Production of Space* in which he perceives of space as a dialogue between these three aspects.

this through repeated interaction with the students and in the process, construct my own meaning-making. However, my position as insider or outsider to the research process needs further clarification.

In making sense of my position I drew from Hellowell's notion of the varying degrees of insiderness or outsiderness as related to the idea of empathy rather than "*spatial, closeness or distance*" (2006, p. 489) from the researched. Empathy is understood as the "*capacity to recognise and share thoughts and feelings*" (McNess, Arthurb, & Crossley, 2015, p. 311) wherein the means to gain clarity is not through distance or detachment which is meant to imply neutrality and objectivity, but through understanding the other person. The former is the traditional mode for ethnographic enquiry (Hellowell, 2006).

I recognised that as researcher I was on a continuum in which there were varying degrees of immersion and detachment. I further did not want to misconstrue empathy as pathologising the participants or polarising insider-outsider relations, but chose to embrace McNess, Arthurb and Crossley's (2015) view on the relationship between the researcher [outsider] and the researched [insider]. This entails viewing the boundary between participant and researcher as a fluid and liminal space or third space where the insider and the outsider meet. The authors described this as an "*area of hostility but also one of great creativity, mutual understanding and new wisdom*" (McNess, Arthurb, & Crossley, 2015, p. 306).

The potential for creativity in the liminal space between outsider and insider was a space that I tried to capitalise on during the data production phase.

4.3.2.3 VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS

The visual representations that frame my world as an architect and educator of young architects have two purposes. The first is to communicate design intent and to explore imagined possibilities to and amongst professionals within a design team and to a client. These representations include design sketches, locality maps, models, 3D renders and photographs of the site, and images of other buildings that could serve as precedents for the design.

The second is representations that communicate technical information for municipal approval, engagement with professionals such as engineers and quantity surveyors, and lastly to building contractors to implement construction. They comprise of measured drawings such as plans, sections and elevations of the proposed structure. Ewenstein & Whyte's (2007) study of an architect's office notes that visual representations serve as 'artefacts of knowing'.

They constitute material entities with which to interact in the practices through which knowledge is developed; and they are symbolic representations, rich in meaning, through which ideas can be articulated and developed (Ewenstein & Whyte, 2007, p. 81).

As a physical thing, in the context of an architect's office, the visual representation serves to firstly assist in understanding and communicating design ideas and secondly, to advance knowledge production through individual and collective interaction. In architectural education the visual representation is central to the pedagogy and engagement with fellow students and lecturers in the design studio, which happens around models, drawings or a computer screen. Instruction and critique from both peers and lecturers in the focussed environment of the studio is ever present and is a *signature pedagogy* (Shulman, 2005) of the discipline of architecture.

This research draws from the architectural discipline in terms of making the visual representation central to the process of knowledge production and encouraging repeated interaction through engagement with the adopted forms of visual representation. Photographs and maps are the forms of visual representation most often used in the initial stages of the design process in architecture to document what is known of an existing space or building. This illuminates the potential constraints or possibilities of a space so as to inform the design thereof. These two forms were utilised in the research process as 'artefacts of knowing' to assist in understanding and exploring students knowings of informal campus spaces. Before discussing each form [photography and imaginative mapping] individually [4.4 and 4.5] I explain how each was understood and interpreted within the context of this research.

Winton (2016) argues that image-making provides a view into people's imagination and interior life worlds, while reminiscence [past] and contemplation are more strongly associated with photography. Furthermore, he asserts that photographs affect us emotionally. The interpretation drawn from this is that images through creative expression are more projective of the future, whilst photographs serve as affective reminders of the past. However, in my study photographs were used to get students to reflect on their past and present experiences of HE. Even though it appeared that they might choose to select and make photographs that reflect their past or their present, the selective making of the photograph also embeds an entanglement with their projective expectations of what HE could be. Therefore, in extending Winton's proposition, this thesis argues that the visual photographic image is not a replica of everyday reality itself, but a re-interpretation of that "reality" to provide an authentic space which simultaneously embeds the past, present and the future.

The second form of visual representation – the mapping exercise – more closely aligns with Winton's notion of image-making. The mapping method is a projective imaginative realm which not only

captures a cognitivist interpretation [rationally] but also allows for creative spatial exploration. This method was developed by an architect (Peled, 1990) to analyse the human experience of architectural phenomena and make this experience explicit. In the context of this research, the experience was projective in enabling students to imagine a future campus. Less emphasis was placed on their present experience of campus; however, as noted in the above explanation with regard to the photography, this did not prevent students from connecting their past experience of campus with their future ideals for an imagined campus.

This section illustrated that several factors are at play in the making of the visual that are informed as much by the relations engendered in the process of the making as in the visual form itself. I turn now to why photography was chosen as a research methodological tool.

4.4 PHOTOGRAPHY: A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS MEANING-MAKING

This section explores how photographs carry meaning through discourse between the producer, the image and the audience. Photographs convey specific information to be read and enable multiple meanings and varying levels of insight into a phenomenon. On a pragmatic level, the photograph serves as a means to capture the spatiality of the phenomenon and assist as a trigger to solicit meaning.

4.4.1 THE PHOTOGRAPH

The philosophical approach for this research was positioned between two purposes of photography – serving to **document** students in particular spaces in time but also having an **affective value** through which the meaning of their relationship with space can be conveyed in a more tangible manner for others to see and from which to further derive their own meaning. The premise, however, is that the photograph on its own merely holds the possibility of **meaning** which can only become clear when embedded within **discourse**. Sekula (1982, p. 84) defines photographic discourse as “*arena of information exchange, that is a system of relations between parties engaged in communicative activity.*” The photograph assumes the role of a medium to transmit a message with which multiple parties engage so as to derive their meaning. The various parties that contribute towards meaning-making include the maker’s conceptualisation of the image [production], the viewer’s reading of the image [the audience] and the subject of the image itself [image], all of which contribute to making multiple meanings of an image possible.

Rose (2012, pp. 37-38) refers to the notion of **medium** as including both the photograph and the device [camera] in describing the medium as the “*technology of transmission and the sort of images it carries.*”

This alludes to the production of the visual and the relations at play in the making of the photograph. Rose (2012, p. 37) extends this to include the “*social institutions and practises that keep the technology and the image in place.*” This explanation is vital to understand the context surrounding the making of the photograph and the audiencing thereof. Whose and what photographs are considered valid? Who decides this? In whose interest are the images constructed, selected, and represented? Who are the photographs shown to, when and why? Which photographs are not shown, and why not? Who benefits from the photographs?

For clarity, it should be noted that the photographs for this research were not analysed for what they signify as images [content thereof] but rather, for the meaning derived through their production and through the re-reading thereof by another audience. The author is not the sole authority of the *meaning the photograph depicts* and the photograph once created holds the potential for others to furnish it with meaning. Photographs thus communicate by means of some “*hidden or implicit text*” (Sekula, 1982, p. 85) which the audience reads by drawing on their cultural beliefs and values.

Berger (1972, p. 8) notes that “*the way we see is affected by what we know or what we believe*”. The way an audience sees things is thus embedded in particular cultural practices. Images can carry two levels of meaning, denotative or connotative. The former refers to the literal meaning which is the documentary purpose of the photograph. The connotative meaning concerns the social conventions, codes and meanings that an audience associates with an image based on their personal experience or beliefs (Weber, 2008). It is the affective value sought from the reading of the photographs.

For photographs to be interpreted and their meaning to be understood, they need to provide the following:

1. **Context**, which according to Prosser (1988, p. 89) gives photographs meaning. If the photograph does not provide context, “*viewers will provide it or not from their own resources.*” Context can be provided in terms of how the photograph is produced, that is, what is within the photograph or series of photographs that collectively explains what the image/s are about. As I was working with multiple participants’ photographs, I opted for a collective approach to inform the context.
2. The context for a photograph can also be attributed through a **text** description or title attributed to the image. In this research, the text inscription [‘caption’] for the photographs was generated by the participant, not myself, so as to draw attention to the author’s intent. This conceptualisation of the text in relationship to the photograph was prompted by Knowles (2006, p. 518) who refers to writing with images, not about images. This was a powerful conceptual shift in my research. Rather than seeing the photograph in support of the text or text to explain or substantiate the photograph, the text and photograph were seen as integrated and both

contributed in their content and form to the research process. The reiterative relationship between text and photograph was also used as a form of validating the data [Truthfulness is discussed further in Chapter five].

3. Sometimes this context is a **shared context** or one that audience are familiar with and reading of the image does not require further explanation other than silent acknowledgement that we already know something of this past that the image captures and in so doing can make sense of it now and in the future. This context is knowledge that is gained through the audience's shared history or experience (Hayes, 2009, p. 37). The students drew on familiarity or **lack of familiarity** in their reading of other students' photographs. The photograph served as a link between their common or differing realities of the HE space.
4. The context in which the photograph is viewed. The meaning of a photograph [See Figure 4.2] is affected by the **social and physical context** in which it is viewed and how the audience is expected to behave within that context (Rose, 2012). Audiencing the photographs within the HE context in which they were taken was the approach adopted for this research, both for connectivity between the photograph and its subject matter and for accessibility to the desired student audience.

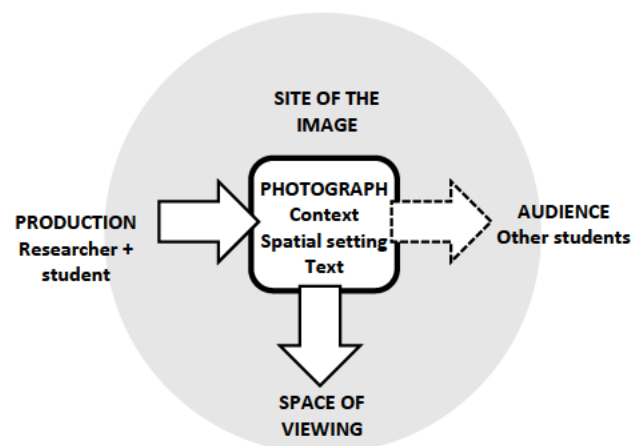


Figure 4.2 Meaning-making as conveyed through the photograph

4.4.2 SPATIAL SETTING OF THE PHOTOGRAPH

The context in which a photograph is viewed and that in which it is produced needs further explanation in terms of its relevance to this research as these spatial settings have the potential to impact power, knowledge and meaning-making (Rose, 2012). This is related to the micro level as to what spaces as captured within the frame of photograph invoke both in the making and in the viewing. As Winton (2016, p. 433) postulates:

It is also possible that the emotional power of photographs also has to do with the fact that memories, experiences and emotions are strongly linked to a sense of place: photographs, then, expose our emotional sense of place.

The predominant spatial settings for production of the photographs for this research were institutional and residential spaces, with the viewing of the photographs taking place in an institutional space. Institutional spaces with their distinctive architecture and social spaces served to evoke various meanings for students, with each constructing their own representations of the spatiality of HE, as experienced. Their representations were affected by the symbolic value associated with the architecture on campus, the practices of exclusion and inclusion in social spaces on campus and the relationship between the campus as the centre and that which lies on its periphery. Similarly, the residential spaces' architecture of thresholds and cellular spaces and the varying social dynamics therein also contributed to how students interpreted and drew meaning from these spaces.

The spatiality of a particular HE space was differently represented by the participants as each drew their own meaning from the space, contributing to a rich and diverse set of understanding of the same or similar spaces.

The spatial setting is further related to the broader level of the physical space in which the photograph is viewed and how these spaces condition people to behave and to interpret what they are view in certain ways. In selecting a spatial setting for the audiencing of the images, I deliberately chose not to exhibit the work in a gallery-like space for fear that this would promote engagement with the photographs as 'other'. Instead of distancing the viewer, I wanted to enable him/her to engage with both the subject matter and other students and myself while viewing the photographs [See Chapter five, 5.3.6] so as to enhance the potential for interaction and collective knowing. The audiencing (Mitchell, 2008) of the photographs was further substantiation of the interpretative paradigm, as the exhibition was viewed as an interpretative process in itself.

To conclude, the photographs were not data in themselves, but triggers to solicit meaning from participants and a broader body of students. The use of photographs as a medium was both for its affective value, its practicality of use and reading and for its ability to capture the spatial setting and the social context in one frame. The following section explores learnings from other research projects utilising photography within the context of the co-production of data.

4.4.3 PHOTOGRAPHS IN RESEARCH

Utilisation of photographs is not uncommon in **educational research** but is less prevalent in the area of HE research. In educational research within the South African context, photovoice or photo-elicitation methods are often used to address issues such as HIV, gender-based violence, poverty, and safe and unsafe spaces (Mitchell, 2008). In the **HE** environment, where interviews and observation remain the norm, researchers have explored campus spaces (Cox, 2011), diversity and space (Samura, 2016) the campus climate (Cross & Johnson, 2008) [no use of photographs], academic achievement (Munro, 2014), student support (Manik, 2015) [no use of photographs], and race and emancipation (Swartz, et al., 2017) some of whom using photographs emanating from participant blogs, photo journals and photo-elicitation.

Studies within the context of education that utilise the concept of **spatiality** often use photos for documentary or reporting purposes and less so for creative purposes. Examples include understanding materially constructed spaces by looking at teachers and objects in the school space (McGregor, 2004); using photographs to analyse classrooms from the past (O'Donoghue, 2010); bullying on the playing fields (Newman, Woodcock, & Dunham, 2006) and studies of sexuality and inequity (Schmidt, 2015). The visual documenting of spaces directs the audience's attention to the environment in which these issues materialise, highlighting how absence silences, marginalises and reproduces complacency.

Research on **co-producing photographs**¹³ within the context of HE specifically addressing aspects of spatiality is limited. At the time of writing up this thesis, only two papers were found that used a form of **co-constructed photographs**. To clarify my understanding of the two terms, co-construction is recognised as directed towards the process of meaning-making and knowledge generation focusing on the act of engagement of producing the product. Co-production foregrounds the creative end product/output of the process. It is acknowledged that both involve a meaning-making project that involves creativity. The former is predominantly for the researcher to make sense of the researched lives through the participant making sense of their own lives. The latter is where the researcher and researched collaborate towards the production of the data and it is then disseminated for interpretation by a broader audience to elicit further meaning-making.

Another distinction made in the art of photograph-making is the concept of photo-elicitation. This construct suggests that researchers, professional photographers and the participants jointly activate the choice, selection and construction of the images to be depicted in the photograph. Van Nes,

¹³ Co-constructing or co-producing data should not be confused with participatory visual methods such as photo-voice, photo elicitation, participatory video and digital story telling. The researcher's premise for participatory visual methods is that participants are experts in their own lives and the researcher's intrusion would limit the richness of data that could be generated. Co-producing photographs refers to the participant and the researcher actively generating and selecting the data together. The researcher's premise is that co-producing data gives the researcher insight into the participant's world with a greater measure of involvement in the final creative output.

Jonsson, Hirschler, Abma & Deeg's (2012) study demonstrated photo-elicitation with an elderly couple.¹⁴ Photographs were taken by a semi-professional photographer of the couple's favourite pastime of walking together in the woods. The purpose was to explore issues surrounding co-occupation. The elderly couple selected specific photographs that the photographer created, and then constructed a narrative with the chosen images to depict their conceptions and experiences of co-occupation. The researchers noted that the strength of the photo-elicitation method lay in the ability to explore the phenomenon within the photograph itself. Furthermore, the process of viewing the photographs enabled the participants to recall the memory of 'going for a walk together'. The photographs were an opportunity to reflect on what made this activity a significant part of their lives. The researchers noted that the limitation of the study was that in selecting the images, the participants assumed control of this process of representing the abstracted narrative, but they themselves were not able to articulate specifically which images triggered these reflections. They were also not able to explain why certain photographs were selected or not.

Two learnings from this research were relevant to my study. Firstly, the concept of students and their interpretations of space could be captured simultaneously in a photograph, but such selection of photograph-elicitation was not always capable of being explained by the participants themselves. Therefore, there was a need to create a means of mediation of the interpretations of the photos. Secondly, it became clear that the priority was not the photographs *per se*, but the kind of interpretations that students intended to convey about space.

A second research study utilising co-constructed photographs focused on nursery school teachers in training. Alexander (2006) asked student teachers to **compose** a photograph of themselves that showed how they would like to be seen as early year educators. A **prompt**, formulated as "the ideal image of the nursery nurse" was used to inform the students' composition of the photograph. The co-production process involved the researcher taking photographs of the student teachers interacting with one or more children. Student teachers then selected images from those taken by the researcher that best represented how they wanted to be seen as early year educators. The photograph became the point of discussion for further enquiry and was used to validate the meaning student teachers attached to their professional identity. It was also used as a means to confirm or contest interview findings and observations.

The researcher noted that other methods of traditional enquiry maintained a hierarchical imbalance between the researched and the researcher and that using a photograph selected by the participants

¹⁴ The researchers referred to their method as photo-elicitation; however, in this case the researched did not generate their own images. Nonetheless, as is true to this method, photos were used to stimulate reflection.

themselves resulted in a more equal power dynamic between the two co-constructors. The author argued that the photograph provided a referential image to which meanings could be attributed. This, she argued, was also directed towards addressing the inherent power dynamic between herself and the research participants who were her own students.

Two further learnings from this research process were relevant for my study. Firstly, when participants control the conceptualisation and produce the images themselves [i.e., the selection of the photographic data], this has the potential to reduce [though not completely eliminate] power differentials between the researcher and the researched. As a researcher, one needs to be consciously aware of the subtle ways in which power dynamics are infused into even spaces of co-production. A second learning was that the photograph could serve as a triangulation device to confirm, refute or elaborate on other data sources such as interviews and observations.

Co-production of photographs in research is not well-documented; hence, it was challenging to make an informed decision as to the benefits or limitations of the utilisation thereof. I opted to persevere with this approach, but I did not do so entirely with blinkers. I was well aware there might be challenges along the way. I was also keen to attempt an approach which could potentially build rapport with the participants, and extend my knowings of a methodology which was not well-documented. I was also deeply aware that however much I may have intended to establish a diminished power differential in the data production process, I could not completely prevent students reading me as a member of academia, as a lecturer, or as a researcher with more power in relation to the design process of the data generation operation.

The following section explores the challenges and potential of the genre of photography as a medium of communicating a portrait of one's environment.

4.4.4 THE GENRE OF PHOTOGRAPHY AS ENVIRONMENTAL PORTRAITURE

A genre can be defined as a set of standard conventions which regulate the terms of operation of a particular practice. When one examines the construction and dissemination of photographs, it might be argued that these artistic forms are constructed, selected and displayed to achieve particular relationships between the *author* of the photograph [the photographer], the *assembler* of the images [the curator, who may or may not be the photographer themselves] and the targeted *audience* to whom the photographic medium is intended to be communicated. This genre is conventionalised to establish a relationship between the author, the artefact, and the message intended to be communicated to a targeted audience. Such relationships could bear the hallmarks of many possible *agendas*: to provoke,

to celebrate, to ridicule, or to comment on the wider social context of the photograph's subject matter, or the audience to whom the object is displayed.

For my study, I was interested in positioning photography within a specific genre. My starting point was to develop an understanding of the relationship between the researched [student] and the space they were in [i.e., the campus space]. While I was myself the taker of the photographs [the author], I nevertheless was keen to understand how the students themselves were framing the relationship between themselves and the spaces they were reflecting on. Rather than my authorship being the priority, the interpretations of the students themselves needed to be foregrounded in their representation of their environment. In this way, the genre of the photographs became a commentary on their environment, and is hence labelled as form of *environmental portraiture*.

Of paramount importance was that the genre of environmental portraiture helped me to understand the technicalities and limitations of the style of photograph making [i.e., the data production selections], and the students' framing of the relationship between themselves and the space they were in. The agenda was clearly one of capturing their interpretations of the phenomenon under study. Understanding the genre was a means by which to conceptualise the overall design of the production of the image, across all participants. The pragmatic practicalities of how this unfolded are explored in the following chapter.

Environmental portraiture and the process of making these kinds of photographs was synergistic with the method I followed. Environmental portraiture portrays people in their natural environment, predominately in the home or workplace surrounded by things in the background and foreground that tell you something about the person. In *Seeing Race through a Lens*, Knowles (2006) cites Suchar (2004) who describes this genre as follows:

Environmental portraiture captures people in the cultural, social and economic contexts they both create for themselves and which reveal broader structural constraints within which they operate.... It captures moments, glances, postures, clues about relationships, things that are written across the face and on the surfaces of the body (Knowles, 2006, p. 218).

Simply by looking at the context, and the contents of the photograph, this genre of photography tells a story to an audience about the person in the image. It acts as a non-verbal text and constitutes a form of interview record of a dialogue with the participants. Environmental portraits are thus, not candid photographs taken in passing; they are full to partially staged photographs, which means that some aspects of their conceptualisation need to be undertaken before production. These include location,

the subject's position and expression. The environmental portraits for this research erred on the side of being partially staged.¹⁵

The accomplished body of work of two photographers, Pascal Dumont and Douglas Harper served as inspiration. Dumont, a photojournalist from Moscow represented candid pictures of life in Russian dorm rooms (Jacobs, 2016). The Russian word for dormitory is *obshaga* – which Dumont (2018) translated as “*a social arrangement that most university students say defines their educational experience*”. His photographs illustrate the harsh living conditions within these dorms and how students negotiate the formal and informal rules imposed on them within their shared living environment. His work resonated with my own interest in HE spaces and students' experiences thereof.

Harper (2002), an American sociologist and photographer became well-known for his research in the field of visual ethnography and the use of photo-elicitation. His evocative photographs depicted the world of railroad tramps, post-colonial Hong Kong and the Italian cultural way of life. His emphasis was providing a commentary on people in their everyday lived places. These photographs were used to evoke memories, information and feelings through a collaborative process which he described as follows:

When two or more people discuss the meaning of photographs, they try to figure out something together (Harper, 2002, p. 23).

Both these photographic artists provoked understanding of how the artistic photographic form can serve as a commentary on the social context, and both emphasise the dialogical process of constructing the images they curate. While the artists are the takers of the photographs, it is the *relationship between the people and their spaces* that defines their critical reflection and communication to a wider audience. Drawing on this rich understanding of the potential of environmental portraiture of photograph, site production and the audiencing, and its potential tool as a knowledge production endeavour, the following section discusses the philosophical underpinnings of the second visual representation adopted, imaginative mapping.

4.5 IMAGINATIVE MAPPING: MEANING & FEELING ATTACHED TO A PLACE

The phenomenological roots of the imaginative mapping method were of interest for exploring the **spatiality of imagination** and how this could contribute to an understanding of **students' foregrounds** [hopes, dreams and aspirations]. This section briefly discusses the origin of these methods and their

¹⁵ This is discussed in more detail in the Chapter five.

philosophical underpinnings. The theory related to this method is made explicit to justify what was 'borrowed' from it and for what purpose. The method itself and the analytical framework are discussed in Chapters five and six, respectively.

The philosophical underpinnings of the Location Task Tool method, are phenomenological with the view that we experience and make meaning of space through the body and that this **space-body interrelationship** is the source of **meaning-making** processes (Zur & Eisikovits, 2015, p. 29). The method draws on the participant's lifeworld, which is perceived as a consciousness that is not reflected while being in the world, but is experienced through the body. It is thus premised on making the pre-conscious factors that govern our actions overt and conscious. Complementary to this is the notion that place has the potential to enrich the experience of personal growth in people, where spatial environments can create a feeling of "*enrichment and well-being*" (Peled, 1990, p. 49). Peled (*ibid.*) has been using this method for architectural research for many years, to explore the "*potential for personal growth that places provide [to] become part of the design.*"

The method is termed a projective technique in that it makes inner meanings and feelings explicit. Initially developed by Peled and termed "Eco-analysis" with later developments by Zur and Eisikovits (2015) who named it the "Location Task Tool," it explores lived space and the lived body in space in order to better understand the meaning and feeling people attach to places. This relationship between body, space and meaning is made explicit through the form of the instrument, where the body's central ordering is related to the physical ordering of spaces on the instrument (Thompson, 1998, pp. 27-30).

4.5.1 BODY AND INSTRUMENT

The methodology draws from architecture and psychology in capturing both the spatial and emotive aspects of each within a simple tool called the task sheet or map¹⁶ [in the Location Task Tool]. The task sheet is seen as an extension of the body [see Appendix 3.4 for a diagram of the Location Task Tool map], both in its form which is in proportion with the human body and in the content of the map itself with its radiating circles, the significance of which is explained as follows:

- The more central parts of the map are regarded as easy to access and able to control or integrate with '*implications of high and intense involvement*'.
- The more peripheral or outer zone is viewed as '*less important and symbolises negligibility, not belonging, escapism*'.
- The front zone, which abuts the participant, implies social communication and interaction.
- The back is '*private, intimate, messy, [and] informal*'.

¹⁶ The task sheet is a square piece of cardboard designed to be the average width of a human body. On this piece of cardboard are three concentric rings; a centre, inner and outer ring. On the four sides are the labelled front [facing the human body] back, left and right.

- The right side means self-control, observance of *'authority and order'*, and the running of the system.
- The left side implies *'freedom, and independence of the system'* (Thompson, 1998, p. 39).

These meanings of the different spatial zones of the map were not made explicit to the student participants but served as a useful guide for myself in analysing the maps. However, in this study, the analysis focussed more on the central-periphery relationship than on those associated with front/back and left/ right [This is discussed further in Chapter five].

4.6 SYNTHESIS OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter explained the arts-based and visual methodological roots of the study and justified the adoption of the two forms of visual representations, photography and imaginative mapping. The first served as a means to solicit meaning-making of students' past and present experiences, while the second captured their future conception so as to project possibilities of alternate knowing of the campus.

Knowing, seeing and meaning-making were discussed independently but are ultimately intimately connected in the methodological process adopted which favoured practice-based approaches to knowing. Past, present and future were also explored independently in the two forms adopted. However, in practice these temporalities were very much entangled within the conception of space as students tried to make sense of the physical, social and mental space in which they found themselves.

This exploration points to the need to explore new methodologies for their broad contribution to developing innovative approaches, and for their ability to activate a deeper conception of space not as purely physical, but as including emotions, experiences and other more holistic interpretations.

The following chapter explores the methods more specifically and addresses their potential and limitations. It also discusses how, in choosing creative or alternative methods, there is the potential for failure as well as success.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the second of three chapters that address the research methodology component of the thesis. While the previous chapter discussed the theoretical origins of the methodology, this chapter addresses the practical implications and the following chapter focuses on the analytical framework and the representation of the data. The two methods that were adopted deepened the understanding of the phenomenon of students knowing of HE spaces along a temporal continuum of past, present and future. The temporal dimension was incorporated as a means to understand the relationship between students' past and how it might influence or shape their future understanding of the spatiality of campus.

The methods adopted served to firstly capture students' lived experience of campus in the present which acted as a window through which other students could reflect on their past and present experiences of campus. The second method focussed on the future, enabling students to explore their ideal campus, hypothetically free from any constraints they were currently experiencing.

5.2 STRUCTURE OF CHAPTER

This chapter explains the data production process as it unfolded from what was intended, to that which was unsuccessful and, finally, the adoption of more refined methods. It is divided into two sections, one on the co-production of photographs and other pertaining to the imaginative mapping exercise. The chapter covers the adopted methods, the techniques used to produce data in the field, how the instruments were conceptualised and enacted, and how these methods contributed to an understanding of the phenomenon of students knowings of HE spaces.

The first section clarifies the data production process as it unfolded in the process of finding participants, *co-production of photographs* with these participants, the focus group and plenary discussions on the photographs produced and an audiencing of the photographs to the broader student body on campus through an exhibition.

The second section explores the *imaginative mapping* exercise and associated tools. Chapter six addresses the analytical framework of the imaginative mapping as well as the analytical framework and representation of the photography component of the research. The diagram below [See Figure 5.1] provides a structured view of Chapters four, five and six with the box highlighting the contribution this chapter makes to clarifying the research methodology.

The final section of this chapter addresses ethics, validity and truth as enacted in the process of producing the data. This is followed by a critique of the visual methodologies adopted in terms of their contribution towards knowing and the power differentials between the researcher and the researched as experienced in the field. A diagram of the final data sources that will become part of the data set concludes the chapter.

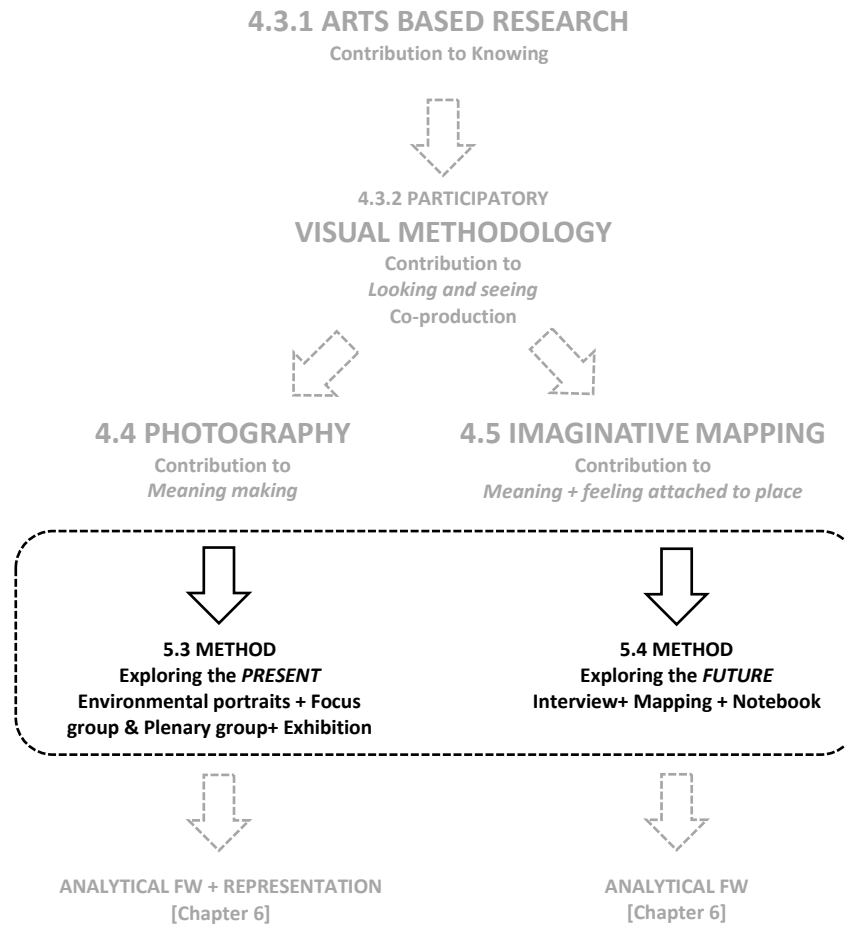


Figure 5.1 Overview of Chapter five organisation
[Chapters four and six in grey]

5.3 METHODS IN THE FIELD: CO-PRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHS

The first methods-in-the-field section focuses on individual interactions with the participants through *semi-structured interviews*, co-produced *photographs* and working collaboratively in *plenary and focus group interviews*. It shows how students contributed towards data production and data selection of the environmental portraiture photographs as a negotiated process. The subsequent data production technique involved a public *exhibition* in which students' selected photographs were curated, and then displayed for *interaction* with a broader university-wide audience.

The second methods-in-the-field section explores *imaginative mapping exercises* which encouraged students to individually conceptualise their future ideal campus.

This methods-in-the-field section in itself is structured in six parts, namely: the *intended*, the *failed* and the *refined techniques*, *co-production of photographs*, and the *enhanced* and *integrated* methods [See Figure 5.2].

In this section, I also trace the evolving methodological techniques and their impact on myself as a researcher from *blinker* beginnings to *juggler* in the field. Blinker beginnings refer to the methodological routes of visual methodology that usually make the erroneous assumption that everyone wants to participate in or is familiar with an arts-based process (Milne, 2012). In contrast, the juggler refers to constant re-negotiation of myself as a researcher in continuing creative and dynamic relationships with the researched. Much of the evolving methodology was directed towards my own re-learnings and re-searching for productive techniques to yield quality data. It was also motivated by my interest in the project being a collaborative venture.

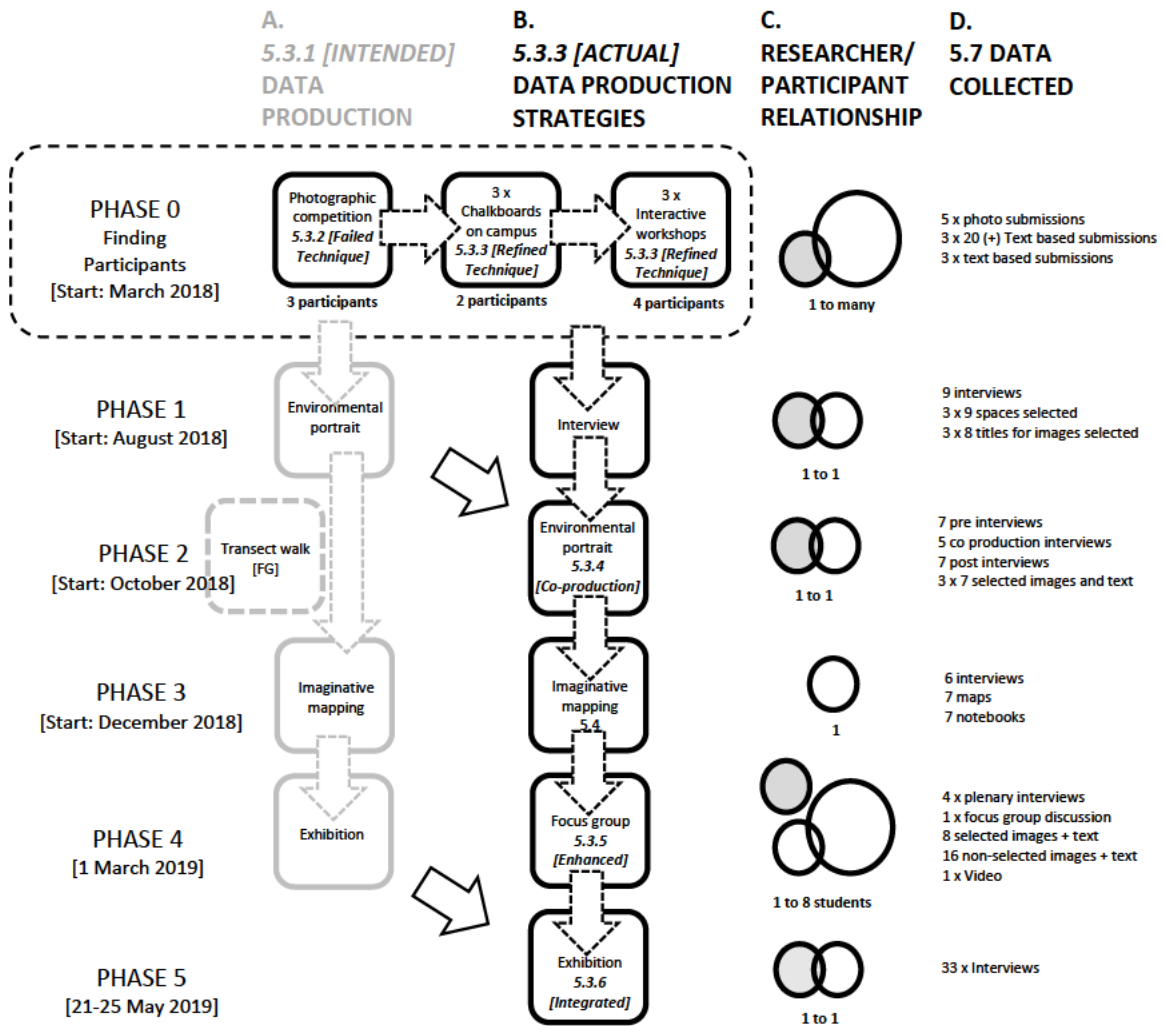


Figure 5.2 Intended and actual data production strategies, individual and collective data production, and data collected at each phase of data production

5.3.1 THE INTENDED TECHNIQUES FOR DATA PRODUCTION

This section explores what I attempted to do and the shortfalls that occurred in endeavouring to put these methods into practice in the field. Intended techniques refer to those methods explored in my original research proposal that seemed good in theory, but did not work in practice.

5.3.1.1. NEGOTIATING ACCESS TO STUDENTS AND SPACE

The study proposal mapped out a clear and logical strategy to find participants for the study. The intention was to find students that were inclined towards visual methods, had an interest in the spaces they occupied on campus and would participate voluntarily. However, I soon realised that the route to

finding voluntary participants for this study was by no means simple, logical or easy. In the end, multiple participatory methods were employed to access and invite students to voluntarily take part in the study.

Furthermore, the proposal laid out the five stages of the data collection process in well-ordered succession like dominos lined up and ready to be triggered. The expectation that these would fall neatly into place in sequence in response to my critical questions, was however, not to be. The phases of data production initially included:

1. a photographic competition as a means of soliciting participants
2. a transect walk with several students across the campus space
3. an environmental portrait of the participants in spaces related to food, accommodation and transport [in which I would be the key producer of the images]
4. an exhibition of the environmental portraits for the wider campus to view and respond to
5. an imaginative mapping exercise to explore what a future campus could be like

The five phases had varying degrees of success. The photographic competition failed miserably with abysmal participation. After a month of probing, I was only able to solicit five photographic entries that students voluntarily submitted as a response to the competition depicting university spaces. Even the prize did not seem to entice them. I was keen to know what explained this failure.

When I probed the photograph-making with the few volunteer students, I noted that several attempts had to be made to solicit the interpretations they were making as they constructed the photograph. This engagement with the participants highlighted the need for a far more fluid negotiated process of photographic data production. It also seemed that each participant required a varied form of interaction in order to yield deeper insights into their motivations for the selection of images and their representations.

The transect walk was, dismissed with reservations. I probe why in the following section. The exhibition also had its challenges, including finding and negotiating both space and time on campus. The mapping exercise was the only phase that was undertaken as initially planned, but with varying levels of participation from the participants.

I have chosen to label these “failed techniques” since I believe they provide insight into the complexities of arts-based methodologies, especially innovative strategies like photographic constructions and reflections, and imaginative mapping. Prospective researchers reading this section may learn from my exploratory approach.

5.3.2 THE FAILED METHODOLOGY: *NON-PARTICIPATION*

Exploring failure is also motivated by my interest in enabling critical reflection on innovative methods, and resisting blind celebration of the methodology and its contribution to the creative co-production of the data (Pauwels, 2010; Milne, 2012). The failure theorised focuses on non-participation in *the first two of the five* phases listed in 5.3.1.1. The varying levels of participation and control that I or participants experienced over the process are discussed later in this chapter [5.6].

I hosted a mobile phone **photographic competition** on campus titled '*Meaningful spaces on campus*' in which students were asked to take selfies or photographs of food, accommodation or transport spaces on campus that were thought-provoking or meaningful to them.¹ Prize money [R1 000] was offered as an incentive. The competition was advertised by means of bright yellow flyers personally handed out by students and later by myself. I came on board later after realising that not only was the uptake very poor but that the students I had asked to distribute the flyers, were not distributing them as widely or as often as I had hoped. Five hundred flyers were distributed across campus, and 100 were placed under doors in the postgraduate residences. Posters were also put up in a strategic location on campus. An Instagram page was opened to allow students to tag their photo submissions to this page so as to generate a social media presence.

The purpose of the competition was twofold: firstly, to serve as a visual record of the spaces that students see as significant with regard to food, accommodation and transport on campus, and secondly, to serve as a means to solicit participants from those that entered with whom I could probe using more extended data production strategies. However, the competition only attracted five students, of whom three later became part of the research project as participants.

In dissecting the failure of this method, several aspects may have contributed to weak participation, including:

1. Advertising of the competition [context]
2. The message [the flyer itself]
3. The messenger [students and researcher]
4. Student apathy [confidence, technical skills]
5. Research design
6. Intentional non-participation

Poor participation could have arisen from lack of sufficient reach to the target audience. I questioned whether I should have relied on some sort of social media platform or the university email system to

¹ See the copy of the competition flyer in Appendix 2.1.

access a broader body of students. In a debriefing with the students that distributed the flyers, they noted general apathy amongst students, as well as the possibility that the flyer's message presented onerous expectations. The reasons noted for general apathy were that students might have considered this competition too much work over and above their current high workloads or the concern that their photographs would not be good enough. The messenger and the form of the message itself could have been the problem. A Zimbabwean student noted, that, in approaching fellow South African students with a flyer, general disinterest was shown towards him and the students' behaviour was blatantly rude.² Students also suggested that the prize of R1 000 was too low. They did not clarify whether this meant that it was too low to encourage participation or too little for what students were expected to do.

These generic responses of apathy, lack of confidence and lethargy towards more creative methods of data production [beyond the normative interview or survey-type data production strategies] have been documented previously (Milne, 2012). Milne (2012, p. 258) suggests that researchers need to be more reflective of what explains non-participation. Firstly, one needs to consider why it is presumed that participation in any research process is a desired behaviour. Moreover, does the explanation lie in the fact that participants are not made overtly aware of the benefits of participating in the process? Does the research agenda unconsciously construct the participants as powerless, which could explain their resistance to being framed in such ways? How does the research process make explicit the potential for empowerment that participation might yield? Milne (*ibid.*) is of the view that when the research design and soliciting of participants do not overtly highlight the benefits to participants, it is considered a poor fieldwork strategy. This also suggests that research design processes should not deny participants the agentic right to refuse participation based on their own needs and desires. Recognition of non-engagement needs to be reviewed more critically. One form of active "participation" is to consciously choose not to participate. The desire to not participate, or to participate in varying degrees, is discussed later in this chapter [5.3.3. and 5.6.1].

In my haste to find participants through a creative process, I made several assumptions about the potential participants. These were that they would want to participate in a creative process, that their financial circumstances would prompt them to participate, that the proliferation of visual culture via selfies on campus would suggest a level of competence and confidence in visual methods, and most of all, that the competition in and of itself would be meaningful to students.

The failure of the second method, the **transect walk**, was a consequence of the failure of the photographic competition. I could not solicit an adequate number of participants to engage in the

² I choose not to explore this unacceptable xenophobic reaction further.

planned transect strategy, which had originally appealed to me as a way to negotiate through the spaces of the campus. In the transect walk, I would have walked with a group of participants to explore one of three areas related to food, accommodation or transport, with the intention being for each individual in the group to interact with others along the route and visually collect spatial data and knowledge of the site. I did not wish to lose the potential of a transect walk to look at spaces on campus more holistically and I thus modified this method to engage individual participants during or after the interview. We discussed how they moved through the campus space and what spaces they occupied in the interview and, if time allowed, walked through and experienced these spaces collectively.

I found myself halfway through my first year of being in the field with only three participants; the consequence of my blinkered beginnings. I began to doubt my methods to access students and needed to re-think and formulate new strategies to encourage participation. I felt compelled to actively immerse myself in the research and the spaces of the campus.

5.3.3 THE REFINED METHODOLOGY: *ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION*

My refined methodologies explored the following: the second attempt at encouraging students' participation in the research project, a reflection on the process of finding participants, and disclosure of who the participants represent and their level of participation and negotiation with myself during the production of the data for this study.

5.3.3.1 FINDING MORE PARTICIPANTS

In my second attempt at finding participants, I opted for a more interactive two-pronged means of engaging with students. This included the installation of three large chalkboards³ inspired by American artist Candy Chang's (Chang, n.d.) participatory public art project titled '*Before I die*' which were installed on campus at the start of the second semester of 2018. Interactive workshops were also hosted once a week on a Friday at 10 am.

Candy Chang's work allowed people to respond to what 'mortality' means to them on the walls of their communities. In adopting a similar approach, students were allowed to respond to the meaning they as students attributed to specific spaces on campus. Three chalkboards were located at different locations across campus. Each posed a separate question or statement to which students could respond and complete in chalk. The first was located at a *bus stop* within the confines of the campus and asked '*While I wait I think about...*' The second board was positioned in a *seating area* outside a large venue accommodating lecture halls and LANs. This board said, '*I sit here because...*' The third

³ See the Appendix 2.2 for photographs of the chalkboards.

board was located between two university *residences* at the entry to a mothballed dining hall. It said, '*I dream of becoming a...to reach this dream I need...*' The statements were in both isiZulu and English.

The intention of the chalkboards was not as a data source but as a means to assist in finding participants through using the boards *to advertise workshops* from which participants would be gleaned. Advertising the workshops through paper flyers hung from the boards proved futile; the flyers were ignored and often fell off, joining other rubbish on the ground. *Interaction with students* at the boards proved far more effective in encouraging conversation and inviting participation.

It was during the weekly ritual of cleaning the boards that I had the most interesting conversations with students. The cleaning process felt like an orchestrated performance. Dressed in casual clothes I would conspicuously criss-cross the campus with a black bucket full of warm soapy water to clean the three boards. Arriving at the chalkboard, I would ask people if they wanted to be in the photo, step back, take several photographs, step forward, grab the yellow cloth from the bucket, and begin cleaning, all the while trying to maintain eye contact with any students nearby so that I could start up a casual conversation. Through these conversations at the chalkboard, I was able to encourage a further two participants to join the research project.

Workshops took place every Friday morning for five weeks at the site of one of the chalkboards, which was outside an old dining hall. I located myself at the bottom of a flight of steps from which I had a clear view of the steady stream of students coming down the steps and the approaching students also had a good view of what was being enacted or displayed before them. Students could choose to dip off around the edges and not engage in the workshop or stop and look at what was going on and in so doing invite participation. Most of the students descending the stairs, on their way to residences or home, were generally not in a rush. However, those going up the steps to campus lecture venues were usually more pressed for time and less responsive. The interactive workshops themselves entailed using various visual methods to pique students' interest. The first two workshops were more individually-focused, with one-on-one interaction with students; while the following three were more collectively engaging [a kind of public focus group interview]. These latter workshops were capable of drawing a crowd and in so doing piqued the interest of others passing by, creating further opportunities for conversations.

During the workshop, students, comments and contact details were noted. The five workshops⁴ included:

1. Making a pinhole camera with a cell phone and then shooting selfies of students against a monotone white or black background.
2. Using the cell phone to take photographs as prompted by the word 'con-text'. This workshop did not work with the flow of students coming and going. It proved tricky to manage as it required individual attention to be given to each student and therefore failed to generate enough interest from students.
3. Students identifying three spaces on campus that were significant to them, noting why and then locating these on a drone map of the campus and placing stickers on these locations. Orientating students to the map enabled opportunities for further engagement.
4. The *'I wish there was a ... on campus'* workshop asked students to record the spaces they wished they had on campus, and
5. The *'I wish I had known... before coming to university'* and *'what have I learnt ... outside of the classroom'* workshop requested students to write what they wished they had known before coming to university and what they had learnt from being at university on sticky notes.

All the data from the workshops were collected and kept, but were not to form part of the data for this research. The purpose was primarily to encourage conversations with students and to assist in finding participants. A large number of students' contact numbers and email addresses were obtained during the workshop sessions, and these students were contacted by email to request their participation in the study. This process led to three more participants joining; however, this was not as a result of the emails per se, but rather repeated face-to-face interaction with some of the students at the workshops over the five-week period. These interactions helped to make myself as a stranger more familiar to students. One of the students I repeatedly met at the dining hall chalkboard struck up a conversation after recognising himself in a photograph I had posted on Instagram. The photograph was shot from behind, casting him in shadow, while looking at the chalkboard.

I also had long conversations at the dining hall chalkboard with two other students who then became participants. With the first, I shared a common interest in recognising the untapped potential of campus spaces, and the second had also embarked on a PhD journey.

A colleague or students from the architectural programme assisted me at each of these workshops. One student that had been part of the photography competition regularly attended the workshops; she helped to set up, encouraged other students to join in and often stayed till the end to help pack up.

⁴ See the Appendix 2.3 for photographs of the workshops at one of the chalkboards.

Throughout this process of finding students, there was one student that I sought out purposefully to be part of the project. I first met him when we bumped into each other going up the steps from the dining hall, where I had set up one of the chalkboards. He was carrying big clear plastic bags full of packets of chips, which I later realised he had probably been storing in his residence room adjacent the dining hall. He had a young woman helping him who was struggling up the steep steps with the load. I was feeling quite fit at the time and offered to help carry the bags to the top. I handed over the bags at the top of the stairs and did not think much further about this interaction. Only later did I realise that he was selling the chips to other students and was essentially trading food informally on campus. His story would be of interest to my research, so repeatedly throughout the year, as he moved from one trading space to another, I would actively seek him out. I would walk past his trading space and casually strike up a conversation either with him or with one of the students that worked for him.⁵ After many of these casual encounters, he finally agreed to an interview date and time. However, he arrived late and imposed a time limit on our conversation. He never returned to campus or his business in 2019; his ten semesters were up and his academic career was over. He and his business had probably moved elsewhere.

I began the first interviews with the nine participants in November 2018 after many months of inviting and encouraging participation.

5.3.3.2 PHASES OF DATA PRODUCTION

The phases of data production included:

1. Co-production of photographs
2. Enhanced methods: Focus group and plenary group
3. Integrated methods: Exhibition
4. Imaginative mapping

These different stages of data production reflected an unfolding methodology as a sequence of phases, contributing to a thickening of the data set. The process was one of broadening and narrowing in data production. The first phase led to a broadening of the data, the second to a narrowing in the selection of photographs, and the third to a broadening again in the dissemination of the photographs to a broader audience in a public exhibition which led to new insights into the phenomenon. Before explaining the phases of the revised data production, I reflect on the initial processes thus far reported,

⁵ His initial trading space was outside the building in which my office was located. His stall was defined by a number of concrete benches which he occupied by lining them with plastic boxes full of chips and baked goods. Protection from the elements was provided by an overhead ramp and his market was the constant stream of students moving in and out of the entrance to a concourse lined with LANs and lecture venues. Along with other student traders, he was later relocated by campus management to a consolidated space within the business concourse.

including finding participants, who they represented and what they did not represent. I also reflect on their agency in the research data production process.

5.3.3.3 REFLECTING ON FINDING PARTICIPANTS

In adopting a more active approach to finding participants, I needed to put myself 'out there' to interact directly with students, any of whom were now viewed as likely participants as opposed to just 'students'. I was pulled out of my comfort zone to initiate conversations I would usually avoid in the hope of finding participants, knowing full well that the success of this research depended on finding them.

However, in critically reflecting on the chalkboard and the photographic competition, both methods utilised a trigger device to prompt a visual conversation either in photograph or text form. Both worked through encouraging interaction, yet at the same time, inadvertently enabled spatial and social distancing from myself as the researcher. Physical presence in the same space and time was not necessary for this kind of communication. Even during the second attempt at finding participants, I unintentionally nearly fell into the same error of distancing myself from the very students I was hoping to encourage to participate. This necessitated a recalibration in the research design to engage students in a fun and more accessible manner in both the workshops and in the cleaning of the boards. Being more proactive and engaging face-to-face with students proved far more fruitful than operating remotely.

My bravado in stepping out of my comfort zone [to find participants], shifted down a gear to allow for more tentative negotiations behind the lens once participants had committed to the process.

What did the nine participants represent in terms of the university and who was not represented? These questions are discussed in the following section.

5.3.3.4 WHO DO THE PARTICIPANTS REPRESENT?

This section explores who the participants were and what demographic and disciplines within the university they represent. It also explores what was not represented and how this was addressed later in the data production process.

The cohort of nine participants addressed diversity in terms of gender, race, year of study, and disciplinary backgrounds.⁶ Further differences became apparent during the interviews as directly

⁶ Four female students and five males. Seven were undergraduates in 2018 when data collection began and two were post graduate [Masters and PhD]. See Table 5.3 for more information.

relevant to the research phenomenon of students knowings of HE spaces. The student participants as a collective occupy, use and have experience of many informal food, accommodation and transport spaces across the campus. However, some experiences of informal spaces were not experienced by the initial nine participants. These only came to light later in the exhibition phase.

- Diversity within residential *accommodation* included students living in residences on campus, in private accommodation in communes and at home. All initial nine participants had their own rooms and did not share with other students. Only one student shared a room with her siblings.
- Diversity in relation to *food and food spaces* on campus included students who brought their food to university, bought food at the various kiosks and outlets on campus or made or bought pre-cooked meals in their residences.
- Diversity concerning *transport* included students that used public transportation, or university leased inter-campus buses, and those who had their own cars or had access to private transport through lift sharing.

The diversity that the students brought to this study as a consequence of their varied experiences of campus spaces served to enrich the data.

What was not represented through the participants was off-campus university accommodation. However, some had lived off and on-campus, enabling them to draw from both experiences. None of the participants shared their bedroom space with fellow students, and none used the university leased buses between campus and off-campus residences. In terms of food and students' access to food, the participants represented the economic diversity present on campus, ranging from those bordering on being food-insecure to those that could regularly buy food at the café on campus.

What was not represented by the initial nine participants was addressed at a later stage when the data production process opened up to include a broader body of students, many of whom were living in off-campus residences and communes and were sharing rooms. This was a fortunate outcome of encouraging broader participation in data collection and thereby avoiding the loss of important contributions to the research. As Milne (2012, p. 258) notes, "*ignoring or dismissing those who fail to take part serves both to silence and to render absent potentially significant elements of the project*".

There was, however, a further gap which as a researcher, I had not considered, namely, the students' agency in becoming part of the data production process. As much as I had encouraged these students to participate, they were also agentic in agreeing to do so. Students were agentic in the process of being selected and in the degree of participation they embraced across the data production phases.

They were actively choosing in [selective engagement] or out [withdrawal] and determining the degree to which they would immerse themselves in the various data production processes.

What were the students' reasons for taking part in this study? What attracted them to the study in the first place, and why were these particular students attracted to the research? Three participants were interested in learning more about research methodologies and were keen to utilise this study as a means to contribute towards their learning. Three mentioned the creative aspect as something they were enjoying and wanted this to remain going forward. One had an altruistic interest in campus space and was keen to speak on these aspects. The remaining two participants did not disclose why they chose to participate. Notably, both of these students were strategic in withdrawing from the environmental portraiture phase. Nevertheless, one selected-in participating in the focus group interview and plenary group phase. This made me wonder if his interest was in the socialising aspect of the co-production process with fellow students. His hesitance to become part of the photographic image-making process is worth further consideration.

Even within the data production process, relatively more secure students did not participate equally across all the phases or even within each stage, for varying reasons which were not necessarily always disclosed. As is noted by the data tally, nine students participated in interviews, with some choosing to participate only once and others three to four times. Seven environmental portraits eventually constituted the final data set. After discussion with myself as to how the photographs could be conceptualised/constructed, two participants chose to take their own photographs without me present. Others required several engagements with me taking photographs with them to obtain the images they desired. Ultimately, seven imaginative maps and notebooks in varying degrees of completeness constituted the final data set.

This varied experience of participation suggests that the over-celebratory accounts of participatory methodologies which claim to empower and give voice, do not necessarily take into account participants' own agency to limit or exclude their participation should they wish to do so for whatever reasons.

Table 5.3 provides some insight into the nine students that were recruited. The emphasis of this table is the participants diversity within and across FAT spaces – hence this being foregrounded in the table. The table includes demographic information disciplinary focus and whether undergraduate or postgraduate.

Material needs and services	Typologies and modes	Racial representation	Gender representation	Degree/ Discipline	Undergraduate / postgraduate	Age in 2018
A. FOOD	1. Buys food on campus	Black	Female	Bachelor of Arts	Undergraduate	20
[students may opt for many means of accessing food to eat on campus only the most common means is noted here]		Indian	Female	Bachelor of Arts	Undergraduate	18
	2. Eats food prepared at home on campus	White	Female	Industrial Psychology	Undergraduate	21
	3. Prepares and eats food in residence	Black	Male	Masters in Town and regional planning	Post graduate	22
		Black	Male	Electrical engineering	Undergraduate	22
		Black	Male	Chemical engineering	Undergraduate	23
	4. Eats food at home	Black	Female	PhD management	Post graduate	26
		Black	Male	Housing	Undergraduate	21
	5. Eats on the run	Black	Male	Geography	Undergraduate	25
B. ACCOMMODATION	1. On-campus Residence	Black	Female	Bachelor of Arts	Undergraduate	20
[some students have lived in more than one typology of accommodation whilst studying however only the typology residing in in 2018 was noted in this list]		Black	Male	Masters in Town and regional planning	Post graduate	22
		Black	Male	Geography	Undergraduate	25
		Black	Male	Electrical engineering	Undergraduate	22
		Black	Male	Chemical engineering	Undergraduate	23
	2. Commune	Black	Female	PhD management	Post graduate	26
	3. Home	White	Female	Industrial Psychology	Undergraduate	21
		Indian	Female	Bachelor of Arts	Undergraduate	18
		Black	Male	Housing	Undergraduate	21
C. TRANSPORT [to and from campus]	1. Walks to campus	Black	Female	Bachelor of Arts	Undergraduate	20
[some students utilise more than one mode of transport only the most common is note in the list – one student used two forms equally]		Black	Male	Masters in Town and regional planning	Post graduate	22
		Black	Male	Electrical engineering	Undergraduate	22
		Black	Female	PhD management	Post graduate	26
		Black	Male	Chemical engineering	Undergraduate	23
	2. Private car [self-driven or lift club]	White	Female	Industrial Psychology	Undergraduate	21
		Indian	Female	Bachelor of Arts	Undergraduate	18
		Black	Male	Housing	Undergraduate	21
	3. Public transport	Black	Male	Housing	Undergraduate	21
	4. Minibus taxi/ private taxi	Black	Male	Geography	Undergraduate	25

Table 5.3 Material needs and demographic information of the nine participants

5.3.4 CO-PRODUCTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

The co-production of photographs is explored in three sections: namely, *before*, *during* and *after*. The before phase included the initial interview before taking the photographs; the during phase included the conceptualisation of the photographs and negotiated production of them in the process of making,

and the after phase consisted of the selection process to arrive at a choice of three photographs [with captions] per student.

5.3.4.1 BEFORE: *INTRODUCTORY INTERVIEW*

All nine students who agreed to participate in the project followed the same process that started with an interview in which I tried to find out a little about them and more in-depth information in terms of their relationship with food, accommodation and transport spaces on campus. I soon realised during the first interview⁷ with a young undergraduate student that in only addressing these spaces, I was limiting what students thought were meaningful spaces on campus. I thus began to open up my questions to pry as to what spaces held meaning other than those already mentioned. This first interview was initially conceptualised as a walk and talk across the campus, with the student directing the walk to key places on campus. I realised during this interview when my thoughts were not aligning with my feet that this was not going to work. The surrounding noise and the distraction of other students coming and going not only made it hard to concentrate on the questions I had prepared but also hindered me in gauging how to respond to some of the answers and comments I received. Thereafter, the interviews were mostly held seated in different locations in and around campus that were convenient for both parties.

The interviews were semi-structured to allow the interaction to be conversational. The first interviews with participants lasted just under an hour and were recorded on an audio recording device. They were structured to ask about the daily routine of a student, touching on various spaces and the people they interact with during the day as they move between their place of residence and the campus. The interview questions enquired where they lived, how they got to and from university, what spaces they occupied on campus and where they ate and with whom. At the end of the interview we spoke about some of the spaces the students mentioned, and we either walked to those spaces if there was time or I noted these down and suggested the student give some thought as to which of the spaces mentioned were most pertinent to them. If they had identified spaces, it was useful to work through how they felt in these spaces using both negative and positive associations with the space. Examples of positive connotations were feeling connected, comfortable, content or in control. The student's response to these assisted my understanding of their relationship with space and others or other objects in the space. In a sense, it was a means of gauging the power dynamics within the space. These responses proved a particularly useful guide to return to when producing the environmental portraits [point of view, framing and distance]. Students were also asked to title their resulting images or to provide a place holder text for the photos, which would be confirmed once the images were taken. These titles were related to the significance these spaces held for them.

⁷ See Appendix 1 for Approval documents and Appendix 3.1 and 3.2 for Consent letter and Interview schedule.

5.3.4.2 DURING: *CONCEPTUALISING AND PRODUCING THE PHOTOGRAPHS*

After the first interview, I met the students again to confirm which three spaces to photograph and how they would like to be portrayed in the photographs, if at all. The second interview aimed to conceptualise the content and the framing of the photograph to reflect the student's association with the space. I brought with me to each interview my notes from the first interview, the table of photo production criteria⁸ and photocopies of professional photographs taken of particular spaces that students were interested in being photographed in, for example, the bus stop, sports field or their room in their residence. These images served both as a point of reference for discussion on the photo production criteria, as well as a means to discuss the political and social aspects of images and how they could be read by an audience (Rose, 2012). It was also in the dialogue between taking photographs and in the showing of some of the images already taken that students were drawn in to speak and think more creatively about how to capture the meaning they attached to the spaces and how this could be represented through the photograph.

The act of looking through the camera can change the way in which the world is seen and the way in which students might view their world. Before producing the photographs with students, I felt the need to discuss how photographs could be read by an audience that might bring their own ways of seeing to the visual. This was as much to ensure that the photographs represented what the students wanted to say as it was to express the need for the visual to be of an aesthetic quality suitable for audiencing. Rose (2012, p. 26) refers to auteur theory as equating the maker of the photograph with being the "author" of the work, therein giving priority to the maker's telling of the story. In this instance, this was a co-production between the participant as author and the researcher as executor of that intent.

Van Leeuwen's (2008, pp. 136-148) discussion on the representation of social actors through visuals, specifically photography, was a useful source of information to discuss with students. Social distance, social relations and social interactions are mediated through the framing of the visual. Relations of intimacy are associated with closeness, and distance of the subject from the lens with strangeness. The camera angle and the subject's engagement with the viewer indicate varying relationships of power or equality, interaction or detachment, and lastly the relationship between the gaze of a subject at that of the viewer and what expectations may lie within the looking back. The research process ultimately directed the visual towards the meaning it conveyed to an audience to align with what the individual student thought they were doing through the visual. The production and the audiencing of the visual were connected to and through the photograph.

⁸ See the Appendix 2.4 for Photography production criteria.

The conversation would begin by affirming the spaces for the photographs and their title for the images. We would then discuss the various aspects of the photo production criteria so as to align how they hoped to be understood through the images with an understanding of how images can be read. Their image text, how they wanted to be seen and how they felt in these spaces were discussed relative to the production criteria. The criteria highlighted issues of detachment or engagement between researcher and participant [facing the camera or not], their distance from the camera [a measure of social distance] and the angle of the photograph as a means of assessing the power dynamics in the space as well as whether or not they wanted to be identifiable in the photograph.

The data production process phase could be described as spanning a continuum between self-generated, collaborative and researcher-driven. At one extreme, some students wanted full control over the process of producing the photos and did so completely independently. In the middle, were those that actively participated in discussing the images and other options for photographing them in the space. At the far end of the continuum were students who were comfortable just to be photographed. The latter tended to respect how I saw best to reflect their association with the space. The process of data production needed to be fluid to allow students to feel comfortable with the process, which was a creative one, although they did not all feel comfortable with the same strategy. Some students wanted independence, some guidance and some preferred being more complicit. I literally went with the flow of their choices while acknowledging that what was paramount was their interpretation of the spaces they had selected.

Two of the students chose to take their photographs and did so with the assistance of their friends. I was not present while these photographs were taken. For five students, I took most of the photographs except for those shot at home in their bedrooms. The last student, an avid photographer, used my camera, with me present, to take two of his photographs. I took the third one of him as a silhouette against the rising sun. This student relished the opportunity to use a good camera, and we met several times early in the morning and late afternoon to capture the images he wanted until he was satisfied that they were as he had conceptualised them. With this student, my stance behind the lens was challenged. I had been photographing him taking photographs, and he now wanted to use my camera and have me in the photo. I could either concede to this request or refuse to be in the photograph. I chose the former and became the subject positioned in the foreground of several photos we would take over the next few days of sunrises and sunsets in order to get his desired image. It was an uncomfortable position to be in: what was I going to do if he chose an image with me in it? Why was he doing this? It just felt odd. However, I still feel that, had I refused to come out from behind the lens, the relationship that I had developed with that student, working together taking photographs [a practice we both enjoyed], would have been irrevocably broken. In the negotiated production of the

data, I was grappling to find a balance between the my voice and the desire for more control over the creative process, and the students' need to represent themselves [and/or their photographs] as they would like to be seen by an audience.

Being recognisable in the images or being present in them was only an issue for two students. In the first case, this was addressed by not showing the student's face and only using parts of his body in the images. The second student wanted nothing of himself in his images and he referred to those that did include him as 'ugly'. He did, however, select an image of himself in silhouette with the sun rising in the background.

Unfortunately, two students withdrew from the photographic part of the process. However, one came back for the focus group discussion where only the text for his photographs was included with the photographs of the other students as part of the discussion.

All the photographs tended to be partially-staged as a consequence of my limitations with regard to technical and artistic abilities as well as the students' time constraints. I did not have any sophisticated equipment other than my Fuji camera [with no zoom lens], that is best known for its street photography capabilities, my iPhone and whatever lighting mother nature provided on the day. I could only manipulate depth of field for emphasis on the foreground or the background or, in most instances, maintained both in sharp focus. I tended to take a number of shots exploring many different angles, the position of focus and depth of field to give the students options from which to choose the image that best spoke to their text. Being less equipped had its benefits in that I was less intrusive as the photographer and more mobile, but was limiting in that I had little control over the outcome of the image. I just had to make do with what I had and the images came out of it. In time and with practice, I became more confident and relaxed in taking the photographs.

5.3.4.3 AFTER: *PHOTOGRAPH SELECTION AND ANALYSIS*

Students were then approached for a further short interview to select their photographs for the focus group discussion and to confirm or change the titling of the images. As noted in the earlier discussion on research on co-constructed photos, this section of the data production proved the least meaningful. Students struggled to express why some photographs were more meaningful to them than others and the selection process was often narrowly based on what they did not want to show. For example, an image of an object in a room which included a coffee maker and a microwave was considered distracting and unimportant, so only the head of the student and his finger pointing at sticky notes on his wall was chosen – effectively framing these objects out of the shot. For some, especially those taken at home with varying degrees of expertise, what was in focus significantly narrowed the selection. Some choices

were purely emotive, as students simply liked how they were represented therein. Others fulfilled the student's desire to reflect philosophical storytelling as seen through the sunrise series of images that addresses hope and reaching one's destination even in adverse situations.

While I had hoped to avoid the lecturer and student dynamics, power relations between the myself and the students persisted. Some students wanted to please me and provided what they presumed I needed as opposed to being more genuine about what was meaningful to them and why it was. This was brought gently to their attention in order for them to change tack.

The students arrived at three photographs each that were significant to them with an accompanying text title. These photographs played an integral part in the next method as data sources for discussion. The selection process itself was not as important to this research as the question of which photographs would be offered for further interpretation in their dissemination to a wider audience.

5.3.5 ENHANCED METHODS: *FOCUS GROUP AND PLENARY GROUP*

The purpose of the focus and plenary group discussion was to consolidate all the information gleaned to date as a precursor and contributor to the exhibition. A student who had taken part in the first interview but not in the co-production of photographs joined this session. His photographs were reflected as blank spaces on a page with only his text visible. A further twenty-one photographs and text constituted the rest of the data to be interpreted.

Getting all eight students together was no mean feat, and we managed to find a gap in all our schedules at 8 am on a Friday, but only for 40 minutes. This put a significant time pressure on the proposed focus group and the plenary exercise and required me to be very well-organised. The room was set up the night before with a print out of the process to follow as well as audio equipment on each desk. This meant that students needed to just follow the written prompts⁹ and could work independently at their own pace. With two late arrivals and the need to shuffle groups around, proper pre-planning was invaluable. A colleague assisted with photographing and videoing the group. This proved very useful in enabling me to recap on the morning's happenings and to visually re-examine the student's interactions and meaning-making with the photographs.

The students met in groups of two in which they interacted with each other's photographs [now printed out at A3 size] with the text typed in below. They each selected an image or text from their partner that best conveyed their understanding of being a student in HE in a post-apartheid South African university. They needed to motivate why they chose the selected image as well as whether or not they

⁹ See the Appendix 3.3 for Focus group and Plenary group interview questions.

felt the text was appropriate. I initially grouped students that had something in common, in either their text, images or in what I had gleaned in the interview information about them, with but with some students arriving later than others, I had to swop two groups around. Even though the students followed a scripted series of questions, with each expected to have a turn to respond, in reviewing the recordings afterwards, I noted that some tended to dominate the conversation, both in what they said and how much they said.

After the plenary group discussion, the eight selected images became part of a group exercise to generate a narrative of a student in HE in post-apartheid South Africa with the images and to position them in a sequence that best reflected that narrative. Each student had a turn to arrange the images in the form they found most suitable to convey their interpretation of them, and in an order with which they felt most comfortable. Two students that needed to leave early did this exercise first, and then left while the other six carried on with the task. The intention was to reach group consensus on the ordering and the story of the images, but time did not allow this, nor did it seem right with two students not there. I also felt that this could reduce the potential of each student's reading and water it down to consensus which might be democratically correct, but meaningless. After all, the research process was premised on generating multiple meanings. It now became my responsibility to think about how I was going to convey these numerous readings to a broader audience for the purpose of the exhibition.

The eight images chosen by the students were enlarged to A1 size, so as to be given more priority in the layout of the exhibition.

5.3.6 INTEGRATED METHOD: *EXHIBITION*

The final data collection phase utilised the photographs for an exhibition open to staff and students at the university to re-interpret the images.

Over and above what to exhibit, there were the issues of where to display and how much it would cost. The "where" was critical as it was conceptualised as part of the research process. It needed to be on campus in an informal space that spoke of food, accommodation and transport and should be accessible to as diverse a student body as was logistically possible. This proved to be a challenge despite earmarking a particular space, a wall where all the food outlets were located on campus along the business concourse. To access this space for the exhibition, we needed to negotiate with the university's business arm. The space is subterranean and lined with banks, and stationery and food outlets. A steady stream of students moved past one inactive wall that held potential as an exhibition space. The wall had an old mural on it and sorely needed sprucing up. In my discussion with the business representative, they saw the exhibition as a revenue generating opportunity as, to date, the

wall had generated no revenue. I was never against contributing something to the rental of the wall, but the proposed cost of R300 per day over two weeks was not feasible, especially considering that I was using it for research and not for financial gain. Many emails followed to request that the cost be reduced to a nominal fee, to no avail. The irony of the commodification of university space and lack of empathy for its users was not lost on me. It made me even more determined to do this exhibition in a way that would work contrary to this system and not perpetuate it. But how?

5.3.6.1 THE EXHIBITION

Each student was contacted prior to the display to confirm that they agreed to their images, especially the enlarged one, being viewed by a wider audience. Only one student asked that his work not include the enlarged images and that his images all remain A3 size. This was the unanticipated consequence of personal information in the background that became visible when enlarged.

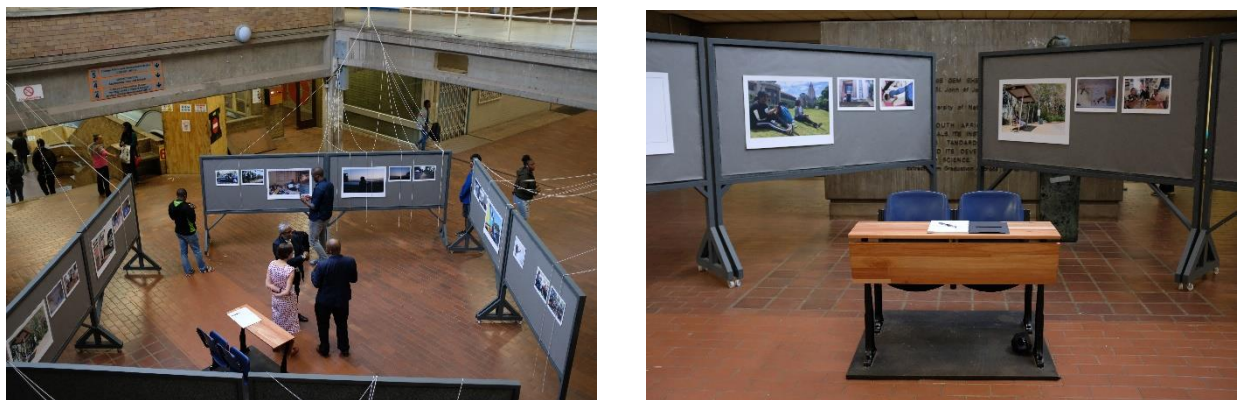


Figure 5.4 Photographs from the exhibition opening May 2019

The photographs were displayed on pinboards in the foyer of the concourse referred to in the opening of Chapter four in my diary notes. The space was a triple volume, which allowed people moving past on the upper two levels to have downward views of the exhibition and those looking at it. This created opportunities for looking at looking (Mitchell, 2008), which generated further interest in the exhibition. In this space was located a bust of the Administrator of Natal¹⁰ and a memorial wall inscribed with an extract¹¹ from his graduation address of 1959. The pinboards were arranged to form a large square, blocking off these historical artefacts and effectively rendering them insignificant to the exhibition. Students would walk through on the diagonal of the square on route in and out of the concourse,

¹⁰ Denis Shepstone was the Administrator of Natal [a province of South Africa before it was renamed KwaZulu-Natal] and Chancellor of the University of Natal from 1949-1966 [prior to it being re-named the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2004 after merging with the University of Durban Westville].

¹¹ "The wealth of South Africa will be measured by its ideals, its institutions, its faith, its justice, its standards of public and private life, and its development of literature art and science."

passing through the display arranged as three photographs per board, with each board reflecting a particular student's series of images.

On the inner side of the square were the images, while the outer edges of the pinboards were left blank except on two boards adjacent to the entry points into the exhibition that held the exhibition statement.¹² The statement also came with a prompt to the audience: "*Which image or images best speak to YOU about being a student in Higher Education in a Post-Apartheid South African University?*"

The exhibition was intended to be a physical and visual disruption of students' daily movement through the concourse. I had hoped that as students moved through the exhibition, the opportunity to stop, look and linger would provide the perfect opportunity for myself to engage with them about what they saw in the images. The exhibition was mounted during the study week before examinations commenced in May 2019, which could not have worked more in my favour for student engagement as campus extended its operating hours to accommodate students' study needs. Evenings proved to be very busy with students coming and going and more in the mood to talk than they had been during the day. I spent several hours during the day as well as three nights interviewing students looking at the images. Given that my presence in the exhibition space often served as a deterrent to students viewing the work, I would remain on the periphery until I noted students were interested in what they saw and would approach them to start a conversation. Some conversations were brief, while others lasted as long as forty minutes.

The exhibition was the final stage of the photographic component of the visual methods adopted and was effectively my swan song before exiting the field and entering the analysis phase that arose from it. The representation of the data and the analysis thereof is discussed further in Chapters seven and eight.

¹² See Appendix 2.5 and 2.6 for the Exhibition statement and the Exhibition data sheet of the images which served as a checklist of which images were viewed.

5.4 METHODS IN THE FIELD: *IMAGINATIVE MAPPING*

Imaginative mapping was the second visual method adopted and was undertaken with seven of the original participants. This phase of data collection occurred over several months in 2019 before the start of the exhibition. It was a unique source of data production which was independently undertaken by the participants without my involvement [other than the design]; hence the need to discuss it independently from the photography component. This chapter discusses the process of collecting the data as well as the data instruments. The analytical framework is discussed in Chapter six and the findings and analysis derived from this method are discussed separately in Chapter nine.

5.4.1. IMAGINATIVE MAPPINGS AS A METHOD

The **individual imaginative mapping exercise** utilised the Location Task Tool¹³ to rethink the spatiality of an ideal campus. The Location Task Tool included a task sheet and a task notebook with a prescribed set of questions relating to the thinking behind the task sheet activity.¹⁴

The seven students were asked to represent their *ideal campus* using counters on a map called the Task Sheet. In relation to this map they were asked to consider what spaces and activities they would like to have *within* the campus, what spaces should be *visible from* within the university, and what spaces should be located *outside* of the university. Students then decided in which *context* to locate their university, which places to include in their ideal campus and how they should relate to one another and the university as a whole (Zur & Eisikovits, 2015, pp. 30-31).

An interview with six of the seven students followed the completion of the Location Task Tool in order to clarify certain issues raised after reviewing the task sheet and notebook and to triangulate the information represented in the text, the mapping and the interview to ensure coherency of information. The seventh student proved impossible to pin down for an interview.

The three forms of data that emerged from the final phase of data production included interpretative drawings, text and interview transcripts. This method proved useful in spatialising students' aspirations for their ideal campus and exploring boundaries as well as identifying the enabling and controlling factors affecting their lived and desired lives on campus.

¹³ The Location Task Tool was developed by the psychologist Canter and explored further in architectural research by Peled (1990). This tool is derived from Eco-analysis. The principles of Eco-analysis are based on Humanistic psychology and Phenomenological-existential philosophy (Zur & Eisikovits, 2015, p. 29). The method is claimed to highlight students' experiences and make meaning of them.

¹⁴ See the Appendix 3.4-3.6 for the Location task tool, Notebook and Interview questions.

5.5 ENACTING RESEARCHER-RESEARCHED RELATIONS – *TRUTH, ETHICS, VALIDITY*

The power dynamics between researcher and researched were discussed in the production of data as a negotiated process of co-production. The relationship between the researcher and the researched necessitated understanding the student as opposed to using distance or detachment as a means to gain clarity. The process of data production thus lay along a continuum that allowed for varying degrees of immersion and detachment.

However, this relationship engendered issues of truthfulness, trustworthiness, validity and ethics that require further unpacking. Truthfulness, trustworthiness and ethical issues, with a specific focus on visual ethics, are discussed further below.

5.5.1 TRUTHFULNESS

Truthfulness within the context of this research did not lie in how students represented themselves in the photographs or the imaginative mapping, but rather in the meaning derived. In other words, the visual truthfulness and untruthfulness of the photographs themselves were not questioned (Schwartz, 2000) or evidence of ‘what was really there’ (Rose, 2012). Rather, truth was understood as a much broader conception. Tagg provides an interesting definition of truth:

what defines and creates ‘truth’ in any society is a system of more or less ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution and circulation of statements. Through these procedures, truth is bound in a circular relation to systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to the effects of power which it induces and which in turn redirect it (Tagg, 1982, p. 129).

The truth is thus very much bound up in the relations that conceptualised, produced, disseminated, audienced and represented the findings emanating from this research. Each of these processes was constructed around decisions made as a consequence of varying discourses, between and within the researcher, the participants, the student body, the institution itself and the space of the campus, all of which inform the intersecting relationship between power and knowledge. The entire data production process was about negotiating power dynamics. In systematically recording these power dynamics within the body of the thesis in Chapters four and five, I aim to be truthful to the process so that the decisions I made are laid bare and if need be, are open to criticism.

This is not to disregard influences that were beyond my control, such as the power exerted by the spaces in relation to the students’ behaviour both in the photographing and in the audiencing thereof. Students sometimes opted for more straightforward photographic solutions to avoid entering into areas or negotiations with their friends that they knew would be unwelcome. This may be construed

as the photographs being untruthful representations of the students. However, within the interview discussions before and during the making of the photographs, these deliberations on what not to capture as well as what was considered appropriate to record, were negotiated both in the interests of the students' anonymity and in their desire to represent themselves as they saw fit.

Truthfulness in this research was less about representation [what is seen], and more about *interpretation and the process of meaning-making*. The latter is discussed further under truthfulness and ethical considerations as it is in the researcher's ability to be sympathetic, and reflexive in the process.

5.5.2 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND VALIDITY

Trustworthiness within the interpretivist paradigm is a construct of the development of consensus, based on the participant and the inquirer. Denzin refers to this as '*extended constructions of validity*' (Denzin, 2000, p. 114-115). The process of validating data within the two methods used was as follows:

- In the production of the photographs, the interview, the photograph and the title of the photograph were a means to triangulate information so as to align what students said they understood of a space, to how they wished it to be represented within it, and how that was or could be confirmed by the text.
- The focus group and plenary group adopted a similar means of **triangulating** the information; however, this was a re-interpretation of the image by another participant, not the author of the photographs.
- In the exhibition, the identification of a relevant photograph or text by the audience and the interview itself were means of understanding the audience's interpretation of what they saw and what it meant to them. The exhibition was also a means of testing the **transferability** of ideas developed within the production of the photograph to a broader audience; this broadened possible interpretations of the phenomenon.
- In both the imaginative mapping and the photography, trustworthiness was substantiated by interviewing participants after the making so that the author's intent was clarified. This limited the possibility of misinterpretation by the researcher.
- The Location Task Tool analysis enables two levels of validation; the first is the researcher checking for **consistency** of reading between the visual map and the written text and the second is through the researcher interviewing the student.

The above list reflects the various levels of checking for consistency within the different forms of data that were collected. Different forms of data cross-checking occurred at the level of the participant in terms of those that had been part of both the co-produced photography component and imaginative

mapping. Understanding these students' current experience of campus enriched and clarified my understanding of their ideal campus.

Member checking was not adopted due to the several interactions with the key participants in which uncertainties of meaning and interpretation were clarified, and the non-traceability of the students participating in the exhibition component.

5.5.3 ETHICS

Students that participated in the photographic component of the study completed consent forms which covered issues of anonymity and reproduction of the photographic element of the work in an exhibition, the thesis and journal publications. Some requested that pseudonyms be used while others did not. Even though they formally consented to these forms of dissemination, the students were contacted again prior to the focus group, plenary group and the exhibition to confirm consent. None had concerns regarding reproduction and dissemination of their images other than the enlargement of one image for the exhibition, as previously discussed. However, ethical issues arose in the production of the photographs themselves that are discussed in the following section.

Students that were interviewed in the exhibition phase did not sign consent forms as this was considered obstructive to a fluid conversation and I feared that formalising the process would dissuade students from interacting with me. I also felt that the likelihood of harm to these students was minimal as their names were never recorded; only their race, gender and discipline were noted. Pseudonyms were assigned later for the purposes of the thesis, and little was said that would have identified them. Those students that did divulge sensitive personal information were asked if they were aware of counselling services on campus. In the midst of these conversations, I felt that it might be cathartic for a student to be able to speak to someone who was prepared to listen and would not judge them.

5.5.3.1 VISUAL ETHICS

The use of visuals raises a host of ethical dilemmas with regard to confidentiality, anonymity, copyright, authorship and ownership.

In the student community issues of anonymity and representation were often intertwined. Students' decisions on whether or not to remain anonymous were discussed upfront before any visuals were taken, and this decision was respected throughout the production of the visuals. Anonymity and representation were noted in varying degrees, from self-selecting out of the production of the visual entirely, to not having any recognisable features in the visual, and shifting from being the subject in front of the lens to gazing from behind the lens in crafting their representation of the visual. In terms

of ownership and authorship, the visuals were readily available to the students in digital format, and many wanted copies for their use. All students were repeatedly engaged to ensure that the audiencing of the visuals met with their consent. Any changes requested by the student were accommodated. I also deliberately chose not to pixelate the visuals in this thesis where students or others are identifiable as it was regarded as inappropriate to deny students ownership of their visuals, particularly when these were personally important to them. Furthermore, pixelating the visuals would obscure the facial expressions of the subjects therein and render null and void the contribution of the visual to further meaning-making by the audience reading this thesis.

An argument is made in the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods Review Paper (Wiles, et al., 2008) for researchers to reveal participant identification with care and due consideration. The paper asserts that pixelating images treats people as objects, erasing their identity and making the images disconcerting to view. These factors also contributed to the my decision not to pixelate the visuals.

Visual ethics also extended to the spaces in which photographs were taken. In working collaboratively in the construction of their world through visuals, I had hoped that the researcher as the outsider would get a glimpse into the insider's world. However, gaining such access was not easy and required that I be invited into the student's world when it was offered and not force myself into it when it was neither wanted nor warranted. Similar to Winton's (2016, p. 437) study, it was felt that researcher presence in these spaces would unduly affect and limit the photographs taken. Access to the private worlds of their bedrooms and home space was not offered by all; however, where I was denied entry, the camera was given to students to enable them to capture visuals of these private spaces independently.

In this sense, students could determine their level of control of the process both in terms of the visual and the representation thereof but also with regard to how much of themselves, the spaces they occupied, the friendships they kept and their family lives they would open up to the gaze of the researcher. Students could choose to co-produce their visuals or do so independently. Keeping participants engaged in the process and amendable to it was more important than enforcing a particular one-size-fits-all methodological process for all participants.

The potential for trust and more meaningful engagement with the participants was enhanced through the students having more authority over the research process. Similarly, in terms of trustworthiness and validity, as students were directly involved in the production and explanation of their visuals, there was less potential for misinterpretation or misrepresentation of their experiences. However, this does not negate how students may feel they should have been represented in the thesis itself which

addresses students knowing as a collective as opposed to the more individualistic stance adopted in the production of the data.

5.6 POTENTIALS AND LIMITATIONS OF VISUAL METHODOLOGIES

Arts-based research and visual methodologies in particular, are often lauded for diluting the power dynamics between being researcher-researched and for promoting authentic representation (Buckingham, 2009) that is not possible using more traditional methods.

The experience I have drawn from this study indicates that these methodologies do contribute to the levelling of power, but do not entirely dispel the hierarchies inherent in research relations. However, the power dynamics at play should not always be assumed to be in the researcher's favour; participants have their own forms of agency. This section unpacks the learnings from the research methodologies as experienced in the field utilising Switzer's (2018) three areas of critique of participatory visual methodologies which include, *representation, power and participation* as a guiding framework. I include *methods* as the last criterion for the critique of the methods adopted.

5.6.1 PARTICIPATION

As a researcher, I erroneously believed that adopting and participating in visual methodological research was an acceptable active practice amongst participants. I hence assumed that finding participants was unlikely to be as significant an issue as it would become. Furthermore, I believed that participants would have inherent interest, confidence and competence to participate in using visual methods. Given their varying competency and confidence levels, the opportunity for students to take their own photographs or collaborate in producing them was a novel way to address these inconsistencies. I interpreted my research design process as allowing students a level of control (Guillemin & Drew, 2010; Liebenberg, 2009) over the research data production through including or excluding myself. Packard's (2009) photo-elicitation work with the homeless illustrated how the participants' lack of competence in using the cameras he provided had a direct effect on their confidence and self-esteem when these photos were discussed with the researcher. The process was, in effect, disempowering rather than empowering (Wheeler, 2009; Ngabaza, Bojarczuk, Masuku, & Roelfse, 2015).

In opting for voluntary participation, I set myself a formidable task which I did achieve, but not without much effort and time, trial and error.

5.6.2 POWER

Once participants were on board, during the photograph selection process, they would often ask whether a picture was what I was looking for them to portray of themselves and whether it was suitable for the exhibition. This highlights a phenomenon known as the 'interviewer effect' where participants say what they think the researcher or outsider wants to hear (Milne, 2012). Negotiating these kinds of questions was tricky, as there were images which I preferred and felt were either more aesthetically pleasing or more suited to what the student wished to vocalise. In these instances, I needed to refrain from voicing an opinion and redirect the question for them to answer. This touches on my agenda which was working toward an exhibition. I thus viewed the photographs in a particular light in terms of whether they were of 'exhibition quality'. If I had an agenda, participants also had their own agenda for the photographs (Wheeler, 2009). Photographs that had been co-produced and shared with one student were used as promotional material on his Instagram page in support of his emerging photography business. He was an amateur photographer prior to this study, but being involved in it gave him the confidence to turn a hobby into a profession.

What these methods don't account for is the participant's agency to limit or exclude their participation and to opt for varying levels of completion in their allocated tasks.

5.6.3 REPRESENTATION

As researcher I was the first audience of the photograph and was concerned that this might have unduly influenced the kind of photographs produced. My intrusion as an outsider was palpably felt when a student opted not to take photographs of him and his friends smoking in the park, even though we had spoken at length about this space in the first interview. The particular place in the park was significant to him and is well-known as the spot where students smoke weed. The legal, political and contested nature of space became apparent. Some spaces became present by their absence from the body of work exhibited.

The insecurities some students noted about being lonely were described in the interview but were not chosen to be represented in the photographs. Students thus chose to not represent some aspects of their life to a broader audience.

5.6.4 METHODS

A further limitation with regard to the adopted methods was the predominance of the individualistic as opposed to the collaborative aspect of image-making. Working in groups was limited by students' timetables, leading to a lack of group identity as they were working as individuals in a vacuum. I also

feel that students would have enjoyed the potential of further interaction as a group as opposed to primarily interacting with myself.

hooks (1995) provides a useful point of closure for the discussion on the potential and limitations of visual methodologies, with specific reference to photographs:

All colonized and subjugated people who, by way of resistance, create an oppositional subculture within the framework of domination recognize that the field of representation (how we see ourselves, how others see us) is a site of ongoing struggle (hooks, 1995, p. 57).

hooks (*ibid.*) reminds us that the terrain of representation is fraught with conflict and that what we see as produced in the process of co-production should be open to critique and not assumed to be an [singular] authentic representation of the research participants.

5.7 DATA SOURCES

Not all the data collected during the research is reported in the thesis. Figure 5.5 illustrates the data collected during the various phases of data production and that which was drawn from this to become part of the final data set. As the icons used in the illustration show, the final data set consisted of diverse forms of data which included:

- Transcriptions of interviews
- Photographs
- Notebooks
- Imaginative maps

Only the meaning-making derived from the photographs, as generated during their production and in the audiencing thereof, form part of the analysis in Chapters seven and eight. The photographs themselves are then not analysed.

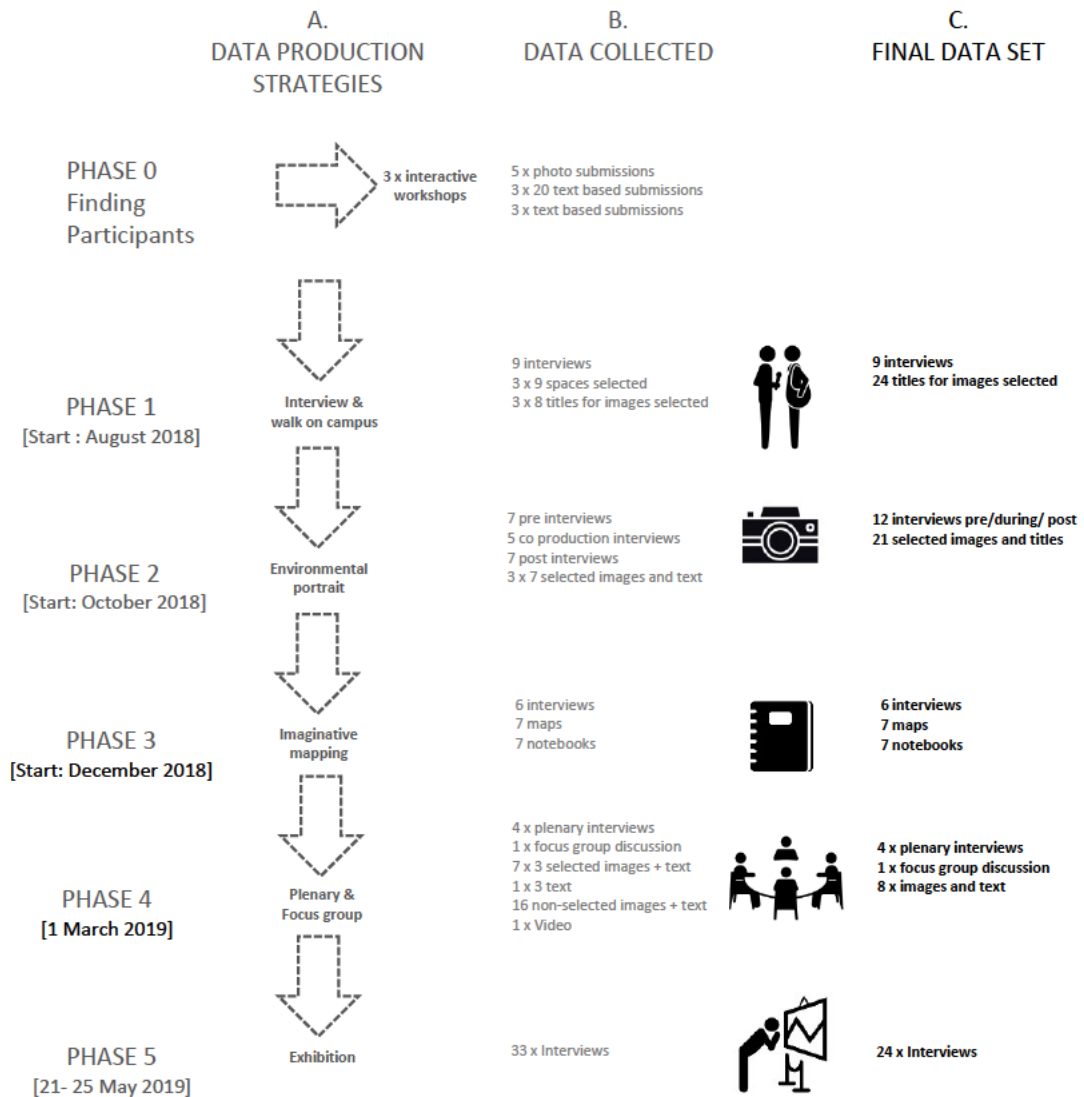


Figure 5.5 Data collected and what constituted the final data set

5.8 SYNTHESIS OF THE CHAPTER

Each phase in the production of the data contributed to a deepening and thickening of the phenomenon of students knowing of HE spaces. Even failed methods, which were unsuccessful in gaining participants, contributed to my sense of the campus climate and the issues students felt were meaningful to address at the time.

This chapter highlighted the interconnected relationship between the researcher and researched in the process of co-producing data. It underscored my relationship with the individual participants rather than identification with the participants. I was not attempting to be an outsider as insider but was rather forging a relationship between outsider and insider through a creative process, adopting the space between outsider-insider (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) as the space for co-production.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Having explored the visual methodological roots for the production of the data, this chapter extends the image-based emphasis that was explored in Chapters four and five to the analysis of the data and re-presentation of the thesis. As explained in Chapter five, the data was produced across various phases for varying purposes and was thus by no means a neat, coherent assemblage of information. It was thus necessary to unpack the entire data set as constituent parts of an emerging puzzle so as to re-assemble it as a comprehensive whole in a palatable format for a novel reading by a new reader or audience. However, the form for the reconstruction of the data obtained through the photographic component of the study [co-produced photographs, focus group and plenary group and exhibition] only gained momentum with the conceptualisation of the metaphor of 'Mobile.' The *mobile*, as kinetic sculpture suspended in space, served as the metaphorical coat hanger to string the different complementary and contradictory findings emerging from the data together.

The analytical unpacking, as well as the metaphorical re-hanging together of the various branches of the data, are discussed in more detail in this chapter. However, before addressing the analytical framework for the *Photography* component, the analytical framework of the *Imaginative mapping* is explained. As this followed a prescribed methodology, for the most part, the framework was set, except where I diverted to accommodate the specific needs of this research study.

6.2 DATA SET

The data accumulated from the research included 19 individual interviews which were held with nine students before photographing them, during the process of taking photographs with them, and while selecting the photographs. Of the nine students, only seven opted to participate in the photography component, an additional student joined later on in the project and requested that his text description of the photograph be used and no photographs be taken. These three blank images (Mitchell, 2011) with text and the three photographs [and text] per participant, culminated in 24 images.¹ The 24 images were narrowed to eight during one focus group and four plenary group discussions which produced five transcripts that accompanied a video of the focus group exercise. The exhibition of the 24 images to a broader audience of students on campus generated a further 33 individual interviews. The interviews lasted between a few minutes and forty minutes as was often the case during the conversations with students at the exhibition, or as long as one hour as was the case when meeting

¹ From this point on, I refer to the combination of text and photograph or just text reproduced with a blank space denoting the location of the photograph - as image. These images were printed out at A3 size and adhered to foam core board. Students could see, touch and move the images around in the focus group and plenary groups but could only view them in the exhibition.

individually with the nine participants. Descriptive notes were taken at every interview to highlight critical points students raised about the phenomenon of students knowings of informal spaces of HE, which were useful reference points before again listening to the interview recordings. All recordings were listened to again, but not all parts or all interviews were transcribed. The initial parts of the conversations were not useful data as their purpose was to put myself and students at ease and to extend the conversation beyond superficial levels. Some later parts of conversations were also not relevant to the research area, as they included necessary interjections and side discussions to keep the conversation flowing smoothly. The interviews with participants during and just before taking the photographs were technical in preparation for taking the photographs. Some interviews were inaudible, too short or were not with students but with a lecturer - a disclosure only made at the end of one of the interviews.

A total of 12 participant interviews, 24 exhibition interviews, one focus group and four plenary group interviews were transcribed in full. A further seven task sheets, seven notebooks and six interviews formed part of the data set for the imaginative mapping component.

6.3 DATA ANALYSIS: *IMAGINATIVE MAPPING*

The analysis of the Location Task Tool is premised on several steps of complementary information. The initial phases were based on Zur & Eisikovits (2011, pp. 457-458) with modifications made by myself in the latter parts owing to differing purposes/requirements for the data:

- Firstly, data were gathered with regard to the current HE spatial environment. This was effectively undertaken in the preceding phases with regard to students' perceptions and experiences of their current HE environment as opposed to what the institution claims it to be.
- Secondly, the task sheet and the accompanying notebook were analysed to understand the participants' thoughts and ideas. This informed the interview that followed with six of the seven participants to address consistency between note book and location task and to clarify information that was illegible or not understood by the researcher.
- Thirdly, the interviews included a set of questions for all students as well as individual questions based on the issues raised in the previous step.
- Fourthly, notes were taken during the interview, and key insights raised informed the choice of parts of the verbal text from the interview to be transcribed. The interviews were listened to more than once but were not transcribed in full.
- Fifthly, the spatial configuration of the task sheet was analysed in tandem with the written text in the notebook in order to understand the relationship between where spaces were located

and the characteristics of the places proposed. The analysis was both descriptive, in that the student clearly defined certain relationships to or between spaces, and interpretative, where the structure of relations was not as clearly defined and the researcher needed to apply her mind to what was intended.

- Sixthly, the sheets and notebooks were compared across the seven students to identify similarities and differences across the group as opposed to within the individual.

The final step is where the analysis begins to diverge from Zur & Eisikovits (2011, p. 29), who tended to focus on generating and triangulating information concerning the individual. This divergence was a conscious decision in order for the data generation to speak to emerging commonalities of thought regarding what was considered an ideal campus across the participants, while at the same time recognising where and why students differed in their conceptions of an ideal campus.

6.4 DATA ANALYSIS AND RE-PRESENTATION: *PHOTOGRAPHY*

The exploration of the data arising from the photography component was undertaken utilising Presentational Analysis [Hereafter referred to as PA] which draws specifically from the work of Donald Freeman (Freeman, 1996) and Critical Discourse Analysis [Hereafter referred to as CDA] as per Theo van Leeuwen (2008) work on multimodality. Both analytical frameworks understand language as a social construct, both draw from linguistics, and both recognise inherent power relations embedded within a discourse which can produce, reproduce and change hierarchies of power.

However, they differ in their approach. CDA connects macro theorising to micro contexts, whilst Presentational Analysis analyses the language itself, the words, as to how they convey meaning. Put simply CDA looks outside of language to the socio-political context to find meaning in the words, while PA looks inward at the language itself to tell us about students' relationship with wider social systems. Two divergent yet complementary ways of viewing the data. Both also search for criticality in voice so not just taking participants at their word but understanding, not just what they think, but also what they know. In terms of this research the analytical frameworks were employed to respond to what contribution this data was making to understanding relationships [who or what students identified with] in the HE setting [PA], and in identifying transformation in meaning-making across students' transcripts [CDA]. Less so to understand the nuances of every individual student.

These analyses conjured up ideas, words and meanings specific to the images as they were reinterpreted through their various phases of audiencing to students, but nothing tangible emerged

with which to structure the thesis.² In the process of trying to bring the different conversations I had held with students around the 24 images together, so as to be understood as one coherent argument, I was drowning in textual overload.

In desperation, I grabbed a page with a thumbnail set of the 24 photographs, cut them out and began placing them in relation to one another. In hindsight, these photographs represented the lowest common denominator in the data; they were the ‘fulcrum’ of the data collection process. By this, I mean that the photographs were both the pivotal outcomes of the culmination of the individual research interviews and a crucial trigger for conversations held with students thereafter. The photographs were artefacts (Fasoli, 2003) both emerging from the research and generating data for it through their continued reading and re-reading.

I intuitively placed the photographs in relation to one another [See Figure 6.1] drawing from the understanding that I gained through continued re-reading of the students’ transcripts of the meaning they associated with the various photographs.³ I was thus consciously embedding the transcript information within the ‘body’ of the photographs themselves.

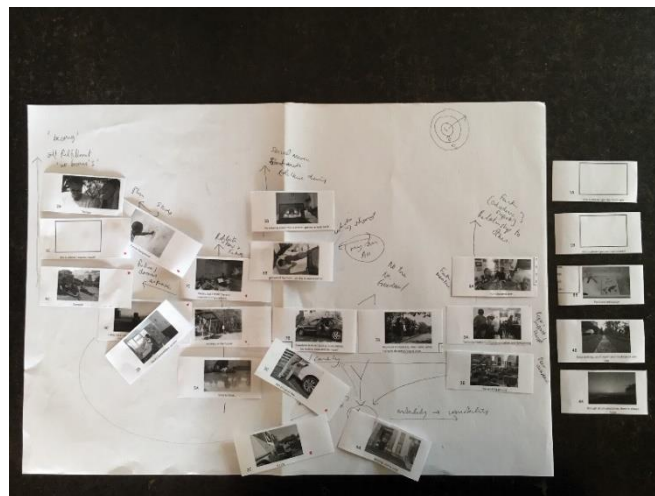


Figure 6.1 Laying out the photographs and exploring the relationships

One of the photographs, of a young woman sitting alone at the bus stop⁵, had connections with other photographs in the data set, through the multiple readings that this photograph invoked. The ideas this photograph imbued, as captured in students' readings, were of *looking back – reflection, looking forward – future aspirations and loneliness*. This photograph then became a pivot about which to build

² See Appendix 4.1 for an example of the presentational and critical discourse analysis of a photograph.

³ See the Appendix 4.2 for an example of the different meanings derived from a photographs from the various data source [author of the photograph, focus group, plenary group and the exhibition].

⁵ See the Appendix 4.3 for an examples of themes arising from the exhibition interviews.

students' thoughts and ideas around these conversations and others that emerged through and in the relationships between the photographs. Once they were all placed on the board in terms of their shared connections, the photographs started to generate a series of associations which began to suggest a more meaningful whole, as opposed to a series of independent ideas.

As a body, these photographs 'spoke' of individualistic becoming, students' relationships with others, interactions with social media, different kinds of mobility, and academic pursuits related to studying and planning. These connections reflected a continuum of views on an idea. For example, students' readings on the idea of mobility reflected the varying modes of transport they had access to such as walking, private car ownership or public transport and the meanings they associated with these modes. Five photographs that did not solicit any significant response or readings from participants were placed to one side of the table, thereby suspending their inclusion in the assembling process.

Drawing on my prior research experience with Space Syntax methodologies⁶, I then drew a justified graph⁷ (Hillier & Hanson, 1984) [See Figure 6.2] to graphically and more succinctly capture the relationship between the photographs as a network. The graph started with the 'root' photograph [8C] of the young woman at the bus stop [noted on the graph as node 8C] and then branched out its connection to all other photographs that constituted part of the data set.

The circles represented the photographs, and the lines the 'permeability' or relationship between photographs as conveyed by frequent readings of students. The dotted lines indicated potential for further connections across the graph. An asymmetrical five stranded diagram emerged that connected ideas of 'alone' and 'loneliness' to 'supporting structures' as one strand. 'Studying', 'sharing accommodation' and 'virtual space' generated another strand. The literal 'journey' to campus and 'mobility' relative to 'time' became the third strand; 'future dreams and aspirations' aligned to an individual 'becoming' constituted the fourth, and the last strand emerged as 'reflecting'. The diagram illustrated the interconnectivity of elements as well as ideas, where there was not only the potential for continuum or evolution of ideas through one strand but also the potential to link into other thoughts, thereby affecting their understanding. The diagram was essentially a two-dimensional flat drawing that lacked any depth or movement. A three-dimensional representation of this diagram came to mind in the work of the artist Alexander Calder, whose elegant kinetic sculptures I explored for their potential significance to the thesis in terms of data analysis and re-presentation.

⁶ Space Syntax is both a theory and a methodology for urban planning and architecture, premised on the idea that if society has a spatial logic then space has a social logic. Space Syntax includes a set of methods for analysing cities and buildings, one of which is the justified graph.

⁷ A justified graph is a graph of spaces [drawn as a circle] and adjacent relationships [drawn as lines connecting circles] between spaces, in which a particular space is selected as the 'root' [starting point] from which other spaces connected to it are drawn in the level above. The space connected to these spaces is drawn horizontally immediately above it [I chose to draw below as opposed to above] and so on until all spaces in a layout are accounted for. In this instance the photograph represented the space [circle] and the connections between photographs [the lines] (Hillier & Hanson, 1984, p. 106).

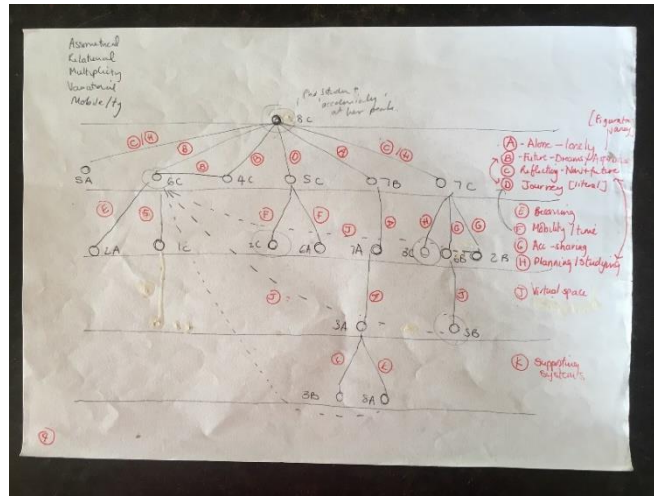


Figure 6.2 Graph of connections between photographs. Relations between photographs indicated in red text on the right-hand side of the graph.

6.4.1 CALDER'S KINETIC SCULPTURES

Alexander Calder is known for his 'mobiles' and 'stabiles', the former being wire sculptures linking abstract shapes that were carefully balanced so as to suspend in the air, moving when touched or by passing air currents [Figure 6.3]. The term *mobile* was coined by Marcel Duchamp and in French means both *motive* and *motion* (Taylor, 2012, p. 25). In contrast, Calder's stabiles were colossal sculptures that were stationary.

Calder's work is best described in a poem he penned for the Abstraction-Création group magazine in 1932 (Unknown, 2019). I have bolded certain parts of the poem for emphasis.

How can art be realized?

Out of volumes, motion, spaces bounded by the great space, the universe.

*Out of different masses, tight, heavy, middling—indicated by variations of size or color—directional line—vectors which represent speeds, velocities, accelerations, forces, etc. . . . —these directions making between them meaningful angles, and senses, together defining **one big conclusion or many.***

Spaces, volumes, suggested by the smallest means in contrast to their mass, or even including them, juxtaposed, pierced by vectors, crossed by speeds.

Nothing at all of this is fixed.

*Each element able to move, to stir, to oscillate, **to come and go in its relationships with the other elements in its universe.***

*It must not be just a fleeting moment but a **physical bond** between the varying events in life.*

Not extractions,

But abstractions

*Abstractions that are like nothing in life except in their **manner of reacting***

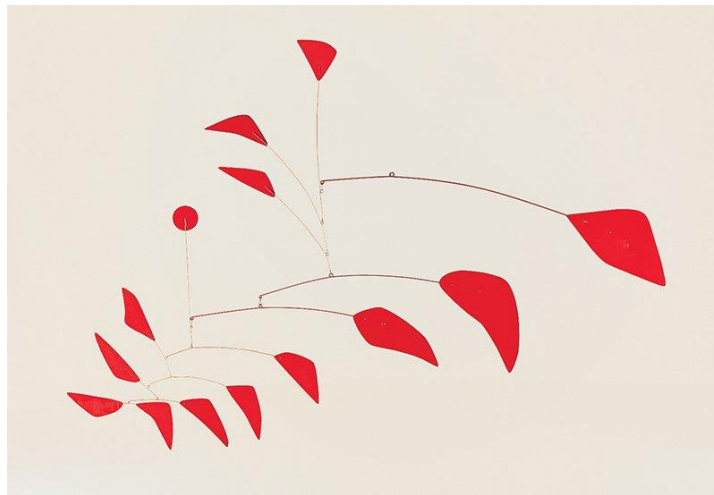


Figure 6.3 Alexander Calder Kinetic sculpture titled *Big Red*, 1959 (Unknown, 2019)

Calder's poem refers to the relationship between the component parts of the mobile and how independently and together, they establish varying trajectories. The mobile is constantly in motion, reacting to and within each part, to the environment in which it is situated, with no purpose or intent other than to respond. Jean-Paul Sartre (Galloway, 2002, p. 4) deepens our understanding of Calder's mobile in his description thereof which captures the diametrically opposed characteristics of the mobile as,

'mobile' does not 'suggest' anything: it captures genuine living movements and shapes them. 'Mobiles' have no meaning, make you think of nothing but themselves... The 'mobile'... never [has] precision and efficiency... [it] weaves uncertainty, hesitates and at times appears to begin its movement anew, as if it had caught itself in a mistake. Yet the motions are too artfully composed to be compared to those of a marble rolling on a rough board, when each change of direction is determined by the asperities of the surface... These hesitations, resumptions, gropings, clumsinesses, the sudden decisions and above all that swan-like grace make of certain 'mobiles' very strange creatures indeed, something midway between matter and life. At moments they seem endowed with intention; a moment later they appear to have forgotten what they intended to do, and finish by merely swaying inanely... [and mobiles] do not seek to

imitate anything because they do not 'seek' any end whatever, unless it to create scales and chords of hitherto unknown movements.

Sartre's description refers to mobiles as suspended between inanimate and animate, erratic and fluid, purposeful and indifferent. He personifies the mobile by giving it human characteristics that elevate the artwork beyond being a mere object suspended in space. Sartre further alludes to the fragile yet resilient nature of the mobile as it responds to surrounding forces, reminding us of its responsive as opposed to agentic nature.

The mobile's doings or actions are a direct consequence of the materiality and tectonics⁸ of the structure. Wire was Calder's medium of choice, and in the utilisation thereof, he transfers the concept of the line from drawing into sculpture. Calder termed this "*drawing in space*" (Barcio, 2016). The line now garnered a third [depth] and fourth [time] dimension in ascending from the page as a kinetic wire sculpture, the assembly of which made the interconnection between the component parts clearly visible and carefully balanced in relation to one another.

Calder's contextual responsiveness to the environment in which his sculptures are placed is noted in the wire sculptures being mostly transparent, thereby allowing other objects and the surrounding environment to remain visible. In reference to this phenomenon, he said (Barcio, 2016, par. 7),

There is one thing, in particular, which connects [my wire sculptures] with history. One of the canons of the futuristic painters, as propounded by Modigliani, was that objects behind other objects should not be lost to view, but should be shown through the others by making the latter transparent. The wire sculpture accomplishes this in a most decided manner.

Futurist painters made use of blurring, repetition and opacity to emphasise the movement of the objects in the foreground, with the background sometimes remaining static and unmoving in order to accentuate the contrast. These descriptions of the mobile are useful as they speak of the relationship between background and foreground as well as the indeterminate external force of the context acting on the mobile. The visual linking of background and foreground has both spatial and temporal connotations of being in the same space over extended periods of time, in this sense, reinforcing the connection to time as past, present and future. I had been grappling with how to represent these aspects of the research on the two-dimensional space of a page.

Through exploring Calder's work, the **metaphor of mobile** developed as an analytical as well as a representational device for the thesis. The kinetic sculpture also served as a recognisable image which

⁸ Materiality refers to the materials used and their associated meaning which has a direct bearing on the tectonics, which is the nature of assembly of the component parts. Tectonic structures allow their component parts and the method of assembly to be visible. Tectonic structures are also understood as didactic because of the visibility of the construction technologies.

was associated with the deeper *root metaphor*⁹ of 'mobility' (Mariaye, 2012). Mobility, as temporal, fluid and disrupted resonated with the emerging research findings of students knowing of HE campus spaces. The utilisation of the root metaphor of 'mobility' in research is discussed further as a means to explore how mobility is understood as a world view, philosophically and theoretically and to be cognisant of how these ontological and epistemological perspectives may influence my interpretation of mobility and mobile as a metaphor.

6.5 MOBILITY AS A ROOT METAPHOR

Mobility is associated with the movement of many things, namely, the physical body, the mind, goods, information, skills, ideas, social practices, networks and labels or identities (Sheller & Urry, 2006, p. 221). The propensity to move is dictated by self, others or circumstances in a manner that is self-directed, guided, forced or coerced (Albertsen & Diken, 2013). The movement is fluid or disrupted and experienced individually or collectively. Mobility is not necessarily movement as a constant state, but movement as sometimes fluid, other times erratic or discordant, accelerating and decelerating, moving in one direction then another, moving for long periods of time or fleetingly, thus capturing the various facets of mobility as rhythm, speed, space, time, and distance (Cresswell, 2008; 2010). The temporal nature of mobility is captured in movement being cyclical, perpetual or in movement toward inertia. Spatially mobility is recognised in the retracing of known routes or mapping out of new trajectories in the movement through or over places and in the transgressing of boundaries or re-affirming them (de Certeau, 2002). Furthermore, mobility discussions locate themselves within non-places such as airport lounges, motels and car parks where interaction is fleeting if at all (Larsen & Jacobsen, 2016, p. 84). Practices associated with nomads (Sutherland, 2014), vagabonds and tourists (Larsen & Jacobsen, 2016) further serve as metaphors for the varying interpretations of mobility.

Turning to the phenomenon at hand, mobility of students knowing of campus spaces is associated with becoming and coming to know in truth-seeking explorations once associated with the elite class who would navigate the world in search of 'new territories' to explore (Van Damme, 2006). Knowledge was presumed to be located in sites waiting to be discovered as opposed to more modern conceptions of mobility where knowledge is not place-bound but transferable between places, people or things. The positive connotations associated with mobility include progress, freedom, creativity and opportunity. In terms of freedom and associated rights, mobility is also connected to inequality (Larsen

⁹ The root metaphor refers to a system of thoughts [about mobility and flow] which are encapsulated in the discourse associated with the metaphor of mobile (Botha, 2009). The root metaphor also encompasses a particular world view about mobility of students and space that is expressed in the literature. The metaphor of rootness, however, should not be understood as a fixity; it also embeds a strategic [literally and conceptually] holding in tension, a form of balancing of multiplicities. Paradoxically the rootness also reflects movement and negotiation in a living balancing process.

& Jacobsen, 2016) where ability and access to resources to enable mobility may not be equal, equally distributed in space or experienced.

The negative connotations associated with mobility include deviance, resistance and shiftlessness. These are entrenched in what Cresswell (2006, p. 26) refers to as the “metaphysical ways of viewing the world” through a “sedentarist metaphysics” or a “nomadic metaphysics”. The former views mobility in a dubious light as an attachment to place is seen as the preferred way of being in the world while the latter celebrates flow, movement and the transgression of boundaries – disciplinary, world of work and world of study. Nomadic metaphysics links mobility to subaltern power (Cresswell, 2006) as noted in De Certeau’s (2002) walker, Delueze and Guatarri’s (2010) nomadology theories and Bradoitti’s (2011) intellectual nomadism. This thesis does not aspire to co-opt either of the divergent views but rather notes the potential of both as signified in the metaphor of the mobile.

Within educational literature, mobility is discussed at varying scales of movement of physical bodies, from domestic immobility (Finn & Holton, 2019), to student and staff mobility (Byram & Dervin, 2008) nationally and internationally. Cognitive mobility is explored in experiences of otherness in universities (Byram & Dervin, 2008) and mobile learning (Pimmer, 2016) explores the potential of flexible learning spaces. This thesis explores mobility as more than just physical mobility of student bodies across space. Mobility was understood as a *socially produced motion* (Cresswell, 2006, p. 3) which employs the three relational aspects of being observable, experienced and embodied, and as representational in that the movement itself means something.

Mobility was positioned as an analytical lens with which to view students’ HE experience more broadly relative to their transition to independence, the learnings they are making across the informal spaces of HE, their aspirations for the future and their becoming out of and attachment to the place of HE. Mobility and spatiality [as discussed in Chapter one and two] meet in the space of HE.

The purpose of mobile as metaphor in extending one’s thinking about the phenomenon, is explored further before delving into the interpretation of mobile and its representation in this thesis.

6.6 MOBILE AS METAPHOR

Conventional and poetic metaphors (Lakoff, 1993) are common in research across diverse fields [humanities and sciences] as they provide an insightful means to explain and make sense of the world

in everyday language that is simpler to grasp. Hence, an unfamiliar phenomenon could be represented through another object, which we are better acquainted with, namely the mobile.

The adoption of the metaphor of mobile aimed to contribute to how we think about the phenomenon of the student within the space of HE and how the metaphor could be used to make sense of the students' world and their everyday lived experience.

Drawing from Lefebvre and his extensive use of metaphors in *Social Production of Space*, Cresswell (1997) explains that,

Metaphor, [then], can be understood as a mode of thought and action that is implicated in everyday life. This extends metaphor beyond rhetoric or theoretical understanding and into the realm of practice and experience (Cresswell, 1997, p. 333).

Cresswell adds that metaphors encapsulate both thinking and doing as they are embedded in everyday life and our world view. How we experience or conceive of things influences how we act; hence, the metaphor of mobile was used as a means to communicate thoughts and to reason [think] about the phenomenon and base [my] actions upon (Lakoff, 1993). The mobile was the message [text], the medium [form] and the mode [method].

Metaphors have been used to explore students and space (Botha, 2009) in such diverse fields as education, student geography, urban design and architecture. The metaphors employed include the ants' nest (Gordon & Lahelma, 1996), spatial metaphors of journey or path (Gale & Parker, 2015), building bridges (Briggs, Clark, & Hall, 2012), containment (Clarke, Harrison, Reeve, & Edwards, 2002), and barriers and borders (Honeyford & Van der Zanden, 2013).

The *mobile* metaphor was not viewed as an absolute or all-knowing view of the phenomenon but a device considered to be the most suitable means to analyse and represent the findings of this particular research. However, in employing the metaphor of mobile, I was not ignorant of the fact that the creation and sustained use of the metaphor could be viewed as political (Cresswell, Weeds, Plagues, and Bodily Secretions: A Geographical Interpretation of Metaphors of Displacement, 1997) as I was in a position of power as a lecturer at the institution in which this research was undertaken, and the participants were students at the same institution. I could be regarded as imposing a metaphor on the participants, which would then display their lives in a particular light. However, I saw my role differently as one of accountability for the many stories I held and an obligation to try and mediate a delicate balance between all the voices to *get the story right and to tell the story well* (Smith, 2007).

6.7 MOBILE AS IMAGE AND ANALYTICAL DEVICE

Calder's kinetic sculptures' underlying structure, aesthetic and purpose were appealing for several reasons, including the mobility and fragility of their structure, the connectivity of diverse elements and the transparency which enabled the background to be visible behind the sculpture. Furthermore, they offered the potential to exist not as a choice between alternative happenings, but as both alternatives encapsulated in one. The mobile also embodied the physical representation of multiple dissonant connections, unsettled by external forces and oscillating tentatively between the foreground, the continuous present and the background, finding its own delicate balance. These characteristics and their consequent contribution to the research as both image and as an analytical device were becoming apparent.

The mobile thus imbues both a visually recognisable image and a textual component. The imageability aspect is of a kinetic sculpture suspended in space and the textual component (Mariaye, 2012) related the root metaphor of mobility. These two components of image [mobile] and text [mobility] were mutually entangled in the meaning-making of the other, generating a discourse with which to think deeper about the phenomenon while at the same time distancing or decentering myself from the phenomenon, thereby allowing multiple understandings of students and space to emerge as they were progressively *hung in one space* on the 'mobile'. The structure of the mobile accommodated the addition or subtraction of ideas and the exploration of balance and movement, gradually building on the concepts that were emerging so as to complete the frame [representational device].

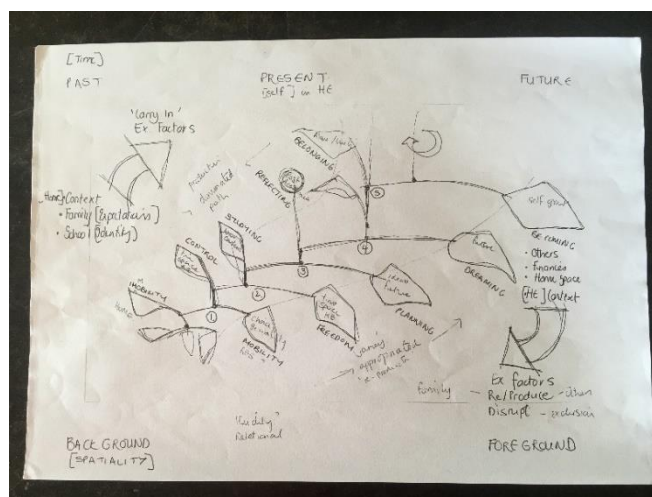


Figure 6.4 'Mobile' as an analytical and representational device

6.8 MOBILE AS REPRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The mobile as metaphor began to conjure up relationships in my mind. In transferring the concepts I had been grappling with onto the *leaves* of the mobile *Big Red* [See Figure 6.3] and locating these on opposite ends of the wire *branches*, relationships began to form by a process of trial and error. Filling in the space surrounding the mobile with what I understood as external forces impacting on students clarified another kind of connection and slowly the form to represent the data started to take shape and assume a life of its own. The structure of the mobile became a device on which to ‘hang’ the concepts [See Figure 6.4] emerging from the data and with which to make sense of the information. The mobile’s transparency and lightness generates a visible connection between the background, the environment and the objects behind, as well as the foreground, which it moves towards but never reaches, thereby bringing both the background and foreground into conversation with the mobile in one space — conceptually linking both past and future in the present through the form of the mobile.

Situated in time between past and future, the mobile is moving in the continuous present, subject to the forces acting on it as well as the agency of its own internal equilibrium. The background was representing students’ past socioeconomic history and context, specifically their school identity, friendships and family expectations. The foreground was originally conceptualised as the factors producing, reproducing or disrupting students’ experiences of HE, such as finances, home-life, other students and institutional structures. These aspects were later absorbed into other themes, and the foreground emerged as representing students’ hopes, aspirations and desires; the present, the experience of being a student of HE.

The mobile rotating at multiple points yet fixed at one point imbues the contradictions of mobility and fixity caught within an in-between space and time. It thereby encompasses the contradictions, complexities and complementarities inherent in the mobile. Stuckness was symptomatic of the disciplinary trajectory of performance re-production, with the alternative being a more nuanced journey of self-discovery and achieving dreams – a mythological as opposed to the technological rational journey mentioned above. The mobile was a metaphor for mobility, yet at the same time was representing spatio-temporal and social relations as ‘lived’ in the process of becoming a student of HE. Originally, the varied complementarities and contradictions of layered students’ experiences of HE emerged as paired couplets as follows:¹⁰

Studying and Planning,
Dreaming and Reflecting,
Alone and Lonely,
Mobile and Immobile,

¹⁰ See the Appendix 4.4 for an example of developing themes as couplets.

Connected [social media] and Disconnected [mentally],
Becoming and Folding,
Observing and Participating,
Supported and led astray/weakened by others,
Be on a Path and on a Journey,
Comfortable/content and Uncomfortable,
Belonging and Alienated,
Knowing and not knowing...

Two further themes, Controlling and Freeing, and Foregrounds, emerged as important themes later in the analysis. Streamlining to remove redundancies and repetitions resulted in the choice of six final themes that are discussed in Chapters seven, eight and nine.

The representation of the mobile in the thesis is also intended to serve a further purpose as a didactic device for the reader. In immersing yourself in the descriptive contents of the findings, the potential to discover new or further interpretations of ‘mobility’ and the phenomenon itself is possible. The descriptive content is enclosed within branches of the mobile and located on pages that are hyperlinked to the analysis within Chapters seven and eight. Interaction with the reader is enabled through the process of viewing both the analysis in the text and the descriptive content on diagram of the mobile simultaneously.¹¹

6.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE MOBILE METAPHOR

As noted earlier, the metaphor of mobile or any other metaphor for that matter, holds certain meanings that could limit the understanding of the phenomenon or position it in a certain light that is not truthful. As the mobile is suspended at one point and moves when force is applied to it, it could be incorrectly understood that no agency exists on the part of students to change or disrupt their experience of HE. Furthermore, the metaphor assumes that mobility is the norm and stasis is not, which might lead to the erroneous conclusion that students wish to be mobile, or are ‘forced’ to move permanently at the whim of external forces. Being mobile also assumes no boundaries or the transgression of boundaries, which does not accommodate students establishing their own boundaries, real, perceived or experienced. Related to this is the assumption of integration or connection between related or unrelated parts or

¹¹ The ‘Note to the reader’ in the prologue to Section A explained how COVID19 rendered the hard copy version of the thesis redundant for examination. In the hard copy the diagrams [of the mobile] are on a series of pull-out sheets. As the reader unfolds the sheets, placing the transparent pull-out sheets over one another, layer upon layer, the layers below will become visible through the layer above, thereby creating the possibility for new readings to emerge through the inter-visibility between multiple layers.

spaces as if all spaces and relations are perceived equally. This was not the case as each student's mobility and spatiality as experienced in the space of HE was different.

The representational use of the mobile thus does not attempt to comprehend all students as one, but rather serves as a means to capture all aspects of the phenomenon, of students knowings of HE spaces, in one structuring device.

6.10 SYNTHESIS OF THE CHAPTER

Data analysis to re-presentation moved from exploring images and text as discrete entities, to image and text consolidated within the metaphor of the mobile. The mobile serves as a means to analyse and represent the phenomenon and then to extend exploration of the phenomenon through the mobile as a didactic learning device.

However, arriving at the use of the metaphor of mobile, was not the consequence of a logical succession of events. Even though I was drawing from visual methodological roots for the origins of the data production process, deployment of a visual means to analyse and represent this data did not come to the fore in a fluid or intuitive fashion. After attempting to unpack and re-assemble the diverse forms of data using Presentational Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis it became apparent that another form of analysing and structuring the findings from the data was needed.

I returned to what I knew and drew from my prior learnings in Space Syntax methodologies and my architectural knowledge of 'concept'. The latter formed the foundational building blocks or backbone, which was repeatedly referred back to so as to ensure that the sense making of the data remained relevant. Referring back to the concept of the mobile and was also a means to gauge new developments so the thesis 'building' could keep moving forward. This was a reiterative and progressive process with which I was intimately familiar. It was thus not much of a leap from using architectural *concepts to design with* to using *metaphors to think with*.

The mobile as metaphor gave structure and order to the data, contributing to a sense of direction and purpose. It also served as a point of clarity to return to when a decision needed to be made or where there was uncertainty in the findings. The metaphor further contributed to consistency across the data sets and provided depth, meaning and richness for the interpretation of the data.

The mobile as metaphor is utilised in Chapters seven and eight. Chapter nine, which focuses on the findings from the imaginative mapping, does not use this metaphor but rather incorporates images to illustrate my interpretation of the findings.



SECTION B

Engaging in the field

Prologue

Structure, Form and Purpose of Chapters 7, 8 and 9

Prologue to SECTION B

The second part of the thesis analyses, theorises and describes [as a series of diagrams] the data that emerged from the study. I have chosen to represent the different themes emerging from the analysis through the metaphor of the mobile. A mobile is a three-dimensional, lightweight artistic creation which suspends a range of objects along a series of branches which are largely connected through string or wire. The delicate construction enables it to catch passing currents of wind, shifting and rotating in a continuing motion of varied responses. Its non-static and dynamic elements allow it to be reactive and evolving, which fascinates its onlookers. A mobile is aptly considered in some cultures as a “dreamcatcher” and is often used as a source for stimulation of young infants above whose cradles it is hung.

The data in this section of the thesis is a series of **six themes** over **three chapters** [Chapters seven, eight and nine], each representing a possible leverage branch of the metaphoric mobile. Each theme is first represented to expose its core elements suspended in relation to each other in paired couplets. Notably, these couplets are not opposite ends of the continuum but entangle each other in shared balance in much the same way as rhyming couplets of a structured poem strengthen rhythm and repetition to contribute to the overall coherence of the artistic form.

In order to aid readability, the subsequent chapters are all introduced through a diagram [See Figure B.2] which captures the essence of key components of the data gathered and reflects the mobile as a whole entity comprising its thematic parts. Following this, Chapters seven to eight present the descriptive analysis and the drawing pages in which the fuller transcripts can be read in tandem with the descriptive analysis. The **diagram** pages include elements from the individual interviews and focus group interviews; they embed elements of visual components of the key photographs co-produced during fieldwork. The drawing pages represent particular thematic parts of the mobile. This logic of arrangement is repeated for five of the six themes. In assembling this form of representation, I have chosen to reflect constructing, assembling and re-assembling as a continuous development of the data production and analytical processes. All elements become entangled in one another as a deliberative strategy to capture the richness and fluidity of the data.

The themes arose from an in-depth analysis of the students’ text in response to the twenty-four photographs co-produced from the initial nine interviews with students, their audiencing with eight students in the plenary and focus group discussions and from the twenty-eight interviews held during the exhibition of the twenty-four photographs to the broader student body on campus [see Chapters four and five]. Certain ideas recurred in the transcripts as invoked by the reading of the photographs.

These ideas were grouped together to become categories which were grouped into concepts (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2012; Cheng & Alcántara, 2007) and then grouped with other concepts to which they were related to create the themes. It is also important for the reader to note that each theme and its concepts are not clearly defined or bounded from the other themes and concepts, and even within themes the concepts may overlap and entangle (Barad, 2007) one another. This entangling is a consequence of the multiple meanings that are made of the concepts by both myself and the students.

The ends of the pendulous branches of the oscillating mobile then constitute the elemental themes harvested and arranged during the analytical process of artistic mobile construction. The representation is the analytical message.

STRUCTURE, FORM AND PURPOSE OF CHAPTERS 7, 8 AND 9

Chapters seven, eight and nine describe the study's findings that, for conceptual clarity as well as ease of readability, are split into three chapters. Chapter seven covers **themes one to three**, and discusses the *daily lived experience* of being a student and the *spatiality of managing academic and non-academic expectations* [within the different environments in which they find themselves]. Chapter eight deals with **themes four and five**, and reflects a discourse on *student aspirations* and the *development of self* within the spatiality of HE. Chapter nine reflects **theme six**, which foregrounds an *imagined future spatiality for higher education*. Across the six themes, the elements of the simultaneous co-existence of the students' past, present and future conceptions of being a student in HE are explored. Each chapter follows the form and structure described below, capturing both temporal and spatial reflexivities.

Chapter seven explores the daily lived spatiality of students and how they negotiate the *present* physical, social and mental space within HE in order to meet institutional and parental expectations as well as their own desire to aspire. The research broadens to include libraries and LAN spaces over and above food, accommodation and transport-related ones that were also recognised as significant spaces for students. The students' capability and capacity [agency] to engage fully or not in the spaces of HE were relative to the kinds of freedoms or lack thereof that they were afforded by the institution and their background or socioeconomic status. Freedom is further related to perceptions of the spatiotemporal in terms of how time and space are structured, by whom, for whom, and in so doing what is given priority and the concomitant consequences thereof for students' experience of HE.

Chapter eight explores how students' daily lived spatiality of HE affects the spatiality of their aspirations for *the future*. This chapter addresses students' ability to reflect on both their academic performance and the significance of the symbols of *the past that are still present* within their HE space. Mobility metaphors of dreams of a better future were powerful signs of students' desires to forge a path through HE, but not necessarily the knowledge or ability to do so. In transitioning into and out of university, the paths students ultimately take impact their identity [and identities] of self. Within this mobility temporal-spatiality, the knowing of both their academic and non-academic self is challenged, disrupted, confirmed or adapted. These selves are constantly in dialogue with one another, other students and other spaces of HE.

Chapter nine explores students' imagined spatiality for HE, where the tension between the academic and the non-academic self, became clear in the spatial and temporal boundaries they created between learning and the places for developing their interests and relaxing. Academic spaces of learning were, for the most part, unquestionably at the core and remained unchallenged as normative acceptance of the key purpose of HE. This chapter, therefore, explores the possibilities for an imagined *future*. Are students indeed capable of engaging imaginatively and agentially with the desired changes, reordering their temporal-spatialities? What enables or constrains these possibilities for an imagined future?

The themes and related concepts emerging across these three chapters are organised as follows:

1. Immobilising and Mobilising
2. Controlling and Freeing
3. Studying and Planning
4. Reflecting and Dreaming
5. Belonging and Becoming
6. Foregrounding

Table B.1 provides an orthogonal and static view of the contents of the 'kinetic sculpture' diagram [See Figure B.2] which can be viewed on Page 143. The **colours** are reflective of the **coding system** used throughout Section B to distinguish the different themes. Table B.1 introduces:

1. The themes numbered one to six.
2. The two concepts that constitute each theme with a brief description of what each represents.
3. The argument per theme.
4. The actions that constitute the crossing over between concepts.
5. The themes as explored in relation to a spatio-temporal journey.

CHAPTER AND THEME NUMBER	A: ARRANGED/SYSTEMIC/ACADEMIC PATHWAY	CROSSING OVER A-B DISARRANGED	B: RE-ARRANGED/EPISTEMIC/NON-ACADEMIC PATHWAY	ARGUMENT	JOURNEY
					SPACE-TIME DEPARTING [STARTING POINT – BACKGROUND]
CHAPTER 7 Theme 1	1a. Immobilising Systems of managing time, space and the movement between spaces	Moving closer or onto campus	1b. Mobilising Independent access, flexibility [when] and choice	The dominance of institutional power is perpetuated through mechanistic control of time and access	Crossing over [between spaces – home/campus]
Theme 2	2a. Controlling Cultural and institutional systems to manage interpersonal relations	Occupying institutional space	2b. Freeing Independent thought, actions and decisions	Identifying spatial practices of exclusion and inclusion	Stopping off [within spaces] residences/home/campus
Theme 3	3a. Studying Systems to maintain curriculum outcomes and expectations –	Consuming institutional resources for personal gain	3b. Planning Independent conceptions of the future [intellectual act of/ how to]	Divergence in the pathway as lived life [academic] as real-life [non-academic] and as aspired [academic and non-academic]	Staging [several points of journey open up]
CHAPTER 8 Theme 4	4a. Reflecting Systems and symbols affecting performance	Entangling academic performance and life choices	4b. Dreaming Independent aspirations [dreams themselves and what they mean]	Dreaming as 'pathway'... to becoming	Destining [direct toward a destination]
Theme 5	5a. Belonging Systems and relations of exclusion and inclusion	Enabling consciousness of self and others	5b. Becoming Independent identity/identities of self – knowing	Becoming is both academic and non-academic	Embarking [start]
CHAPTER 9 Theme 6		6. Foregrounding Creating space/place for possibilities of multiple becomings		New becomings lie in the non-academic spaces of hopes and dreams and the relationship between academic and non-academic [self + space]	Re/embarking

Table B.1 Organisational structure of chapter's seven to nine

As represented in Table B.1, the concepts appear as opposites; however, as elaborated in the descriptive analysis, the boundaries for each theme are less clearly defined.

Each theme includes a **descriptive analysis** as well as a **drawing section** [themes one to five only]. The descriptive analysis *identifies commonalities and divergent viewpoints* within the students' meaning-makings of the **photographs** that contributed to a deepened or diverged interpretation of the concepts. The analysis includes brief extracts from truncated transcripts. A referencing system is used to guide the reader to the truncated transcript in the **diagram** which is represented as branches of a mobile.¹

Before reading the descriptive analysis of each theme, it is requested that the reader:

1. At the beginning of each theme [repeated for each concept] view the relevant **pages of diagrams** so these fuller transcripts can be read or viewed in tandem with the shorter descriptive analysis in the text.
2. Note the **colour coding, font size, numbering and referencing** devices that I have employed to facilitate ease of reading between the diagram and the descriptive analysis.

The **descriptive analysis** is structured as follows:

1. Each theme begins with a brief discourse as to what is understood by the concepts used and the significance thereof to this research.
2. The findings of the research are sequentially presented, dealing with the first, then the second concept in paired constructs.
3. The concluding comments at the end of each theme serves as a means to summarise each concept and to denote the key contribution each theme makes to students knowings.
4. The participant's voices in Chapters seven, eight and nine are foregrounded by italicising their words.

Each theme's descriptive content is encapsulated in **two diagrams, one for each concept**, that include **photographs, truncated transcripts**² and a **vignette**. The transcriptions were abstracted for ease of reading to accentuate the relevant parts. The photographs were selected through a process of analysing the transcripts, and the meaning students were making of the photographs across the different phases of data production. The process of generating the themes ran concurrently with the selection of the photographs.

¹ An example of an extract from a transcript is presented in Appendix 4.5.

² Transcripts from interviews, plenary group, focus group or exhibition – the source is noted on the data sheet.

The contents of the **diagram pages** are as follows:

1. The truncated **transcriptions** from the various data sources relevant to each concept are located on the diagram pages.
 - a. These transcriptions sit within ‘leaves’³ that are **numbered** so as to refer back to the **subsections of the text** in the descriptive analysis.
 - b. Each transcription in the diagram page is **referenced** back to the data source. This reference includes the name of student [pseudonym where consent was not given], an acronym for the data source [Ex – exhibition interviews, PG – plenary group, FG – focus group, I – interview], and a number to structure an ordering logic in which to read the leaves.
 - c. The **reference code**, along with brief excerpts from the transcripts, is repeated in the descriptive **analysis** in each chapter. The coding allows the reader to refer to the context of the text within the transcripts in the **diagrams** while reading the descriptive analysis.
 - d. If applicable, a **reference** to the **photo** that prompted the text is also included in the leaves.
2. **Photographs**, as relevant to each concept and the **photograph’s caption**, are located on the diagram pages.
3. As each photograph is introduced:
 - a. The text related to the photograph is visible as **bold text** on the leaves of the mobile.
 - b. This text includes an **explanation in the student’s own words** of the meaning that was intended to be conveyed through the photograph.
 - c. These explanations are either drawn from *initial interviews* with the participant or the discussions held during the *plenary group*.
 - d. This initial meaning-making provides a context for the reader to note further re-**readings of the photographs** that emanated from the *plenary group, focus group and the exhibition phase*.
4. The **vignette** is located on the **second page** of each set of diagrams.
 - a. The vignette is a **constructed story** drawn from the data⁴ to illustrate more specifically how the concepts within the theme are interconnected in a student’s daily life.
 - b. The vignette is written in the **first person** as both a factualisation and fictionalisation of the transcripts in that, it is drawn from the actual data/facts to construct a **narrative** that in itself is a version of the facts.

³ See the Appendix 4.6 for an example of a truncation of a transcript to become a ‘leaf’ on the mobile.

⁴ Numbered to identify the source within the data description.

- c. Each vignette also illustrates how the **concepts are related** to the **spaces** that were the focus of this research, namely, food, accommodation and transport spaces.
- d. The vignette includes the same **referencing system** as in the text on the leaves of the mobile and the descriptive analysis.

The **conclusion of each chapter** serves as a means to further abstract and theorise what has been learnt about students knowings, through the preceding themes. This operation establishes what is new in the consolidation of each chapter.

The **last theme** [in Chapter nine] is distinct both in its representation and structure from the other chapters [seven and eight] as draws its information from a different phase of data production. It draws predominately from the **imaginative mapping phase** in which students were asked to imagine their ideal HE campus with no limitations on their creativity. Students' 'desire to imagine' relative to their 'ability to imagine' is explored in this last theme. It includes the description of the **three models of imagined campuses** that were generated by the students in response to their lived campus experience. In this chapter, the five previous themes are revisited in reading the three models of the imagined campuses. The chapter also **includes illustrations of the three models** as diagrammatic representations of the key ideas embedded within each model.

This prologue described the structuring and ordering logic within and between Chapters seven, eight and nine as well as how the themes and related concepts are entangled both within themselves and the phenomena explored. The graphic mobile represented as a kinetic sculpture [*See Figure B.2*] serves as the guide for the chapters that follow.

Mobile



Figure B.2 Structure of the mobile

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the first of three that analyse and theorise the data. Chapters four and five explained how the research was designed and how it was informed by visual methodology, specifically photography. The data for this chapter is drawn from four different sources, namely, interviews in which photographs were co-produced with participants, plenary groups and a focus group in which these photographs were discussed amongst participants, and an exhibition where the photographs were made public to other students for further conversation. This chapter focuses on the spatiality of students' mobility through HE, exploring numerous stories of food, accommodation, transport spaces¹ and other spaces unrelated to formal teaching spaces. These spaces are constructed out of social interactions and interrelations (Massey, 1992) that give rise to multiple student narratives (Massey, 2005, p. 71) which could inform understanding of the space of HE. The three themes discussed in this chapter are:

1. Immobilising and Mobilising
2. Controlling and Freeing
3. Studying and Planning

Alongside those in Chapter eight, these themes address the critical question of what students know about the informal spaces they occupy through their daily lived experience of HE.

The prologue provided a detailed guide to the structure and organisation of Chapters seven, eight and nine. Before reading the concepts within each theme, a diagram sheet needs to be viewed at the end of the theme. The 'leaves' of the mobile [on the diagram sheet] are numbered [A, B, C] to reflect the different subsections within the themes. The truncated transcripts are referenced according to the data source [interview, plenary group, focus group, and exhibition] and are also numbered to cross-reference between the diagram and the in-text information. Each transcript is also individually numbered [1, 2, 3] and so onto suggest the order in which they should be read.

Chapters seven, eight and nine should be read as an integrated whole with the latter chapter serving to encapsulate students' imagined spatiality within the present lived spatiality.

¹ The relevance of these spaces was explained in Chapter one and three as spaces in which students are deemed 'free' to engage with other students or other things without interference by the authority figures such as lecturers, management and administrative staff.

7.2 IMMOBILISING AND MOBILISING EXPLAINED AND EXPLORED

7.2.1 THE MOBILE [LEAVE HOME] AND THE IMMOBILE [STAY AT HOME]

Students' geographical mobility to leave home and attend university denotes a key threshold transition from being a young person to becoming an adult (Christie, 2007). However, not all students are able to choose to stay at home or even to leave home. Hence, the concepts of *immobilising and mobilising* in exploring living at home or leaving home as alternate pathways to HE are presented below.

Students' spatial mobility from home to university, or lack thereof, has been associated with identity construction (Christie, 2007), experience of HE (Holton, 2015; Cross & Johnson, 2008; Backhouse & Adam, 2013) student retention or departure (Manik, 2015) cultural, social and economic capital (Leatherwood & O'Connell, 2003), meaning-making of home after having left for university (Kenyon, 1999) choosing to stay home (Patiniotis & Holdsworth, 2005) and off-campus mobility challenges (Mbara & Celliers, 2013), amongst many other topics.

Students' spatial mobility is defined in the literature (Christie, 2007; Holton, 2015) in terms of whether they stay at home and commute to university every day or leave home to study at a university in another city. Leaving home means finding alternative accommodation and there is a multitude of choices as to where to reside depending on the student's financial means and ability to access. Accommodation options could include living collectively or individually in university or private accommodation such as university residences, communes, apartments and granny flats.²

Students who choose to *stay at home* are seen as spatially *[im]mobile* (Christie, 2007) in that they are home dependant for a number of reasons such as limited financial means, being close to employment opportunities, cultural factors, needing to care for relatives, or for other reasons. Their spatial *[im]mobility* is often associated with disadvantage, especially in British studies on students of HE (Christie, 2007; Holton, 2015).

By contrast, students that *leave home* are spatiality *mobile*, which is usually regarded as a middle to an upper-class phenomenon (Holdsworth, 2009), where parents have the financial means to cover the additional costs of supporting the student's studies away from home (Holdsworth, 2009; Brooks, Byford, & Sela, 2016).

² A separate abode outside a main homestead.

Within the context of South Africa, students' spatial mobility needs further explication as large numbers of "non-traditional" (Jama, Mapesela, & Bylefeld, 2008), "first-generation Black disadvantaged students" (Fataar, 2018) come from marginalised communities (Langa, Wangenge-Ouma, Jungblut, & Cloete, 2017) of lower socio-economic status. Students residing in rural areas or townships do not necessarily have the choice to stay at home and commute to campus, as the distances are too large. If such students want to access tertiary education, they need to become mobile and leave home. The participants in this research attend a university that draws 58% of its students from quintile³ 1-3 schools.⁴ Most are from rural areas and require accommodation in some form or other, be it in university residences or communes outside of the university. University residences might be located on the campus or are managed by the university as "off-campus sites" of abode. Students that live off-campus commute on a daily basis, with transport usually provided by a regular shuttle service funded by the university.

Financial barriers to accessing a university education and the necessary accommodation for undergraduate students have been bridged to some extent in South Africa through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme Loan Programme (NSFAS), which covers accommodation, a food stipend, and study fees and provides a laptop. The university campus on which this research was undertaken, provided a total of 7 796 beds to students in 2019. However, demand stood at 11 044 beds. The fact that demand for accommodation way exceeds supply places universities under huge pressure to provide accommodation for students in university-approved and managed accommodation in order to fulfil NSFAS obligations.

In the context of the institution under study, spatial mobility is *obligatory* for the majority of students in order to access HE. This suggests that many students do not enjoy the financial privileges associated with middle-class status that promote mobility. For the purpose of this research, all students [irrespective of 'staying at home' or 'leaving home' as a place of residence] are seen as exercising forms of mobility. Mobility is understood as a spatial construct as well as a construct of selfhood in shifting conceptions of boundedness of habits, rituals and conventions embedded within the movement between the place of accommodation and the space of the campus. It also refers to shifting conceptions of students' personal [self] choices in relation to prospective conceptions of their future goals.

³ Schools are categorised into five quintiles that are relative to the wealth of the communities in which they are situated. Schools in the poorest areas are Quintile 1, while those in the most affluent areas are Quintile 5. Quintiles 1, 2 and 3 are non-fee paying schools and are entirely dependent on government funding.

⁴ Source: Vice-Chancellor's university mail dated 4 September 2019.

Mobility, as discussed in this thesis is structured according to where students live while studying and the mode choices available to them. It is explored through their access to car ownership and to alternative modes of transport between their accommodation and the campus (Yu, Bryant, Messmer, Tsagronis, & Link, 2018). By exploring the nature of the *transport mode choices*, the significance of both mode and accommodation choices in their personal self-development becomes apparent in their navigation through HE. The different accommodation and mode choice options available to students include:

1. Living at home [and commuting to campus via private or public transport].
2. Living off-campus [in university leased sites and commuting to campus via university provided shuttle services]. These sites are usually privately rather than university-owned. In 2019 this equated to roughly 33% of the student community for the site of this study.
3. Living off-campus [in non-university sites, with family, friends, groups of peers, in single accommodation] [commuting via private or public transport].
4. On-campus university residences [according to university policies regarding original home distance from the campus based on a radius of 20km and need] [limited commuting] (Department of student residence affairs, 2016). In 2019 this equated to roughly 12% of the student community for the site of this study.

Student access to these typologies is influenced by a range of factors including institutional policies regarding student placement in residence, the geographic distance between home and university, and students' financial means, lifestyle preferences and family obligations.

The discussion in this chapter foregrounds how students make sense of these varied options and how this influences their participation and engagement within the university academic and non-academic environment and practices.

The descriptive analysis of spatial mobility illustrates how students' daily lived experience of the campus is neither equitably perceived nor experienced. Furthermore, a student's spatial mobility [leaving home] does not necessarily render him or her more mobile or independent relative to his/her lived experience of campus life. Spatial mobility as [independent] access to education is discussed below.

7.2.2 STAYING HOME AND MODE CHOICE OPTIONS

The mobility of students living at home could be via access to a family vehicle, being part of a lift club, or reliance on public transport such as buses or the ubiquitous 12-seater taxis [See Figure 7.1]. A student that accesses campus either in a friend's car or by taxi describes the former in a positive light:

“start of a good day” [Sipho_I1] 2⁵ and the latter in a negative light: “let’s see what today will bring” [Sipho_I1] 2. Using a taxi requires an earlier start, taking longer to get to campus and having to interact with strangers. A private car involves less hassle, is direct, fast, and reliable and includes the company of friends.

Another student that has access to a family car describes her daily commute as follows: “I have to leave 40 minutes before class starts to get here [to campus]. So I spend half my life driving, which I hate, but... um... it is required. It would be lovely to live on campus” [Brie_PG] 3. Her reason for wanting to live on campus is to do away with commuting. The fact that she says, ‘it is required’, suggests that this might not be an option. However, in the titling of her photograph [7B] of her family car, Brie notes the antithesis of this as “Freedom to study [and at times sleep] be mobile, relax and be myself.” This reflects the choices associated with car ownership or access to a car as well as the flexibility it affords her in terms of access to campus and to a private space to which she can retreat when necessary.

The car is seen in antithesis to the bus as providing fast and independent access to campus. Wisdom uses the word “simply” [Wisdom_FG] 4 to note that having transport comes with fewer complications or challenges. The car is also read as a commodity, a sign of material capital; “she has a car” which defines her status as “rich”, making her dismissible from the student’s social and economic reality, and “so she is out” [Sibongile_Ex] 6. Sibongile does not have the financial means to access a car or the same social and physical spaces occupied by students that do own cars. Her lived reality on campus therefore does not include social relations with other students in the car park. The parking areas for students with cars and the area for waiting for buses are spatially separated on campus, thus spatially and socially segregating students of different socioeconomic groups.

Access to a car has many positive connotations in terms of student mobility, but less so in terms of social integration, as the car is seen to perpetuate racialised and classed space. The car provides flexibility, but also reliance on others who have one, yet is commiserate with the long time spent commuting across the city [for those who live far from campus] which impedes study and leisure time.

7.2.3 LEAVING HOME AND MODE CHOICE OPTIONS

The university provides two types of accommodation that are spatially distinct from one another in terms of their proximity to campus [See Figure 7.2]. On-campus residences are located within or on the perimeter of the campus and off-campus residences are found in surrounding suburbs or the city. The latter are predominately privately owned and leased by the university. Undergraduate students have

⁵ The referencing for each quotation is ordered as follows - Name of student [pseudonym where consent not given], where data source is drawn from, [Data sources include: PG – plenary group, FG – focus group, I- interview [numbered 1-3], Ex- exhibition interviews] and a number that relates back to the ‘leaf’ of the mobile on which the fuller transcript can be viewed.

no choice as to which residence they live in as they are allocated space by the university housing department. Off-campus students access campus via a bus service that connects various residences to one of the institution's five campuses, while the intercampus shuttle provides transport between the campuses. The campus that formed part of this research was connected to one other campus located in the same city by a private company contracted to the university.

The intercampus transport service ran between 7am and 8.30pm with nine scheduled pick-ups a day. The hours of operation were increased over exam times and suspended when the academic programme was suspended or ended. The intercampus bus entered the campus, while buses transporting students backward and forward to residences did not. Students were dropped off on the perimeter of the campus, and would walk into campus. Over the duration of the study the latter bus service's drop-off and pick-up points moved onto campus.

The spatial mobility of students living in off-campus residences is very much reliant on the bus, as indicated by a female student's comment that "*without the bus, we can't get to school*"⁶ [Sibongile_Ex] 8. The bus not only enables access to the campus but access to their education. Students' epistemic growth is facilitated through this vehicle.

Students staying off-campus with limited financial means are not able to access alternative, more convenient forms of transport to move between residence and campus. As one student notes "*lots of waiting around here. If you don't have any money to catch a taxi, you have to wait*" [Phila_Ex] 9. Students have no choice but to wait for the bus even if it means losing time, which could be better spent doing other things. This begs the question: do students wait for the bus? Currently, there are no facilities for students waiting for the bus, other than some street furniture to sit on. If they miss the bus, going back to libraries, LANs, studios and cafeterias, may seem futile as their space may be taken by another student or the time and energy spent walking back may not be worth the effort, so they wait, perched on the limited furniture, standing in the shade or sitting on the grass verges next to the road.

The public bus is seen as a necessary "*primary mode of transport*" [Msizi_Ex] 10 for many off-campus students. It is also a space that students regularly occupy in-between two spaces which take up much of their time, their residence and the campus. One student aptly describes this relationship as "*so like you are always there [meaning the bus] so if you are not on campus, you are on the bus, if you are not on the bus, you are at res*" [Msizi_Ex] 10. The relationship Msizi describes between the university space and his residence indicates how he is bounded and constrained to perpetual movement between these two spaces by his third space and only mode choice option – the bus.

⁶ "School" refers here to the university site of learning.

Further challenges with regard to the bus relate to students' interaction with one another in order to secure a seat, described as *"the struggle to wait for it"* and the *"shoving"* [Msizi_Ex] 10. Students jostle for a space on the bus while waiting in long queues. Many also have to run to catch the bus when the scheduled time of departure is imminent. Participants also described running to get a seat in order to avoid standing for what was perceived as a long and uncomfortable ride from campus to their residences [Wisdom_PG] 11. The challenges of the bus thus impact on the student's body and invade the space of the body. This is presented by the participants via repeated comments on waiting, running, pushing and shoving to get a place on the bus and the uncomfortableness of the journey itself. The immobility and mobility of the body are then dependent on the scheduling of the bus and the students' ability to adhere to the scheduled times. Their university lives and experiences become a process of negotiating waiting and securing a comfortable bus journey between campus and "home".

The bus drivers' inability to stick to the scheduled time is lamented by some students who note that drivers *"comes late maybe he will spend five minutes waiting for student"* [Phila_Ex] 12 and, at other times, leaving earlier than anticipated. As the buses operate on a one-hourly schedule, missing the bus means waiting an hour for the next one. Waiting for the bus to go to another campus introduces a further concept of mobility as movement between campuses. The bus stop is used as a transition space between campus, and students identify with the campus where their courses are rather than where they leave from.

Running to catch the bus or waiting for a bus that is yet to come was a common response to the scheduled timetabling of the buses and the drivers' adherence to the schedule, neither of which are within the students' control. Time is wasted and energy is spent on catching the bus. Regulating the bus schedules [especially the shuttle service buses under the control of university management] is thus a frequent area of institutional concern and deliberation. An official university communique from the office of the Executive Director Student Services (2018) noted student grievances regarding the bus service as a, *"shortage of buses running the shuttle between residences and the campus as well as the times which are not consistent and not aligned to the academic activities of the university."*

Students perceive using the bus as a necessary evil to access education.

7.2.4 LEAVING HOME AND ACCESSING MATERIAL NEEDS

The scheduling of the bus service can be regarded as a separate issue from the irregularity of the bus drivers. A student who had recently moved from off-campus to an on-campus residence notes that, *"the times are not that far apart from one... each... another. Because the times half-past one, the first ones go back actually, half-past one, two, half-past four, six"* [Thadie_Ex] 15. Thadie uses campus buses

to go to town to access basic necessities. Travelling to town or the surrounding suburbs is necessary as there are no clothing stores, supermarkets or chemists on the campus that was part of this study. To save travel costs, students often pre-plan or share trips to purchase necessities.

A student who lives on campus and owns a campus-based business makes use of public transport daily to travel to the city to fetch supplies. His mobility requires more flexibility than most students moving between campus and residences, but this comes with a cost to his business. The daily commute is a consequence of both the spatial constraints of his store [to hold more products and a lack of refrigeration] and because he sells freshly baked items which are made in the city. This student started his business with R700 from his financial aid money and launched it in his room in an off-campus residence. He later sought space in an on-campus residence because “*moving from Canning⁷ to campus made it easier for me to operate my business*” [Dumiso_I1] 16. He wanted to be on campus because “*most of my clientele is here*” [Dumiso_I1] 16. Access to patrons, supplies, the place of trade and adequate storage space is critical for small scale student entrepreneurs.

The flows of students [and capital] onto the campus for financial gain and off campus to access material needs creates a connection between the campus and the city. This mobility is unintentionally enabled by the university bus service to residences in the city which students appropriate for their gain.

7.2.5 WALKING AS A TRANSPORT MODE - CHOICE OR CHALLENGE?

Students allocated to on-campus residences are within walking distance of the campus and can move quite easily between campus facilities and residences on foot. Some residences are closer to campus than others and for students who are time-pressed or need to go back to the residence to prepare food as opposed to buying it at the campus food outlets, these subtle savings in time and reduced distance are important. Nhlonipho explains the convenience of moving from one on-campus residence to another,

I switched from Jeffreys to Archer residence⁸ this semester. It was my choice because... ah... from Jeffrey's... from Jeffrey's to on campus it was like a long-distance for me. So I wanted a res where I can move straight... from... maybe to library from my res, to a class very quick. Maybe I can... and... go attend, come back and eat and go again. [Nlonipho_I1] 17

Nhlonipho's ability to access all his academic and biological needs in close proximity was enabled by making strategic spatial changes in the location of his accommodation. Spatial proximity assisted this financially challenged student to maintain daily habits that supported his limited fiscal resources and

⁷ The names of the residences are pseudonyms.

⁸ Both these residences were considered on-campus residences. However, the latter is within the campus grounds and is therefore considered closer while the former is just outside the campus perimeter fence.

his health, as well as enabling him to manage his time to make better use of the resources available on campus. Access to and use of these resources and the implications for his future development are discussed further in the theme of *Studying and Planning*.

When a student's place of accommodation is far from campus and walking is the only affordable means to move between campus and accommodation, other challenges become apparent. A student living in a commune about thirty minutes' walk to campus expresses how "*I have to rush... go fast... get in my room, cook, I do everything before I start studying. And at that time I am tired*" [Mhambji_Ex] 18. She spends so much time and energy moving from campus to her commune and preparing to study that by the time she can study she is too tired to do so. Spatial distancing from campus is limiting her capacity to learn. The longer term implications of this incapacity in terms of her ability to meet her future academic goals are cause for concern.

Students' financial standing determines their mode choice options, with walking the least financially challenging, yet it can require much physical exertion and time. If distances to accommodation are far, walking also imposes time constraints not only in students reaching their accommodation before dark but also in time left to study. Living on campus where all spaces are nearby not only enables easy access, but also gives students the flexibility to provide food for themselves in residence, saves time which could be better spent studying, saves energy, and prevents the stress associated with commuting. Spatial proximity between accommodation and campus has a direct bearing on students' available time and mental readiness for learning.

7.2.6 CONCLUDING COMMENTS: *THE MOBILE NOT SO MOBILE*

Immobilising is an imposition of institutional systems that hinders students' freedom of movement between spaces and access to certain spaces. Institutional systems govern student mobility through the provision of university transport and its prescribed schedule as well as through the allocation of accommodation. *Immobilising* also refers to limitations placed on students' development of self and their ability to meet their future goals and ambitions. Students are also subjected to precarious financial situations that bind them to the 'free' offerings of the institutional systems. In contrast, *mobilising* refers to students' independent movement or the flexibility to choose when and how to move that best suits their academic and non-academic needs and desires.

Immobilising and mobilising are also related to where students live while studying. Those that have become spatially mobile in *leaving home* to study elsewhere become *immobilised* by distances to and from campus and by limited finances resources. The predicament in which they find themselves renders them dependant on the institution's mode choice in order to move between the place of their

education and that of their *accommodation*. A *fragmented relationship* then exists between education and accommodation, which is perpetuated by the institution's *mechanistic control* over time and access to [accommodation] spaces. Students *living closer to campus* overcome the factor of distance by bringing their *bodily needs [accommodation]* and *academic needs [education]* in closer relation to each other to serve their individual needs and habits if and when it suits them [not according to the institution's scheduling of time]. They are effectively mobilising themselves. Those that stay home remain *immobile* [dependant] as distances and financial constraints complicate access to campus. Utilisation of public transport renders their navigations to campus *convoluted and time-consuming*. In contrast, those with access to *private transport* either through friends, family or on their own, navigate access, time and choice to achieve a more *direct and speedy* means of connecting their academic and bodily needs.

Time is effectively swallowed up in overcoming distance and in the scheduling of time itself. This impacts the *quality and quantity of time* that students have left to study [academic self], and their physical and mental well-being [non-academic self]. Extended time through the contraction of space can contribute to students forming healthy habits that enable the development of self.

The mode choice itself is of interest in terms of its relationship to the student's body. A student's mode of transport could be viewed as an *extension of their body* (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 98) in terms of the different *spatial practices*, be they passive or active [such as waiting, running, pushing and shoving] that exert varying degrees of affronts on the personal self — suggesting that students seem to be always on the run in order to activate resources like food and transport and engage with their accommodation conditions.

The mode choice could also be seen as an *in-between space or third space*⁹ (Covarr, 2015) which students occupy, between the space of their bodily or non-academic needs [sleep, eat, and cook] and that of their academic needs [lecture, library, resources, LANs]; a space with the potential to disrupt or maintain the relationship between these spaces of bodily and academic needs. Mode choice specifically that of the car, also has *symbolic value* in terms of the association with material capital or with independence and freedom.

The *inequity* associated with the different modes becomes apparent as a consequence of students' *dependence* on particular modes of transport, how this affects the body of the student and their *inability*

⁹ Bhabha refers to a third space as one occupied by an oppressed or colonised people which is neither central to their culture nor to their oppressors (Covarr, 2015). This captures the transitional nature of the bus, belonging to no one, yet necessary for students to access campus, and for the institution to receive its students.

to control these actions and what these modes symbolise. Put simply, becoming mobile [leaving home to study] can be immobilising [incapacitating].

Mobilising tends to liberate a student while *immobilising* renders him/her subject to a controlling system. The theme of *Controlling and freeing* addresses these concepts further.

Immobilising

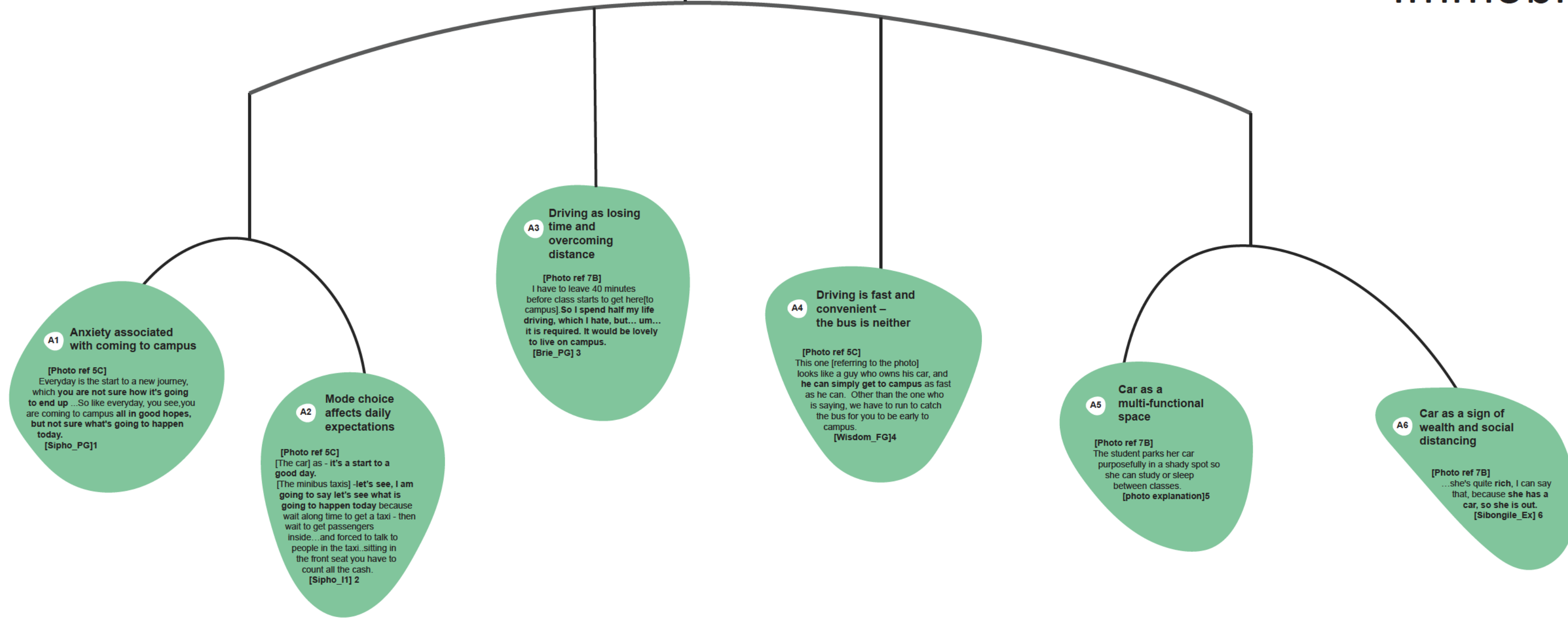
A Staying home and mode choice options



Photograph 5C
Start of a good day



Photograph 7B
Freedom to Study (and at times sleep) be mobile, relax and be myself



A1 Anxiety associated with coming to campus

[Photo ref 5C]
Everyday is the start to a new journey, which you are not sure how it's going to end up... So like everyday, you see, you are coming to campus all in good hopes, but not sure what's going to happen today.
[Sipho_PG]1

A2 Mode choice affects daily expectations

[Photo ref 5C]
[The car] as - it's a start to a good day.
[The minibus taxis] -let's see, I am going to say let's see what is going to happen today because wait along time to get a taxi - then wait to get passengers inside...and forced to talk to people in the taxi. sitting in the front seat you have to count all the cash.
[Sipho_I1] 2

A3 Driving as losing time and overcoming distance

[Photo ref 7B]
I have to leave 40 minutes before class starts to get here[to campus]. So I spend half my life driving, which I hate, but... um... it is required. It would be lovely to live on campus.
[Brie_PG] 3

A4 Driving is fast and convenient – the bus is neither

[Photo ref 5C]
This one [referring to the photo] looks like a guy who owns his car, and he can simply get to campus as fast as he can. Other than the one who is saying, we have to run to catch the bus for you to be early to campus.
[Wisdom_FG]4

A5 Car as a multi-functional space

[Photo ref 7B]
The student parks her car purposefully in a shady spot so she can study or sleep between classes.
[photo explanation]5

A6 Car as a sign of wealth and social distancing

[Photo ref 7B]
...she's quite rich, I can say that, because she has a car, so she is out.
[Sibongile_Ex] 6

Mobilising



Photograph 2C
R.U.N



Photograph 8C
Journey to the Future

Immobilising and Mobilising

I was walking down the stairs chatting to my friends when one of them checked their phone. "It's 1:30!" she cried. As if on cue, we all started running down the stairs. Reaching the bottom we saw the back end of the bus heading off down the road. A few other students who had also run down joined us at the bottom of the stairs. [Nokwanda_PG] 7

We all angrily stomped our feet and cursed at the driver for leaving before the time – again! Another student who was milling around, said the bus had actually come late, it filled up with students who had been waiting here from the earlier time slot and when it was full it left. [Phila_Ex] 12

We will have to wait for another bus but that will be in an hours' time. I could find a spot on the verge or walk back up the steep hill to the library. I opted to sit and wait, hoping for a seat on the bus when the next bus arrives. [Wisdom_PG] 13

While sitting on the verge of the road I thought how easy it would be if I had a car. I could get back to my residence in town as quickly as possible I would not have to wait. I could just go fast. [Wisdom_FG] 4

- A Leaving home and mode choice options
- B Leaving home and accessing material needs
- C Walking as a transport mode - choice or challenge?



Figure 7.2 Mobilising: Descriptive sheet with truncated transcripts vignettes and photographs

7.3 CONTROLLING AND FREEING EXPLAINED AND EXPLORED

Attending university is a significant transition that young people make to independence, through which they could experience a new lifestyle, a new city and new friends. The mobility of coming to university is associated with freedom; free from the constraints of home life, free from parental interference and free to be oneself unhindered by the interference of others. However, such freedom could simply be a semblance of freedom of expression and movement, wherein students are following a predetermined journey dictated by their parents or others. Controlling factors such as parental authority are imposed on students, limiting their freedom of choice. This can occur despite parents not being in close proximity to students whilst they are engaged in university studies.

Freedoms in the context of this research are understood through the choices that students have access to within informal spaces [food and accommodation] of HE, namely, where or how to live, what and when to study, how best to utilise time, and lastly their access to the varying food choices available on campus. Aspects that limit or restrict these choices are explored as controlling factors.

The transition to independence that HE is meant to afford is not only related to the mobility to HE but to also to the learning experience, where the university encourages the idea of an independent learner. The responsibility falls on the student to manage both their non-academic and academic selves as part of their journey to independence (Holdsworth, 2009). A student's ability to foster independence relative to their engagement with others [parents, siblings, fellow students and the university administration] in informal spaces is foregrounded in the discussion that follows.

7.3.1 CONTROLLING FREEDOM WHEN STAYING AT HOME

Students that stay home are likely to have more parental interference in regulating their academic practices and degrees of privacy in their bedrooms, while those not living at home have to either adapt or develop coping skills to manage their environment so that it is conducive to studying [See Figure 7.3].

Maintaining one's freedom at home, where students still live with parents and siblings, requires management of the threshold between the student's bedroom and that which lies outside of it, be it other spaces or family members. The threshold between the bedroom and the rest of the home space is more often than not outside of the student's right to control. As one student notes concerning his mother barging into his room when the door is closed, "*She [his mom] comes like frequently, she comes in frequently. Like my house, there is no private space at home. Like if she wants to walk in anytime, she walks in*" [Sipho_11] 2.

Privacy is a freedom that Siphon does not have access to; he has the right to use his bedroom space but does not control what he can do therein. By regularly checking up on him unannounced Siphon's mom is making sure that he is conforming to what she views as acceptable activities for the bedroom such as sleeping, relaxing or studying. In another student's home, management of the threshold of the bedroom is enforced and maintained by the mother, as this example illustrates, "*sometimes the baby one can push it, he keeps walking in and out and my mom says no it's fine, just lock your door*" [Razeena_I1] 4. Only when Razeena's younger brother disrupts her studying frequently is she allowed to exclude her sibling from the bedroom. Securing the door is regarded as a means of limiting distractive contact, in order to assist her learning.

In a third example, the expectation in the home is that this threshold will always be open as whatever is done in the room should be open and visible to all.

[Y]ou keep it [the door] open it just shows that... you that... there is nothing that you are trying to hide from anyone. It also makes you feel guilty when working, but you are not working, when you are actually meant to be working, and someone walks past. [Brie_I1] 5

The open door contributes to the student's feeling of always being scrutinised and invokes a constant need to enact a performance of studying and inability to relax. The open door and the mom barging in affect the students similarly, making them constantly feel on edge. The difference, on the part of the authority figure, is that the open door presumes innocence while the closed door presumes guilt. The behaviours on the part of the authority figure coincide with the developmental stage of students as emerging adults, which raises the question of the kind of privacy of selfhood that is necessary in their trajectory of growth into adulthood. It is noted that these behaviours may also be culturally specific family practices.

These three instances illustrate different ways in which parental control is exercised over the student and the activities they choose to partake in, in their bedroom. The examples illustrate physical policing of the student's space, managing boundaries and surveillance to ensure that what is undertaken in the bedroom is in the interests of their academic development.

7.3.2 CONTROLLING WHERE TO LIVE WHEN LEAVING HOME

Students that apply to stay in campus residences have no choice as to which residence they would like to stay in or with whom they will share, as they are allocated space by the residence authorities and assigned a roommate. For these students, the department that allocates housing is seen as a powerful obstacle that restricts their freedom to live where they wish. The department is perceived as unhelpful, dishonest and a law unto itself: "*they [the housing department] always say the spaces are full, the*

spaces are full. We can't help you and we know that's not true. They are just doing their own thing" [Scarlett_Ex] 6. Scarlett perceives the housing department as unsympathetic to her needs, while Ulwazi points to incompetence on the part of the department: *"there were a few problems at the housing department where my application for my room got lost"* [Ulwazi_Ex] 7. Ulwazi does not explain what these complications were other than the effect on her which was the rush at the beginning of the year to urgently find affordable private accommodation.

Students view the allocation of housing as a numbers game of fulfilling quotas that does not address the issue of creating quality environments both within the location of residences and in the residences themselves. Wisdom refers to the university's allocation of accommodation as a, *"filling game for them, just filling us like water... just filling containers"* [I1] 8. This apt metaphor of students as water and allotted rooms as containers filled by the housing department, not only illustrates the fluidity of the process, but the lack of care and concern for the individual student. Students' individual preferences are not taken into consideration and they remain nameless and faceless in a process in which they are merely recipients of a space whether or not it meets their specific needs. The kinds of environments students could imagine themselves living in are explored further in Chapter nine.

The housing department faces huge pressure to service the growing number of students requiring accommodation every year. The number of beds that the university holds is less than the demand; therefore, it relies on private service providers to provide for those it is unable to accommodate.

Not having control over their choice of accommodation through the university, let alone any certainty that they will get accommodation, contributes to students' anxiety. They often have to make hasty decisions to find alternative accommodation, which may not be suitable for their academic needs. However, as the following section explains, they find ways to adjust to these new environments.

7.3.3 CONTROLLING FREEDOM WHEN AWAY FROM HOME

Students living away from home find various ways to manage their relationships with their peers in order to negotiate time to work and to have some personal space.

Management of accommodation spaces in themselves is also seen to provide varying levels of freedom and control. A student describes moving from a university residence to a commune:

It was a big jump for me from having my own room and being in a... in a... controlled s-s-setting. To having to share and... um... having much more freedom. Because at res you can't do quite a

lot of things that your private accommodation can do.¹⁰ So it was quite an adjustment for me it took a while. But... I made it work. I had to. [Ulwazi_Ex] 9

University residences have secure access and security personnel manage the activities that take place in and around the residences. Communes do not necessarily have such security or control, thereby requiring students to self-manage their environment. A student notes that negotiating an environment with her peers made it work: *“mutual respect goes a long way. We find like mutual ground and we understand each other how everyone works, what everyone likes, does not like. And we take it from there”* [Ulwazi_Ex] 10. Engagement to facilitate respectful use of their shared space is necessary as the commune is not only where students live but also where they work, predominately in their bedrooms.

Students in residence may lock, close or leave their door ajar depending on whether and how they wish to interact or not be disturbed by their fellow residents. As Nokwanda clarifies, a locked door does not signify no access, but merely anticipates a request, through knocking, to be invited in,

so if I am really not up for anyone I write a note and leave it on the door. My room door is never open...but it differs on how you say it's open... you know it's open when there's not a lock on the door... I always have the lock on my door even if I am in there. Whoever knocks I allow them in. [Nokwanda_I2] 12

Nokwanda is responsible for her residence and often has students coming to her room with residence related issues. In order to make time for herself, she literally writes out any contact with students. Nokwanda's door is always closed. Her management of the threshold prohibits fluid movement from the more public space of the passage to the private space of her room. Furthermore, mediating the threshold requires both a request by the person outside of the door and an invitation from herself to come in.

Other forms of self-control are necessary as in the case of one student who describes his roommate as *“mentally disturbed”* and that he is also *“getting affected mentally”*. His solution is to *“focus on social media or something, lets me... lets me... just get out of space”* [Phila_Ex] 13. Phila socially disconnects from the present company and space to connect virtually to others in another time and space. Further examples of managing interpersonal contact in their residence rooms are students using earphones to signal their unavailability to engage in conversation at that time and in that space with their roommate: *“the moment you put on earphones means don't talk to me... get the Q? Do not talk to me!”* [Thulani_Ex] 14. Managing interpersonal contact between students requires navigating multiple boundaries of physical, mental and personal space at particular times.

¹⁰ Access control would be less stringent as would be rules regarding alcohol on the premises.

The spatiality of face-to-face contact amongst students to collectively establish a set of rules of engagement, the individually scripted note for avoidance and the slippage into virtual space are all necessary coping mechanisms in order to manage time for self and study.

7.3.4 FREEING AS INDEPENDENCE AWAY FROM HOME

The newfound freedom that students experience in coming to HE [See Figure 7.4] could be overwhelming as it enables a multitude of choices across spatial, temporal and social lines, expressed by a student as follows: *“firstly there is too much freedom here, it’s how you use it, ah yah... you chose who you want to hang out with; you chose how you want to spend your time”* [Nhlonipho_I1] 15. Nhlonipho perceives freedom as a commodity, something he has access to use, with someone, somewhere, doing something of his choice at a time of his choosing. Freedom for students is about having choices and being able to manage these while simultaneously handling their progress within HE.

Freedom is also directly related to moving away from home. As Nhlonipho explains: *“when you are free and when you are away from home that is when you can actually be yourself”* [FG] 16. Students regard the HE space as an opportunity to express themselves in various forms, free from family control, *“cause this is a place where I can be myself, do things, write things without my family being on my case”* [Scarlett_Ex] 17. Scarlett and Nhlonipho both stay in university residences, the former off-campus and the latter on-campus.

Freedom for these students is thus directly related to living away from home, and the kind of freedom that this has afforded is freedom to be themselves, free from parental control.

7.3.5 FREEING UP TIME

For students living at home, having friends on campus enables them to enjoy leisure time in HE spaces. In describing her photograph, Razeena said,

[T]hat's just me and my friends... on like... in between lectures and things. That's my quiet time. Well, not quiet time, that's when... like... I can feel like I can laugh and talk, and so that's why the caption is 'Content'. [Razeena_PG] 18

Razeena’s *‘quiet time’* is her leisure time, which she finds in the midst of her academic day whilst waiting for classes. This is a time and a space in which she can relax, have fun with her friends and be able to express her emotions and thoughts freely. The fact that the university provides spaces where one does not need to be productive all the time is also appreciated by Razeena, *“like you don't always have to be in a space that... like... [is] meaningful doing something constructive... like... you could just be sitting around, you know. So it’s very... I like that”* [I1] 19. Productive spaces for Razeena are libraries, tutorial

spaces and lecture rooms which contribute to her academic development. Non-productive spaces are the university lawns and gardens where students socialise outside of the formal academic spaces. Space to be idle and to relax are essential for Razeena, as when she arrives home, she is obliged to help with her siblings and other household chores. There is no time or space for leisure at home.

Another student that lived in cramped home conditions, where she was expected to assist with various chores, stated that the *'freedom to study'* caption on one of the photographs [7B] is something she cannot identify with as an African student. She says,

I don't know, I am not used to... I have never experienced this and it really seems like she does have freedom to study... um... where us Africans we don't have that. Most of us that are not [word not audible] come from family backgrounds that are really low in contrast. We don't experience that. [Mhambi_Ex] 20

Students coming to university from low-income backgrounds do not have the freedom to learn when and how they wish. Their family circumstances often dictate how and what they do with their time when home. Freedom for Mhambi is associated with time, *"yah we don't have... um... time to recover"* [Ex] 20, not necessarily with choice. Mhambi actively decided to move away from home to a commune, thereby severing her family ties in order to claim back time. She explains this as *"shifting from my house, to live in a commune so I get my time"* [Mhambi_Ex] 21. In so doing, she frees herself from family obligations in order to foster her self-development.

The university space allows students access to leisure time as a means to balance the time spent on family expectations when home. Students staying at home learn to balance the needs for self amid the collective responsibility for the family.

7.3.6 FREEING UP CHOICES

7.3.6.1 FREEDOM OF STUDY CHOICE

In terms of study choice, one student noted in relation to parental control that, *"[w]e are still told what we should study, but it's not a way of colonising us"* [Nokwanda_FG] 23. Nokwanda makes a powerful statement about the shift in control from the state to the parent post-apartheid, where parents of colour are now seen as being able to determine and dictate academic paths for their children. They do so in the hopes of securing a better future for their children than they [parents] had while growing up during the apartheid era. Nokwanda's response also highlights parental interference more generally within the study choices students make in coming to HE, where parents regard students as children and not as young adults able to make their own career choices.

For others, parental control might not be so much about what they can study but where they study or where they can live while doing so. A young Muslim student noted that she had no option but to study at an institution near home, yet she had the freedom to choose what she would like to study. Razeena explains,

[t]hey [her parents] wanted me to stay at home, so I did not even apply anywhere else. I did not like that, because that was... kind of... limiting my choices in a way. But, I just went with it. Even through the university choosing process and what to study... things like that... they [her parents] weren't forcing me to do something that - that to everyone is like elite... or something... like that... you know. [Razeena_11] 24-25

Razeena is not able to break her family ties and complies with their request to study closer to home, even though she feels this is restricting her freedom. Her parents set aside community aspirations of a privileged career path for their child to allow her to decide her future academic path. Razeena chose to register for a Bachelor of Arts where she could explore several diverse courses to see where her interests might lie and after that, pursue a more specialised direction.

Students that have been afforded the freedom to choose their university courses themselves sometimes make ill-informed decisions. They sometimes base their choices on a better life and employment opportunities post their tertiary education. Nhlonipho explains, *“right now. I did not get into engineering because I like it; at first, it was because of money and stuff”* [11] 26. His interest in the course was based purely on its income potential as a salaried employee post his university education, rather than a passion for the profession. Nhlonipho views HE as preparing him for the world of work which he equates with financial independence. Razeena, on the other hand, views her HE experience as about making the most of opportunities to discover herself. She is less concerned about where this self-discovery will lead once she leaves HE.

Students make academic choices based on limited knowledge of the career opportunities available to them, what they might enjoy, or what they are eligible for based on their high school academic record. Indeed, the choice of what to study is sometimes not a choice at all, but a matter of accepting whatever the university deems them fit to study or where there are still places available in a particular course.

Freedom of study choice raises some key points about the purpose of HE, as about satisfying parents' aspirations for a better life for their children, students' aspirations for employment post-university, and offering diversity before specialisation.

7.3.6.2 FREEDOM OF FOOD CHOICE

Students have diverse relationships with food on campus. Their socioeconomic status, coupled with their ability to access, choose and determine what and with whom they will eat defines the differences in their experience of the freedom related to food choice.

Students of limited financial means have *limited food choices* on campus. The locations of what is considered by students as cheaper food are relegated to spaces 'down' at the bus stop or under the business concourse, while what is perceived as more expensive food is 'above' the concourse level, spatially segregating students into different socioeconomic groups [Nokwanda_I2] 27-28.

Nokwanda explains that most white students bring food to campus and are very unlikely to buy food 'down' at the bus stop [Nokwanda_I2] 29. Brie notes two reasons for this; firstly, the food on campus is seen as unhealthy and secondly, she avoids buying food as a means to manage her finances [Brie_I1] 30.

Preparing one's food in residence is a cheaper alternative to what the university cafeterias and food outlets offer, but this calls for a more contiguous relationship¹¹ between campus and accommodation. Students return to their residence to cook in a communal kitchen and then go to their bedroom to eat as there are no dining areas or furniture in the kitchen to sit and eat. Eating is relegated to the private space of the residence room, limiting the potential for students to collectively socialise around food.

The social aspect of food is noted by Razeena, who explains that having friends makes access to food spaces on campus and leisure time possible [Razeena_I1] 31. Further attributes required to enjoy these collective spaces but not explicitly noted by participants relate to 'free' time and disposable income. For those that do not have money, sitting on the periphery of food spaces, looking in or in the park looking out, renders them observers of others rather than active participants in the activities around them. As Menzi noted,

No, I am not sitting toward the cafeteria. I am sitting more toward the side there closer to the edge of that place there. Nah, I have gotten able to sit in an environment where they are doing what they are doing, and I am doing completely the opposite. That does not bother me.
[Menzi_I1] 32

Questioned as to what he meant by 'opposite', Menzi explained, "[t]hey are eating, and I am not eating." [Menzi_I1] 32. Menzi is highlighting that his non-participation is related to his inability to afford the food. This is a typical example of food insecurity which he mediates through vicarious eating, in

¹¹ As discussed in *Immobilising and Mobilising* where Nhlonipho moved onto campus to enable this.

other words, looking at others eating. For Menzi, the long term mental and social effects of disassociated communal engagement around eating and sharing are yet to be revealed.

Food choice also raises issues with regard to the university's policies on the consolidation of *food spaces and small businesses owned by student entrepreneurs*. These businesses afford students an income to support their meagre scholarships or government funding. Student entrepreneurs use university resources such as well foot-trafficked space, the internet, accommodation spaces, other students as employees and extended networks on campus to further their business opportunities. Management, which is sensitive to students' need to earn an income, often turn a blind eye to such practices. However, this does not stop student-led businesses from sometimes facing harassment by the university security services when they trade outside the lecture venues.

Student entrepreneurs need permission to operate on the campus and they have to do so in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated by the Student Services Development Company [SSDC], a university-owned company that manages all university commercial spaces. In 2018 three entrepreneurs (Executive Director Student Services, 2018) had permission to trade on campus, although several others were visible on campus selling baked goods, sweets and chips. If students traded illegally and were caught doing so they were likely to have their goods confiscated by university security and prohibited from further trading.

University administration consolidated the student-led businesses in 2018 within a business concourse¹² in which they now had to pay rent and compete within the same space and price range as established private businesses. In combining these student-led enterprises, the administration took away two of the student entrepreneurs' key competitive advantages, their adaptability and accessibility to their clientele, crippling their ability to operate as successfully as they had before.

With regard to the *adaptability of student-led food enterprises*, they were flexible enough to adjust to varying student flows throughout the day as well as their clients' changing food and drink requirements. As the length of time spent on campus increased between term time and exams, so too did students' need to study for longer hours, and the muffins, chips and fruit sold during the day would be replaced by energy drinks in late afternoon trade. In terms of *accessibility*, these student-led enterprises located themselves near the entrance and exit to a concourse connecting several lecture theatres, in and out of which many students would regularly move throughout the day. These factors, along with not paying rent, were probably perceived as unfair competition to the established businesses on campus that paid

¹² It is speculated that the reason for consolidating student-run businesses, which were selling food in various locations across the campus was to address health and safety related issues.

rent for their stores yet were located some distance away from the busy concourse. Furthermore, the university administration needed to comply with health and safety regulations regarding the making and selling of food on campus, which was probably difficult to manage when student entrepreneurs had no fixed location from which to trade.

Freedom of food choice both in the purchasing and in the selling thereof is ultimately defined by students' *spending power* and by student entrepreneurs' ability to navigate university bureaucracy. Freedom of food choice and associated spaces not only speaks of inequality but also about the opportunity for engagement with others across socio-economic classes where those with limited means remain on the periphery perpetuated by the logic of the location of food spaces themselves.

7.3.7 CONCLUDING COMMENTS: *CONTROLLING FREEDOM*

Controlling refers to a spatiality as conceived by cultural, parental and institutional systems [housing allocation, regulation of student businesses, timetabling, and acceptance protocols] which impose structures to regulate access, time, actions, space and choice. *Freeing* is with regard to students being enabled to have independent thought, actions and decisions in order to gain access to time and space for themselves. The theme of *controlling and freeing* is thus fundamentally about how students negotiate their interpersonal relationships with peers, parents and the institution itself through the *spatial practices of exclusion and inclusion* [withdrawing, boundary forming, peripheralising] in order to make time and space for *self and academics*.

For example, interpersonal relationships play themselves out in the private space of the bedroom, where several spatial practices can occur simultaneously or concurrently, namely, studying, sleeping, relaxing and socialising. The bedroom is a physical space constructed out of the interrelations and interactions between the collective [family, friends, and peers] and the individual [student/s]. The door serves as the controlling device for the inclusion or exclusion of the social relations and practices that might wish to flow in or be kept out. Students manage this threshold in order to gain leisure time and space for themselves. If it is not possible to assume control of access to the physical space of the bedroom, social media offers an alternative means of freeing themselves into a virtual space.

Students also seem to peripheralise their relationships in spaces in which they do not have the financial means to participate or to change. Inequality with regard to the access of certain groups of students to specific spaces, most notably leisure and food-related, raises a concern with regard to the potential of different groups of students to engage over everyday activities such as food (Dominguez-Whitehead & Whitehead, 2014, p. 65). Students' experiences of inequality are thus primarily mediated by the

financial resources at their disposal, providing varied potential experiences of what it means to be a member of a HE community.

Within this HE community, students are always trying to negotiate the impositions and the freedoms that university life brings, to live more balanced lives. They are doing so by attempting to make better use of their time not only academically but also socially by finding common ground in their residences to be more conducive to learning and by connecting with others on campus to enhance relational experiences.

Controlling

- A** Controlling freedom when staying at home
- B** Controlling where to live when leaving home
- C** Controlling freedom when away from home



Photograph 5B
My relaxing space this is where I get my energy back



Photograph 6B
Get out of my room...oh this is your room too



Figure 7.3 Controlling: Descriptive sheet with truncated transcripts vignettes and photographs

Freeing

Controlling and Freeing

I had moved to a commune to get my own space as home was pretty crowded. Four of us living in one room and many chores to do when I got home meant I had no time or space to study.
[Mhambi_Ex] 21

I now share a room with one other person in a commune.
[Ulwazi_Ex] 9

I struggled a bit with the freedom you have in a commune it's not like back at home. We can be ourselves; there is no one telling us what to do when to do it and how to behave. Which means it can be difficult to work sometimes. To make it work in the commune, we have to respect one another. We all work here, so we have to get along. We discuss what we like and what we don't like, and we take it from there.
[Ulwazi_Ex] 10

Now I walk, from campus to the commune it takes me about 30 minutes and by the time I get to my room and have cooked, eaten and cleaned I am too tired to study.
[Mhambi_Ex] 21



Photograph 6C
Content



Photograph 7B
Freedom to Study (and at times sleep) be mobile, relax and be myself



Photograph 3C
The Future Background

A Freeing as independence away from home

B Freeing up time

C Freeing up choices

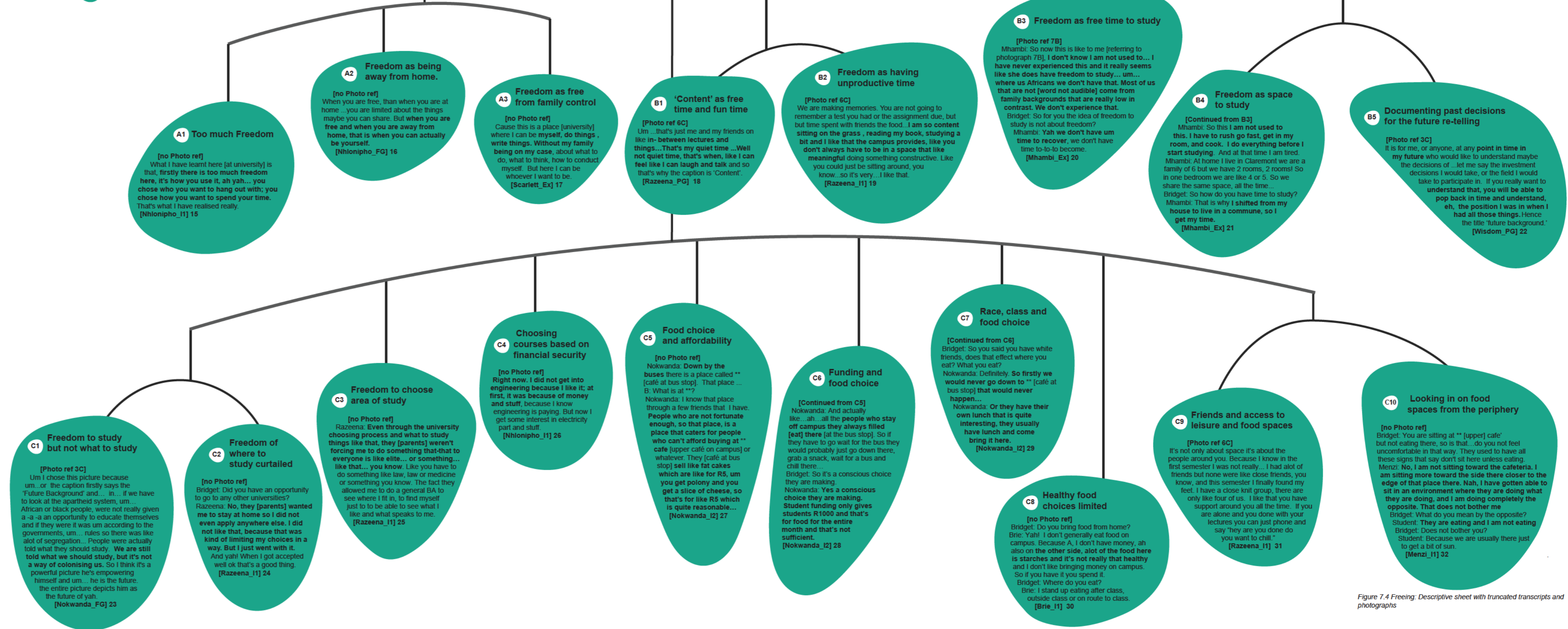


Figure 7.4 Freeing: Descriptive sheet with truncated transcripts and photographs

7.4 STUDYING AND PLANNING EXPLAINED AND EXPLORED

Studying and planning are viewed as contributing to institutional [academic] and personal [non-academic] mobility. *Studying* is a necessary activity that needs to be performed in order to learn the knowledge and skills required to meet HE expectations. This section explores the *spatiality of studying* through the nature of *learning environments* and *learning relationships* within HE spaces. Studying is of a temporal nature but has a tendency when expectations are seen as too high to infiltrate into students' academic and non-academic lives. It is at these times that there is a need for additional support in order for students to persevere with their studies (Manik, 2015). During intense periods of studying [end of term and exam times] high demands are placed on scarce resources such as suitable learning spaces, which students cleverly manage through an understanding of the institution's scheduling of time.

Planning is about students' future non-academic self, and preparations for their *life of work* outside of HE prepared for while inside HE. Planning could be seen as learnings [about possible employment options] for the future or the realisation of *future learning* suspended until a student's studies are complete. Planning is, however, not learning as contained in the classroom (Leander, Phillips, & Taylor, 2010) and determined by a predefined curriculum; it is a learning that occurs on the run, in virtual and physical space and is discovered in contrast to being imposed through the curriculum.

Planning is the ability to move through and find a pathway out of HE, which is dependent on students' ability to *identify with a particular path* which they discover through *access to resources*, such as the internet, people and other programmes that the institution might offer. Planning is more than a cognitive activity; it is also about making a concerted effort in the present to align their non-academic self with learning networks [virtual networks] to establish a learning trajectory [identity construction] for the *future* (Leander, Phillips, & Taylor, 2010).

The flexibility of the student's pathway is affected by the institutional policies, the structure of the built environment and the pathways prescribed by the institution itself (Stevens, O'Connor, Garrison, Jocus, & Amos, 2008). Studying is structured into the *institutional pathway* while planning is an *independent pathway*; these two pathways through HE are mutually dependant though not necessarily related to each other.

Thinking and learning can occur across space and time, not just in particular contained spaces. Learning contexts (Leander, Phillips, & Taylor, 2010) are viewed as more fluid and varying for students' individual needs. However, in referring to where studying and planning take place, students mention very specific

HE spaces for each purpose. This research did not focus on formal spaces of teaching and learning such as lecture and tutorial venues. The spaces that were spoken about in relation to studying were libraries and the micro place of the student desk, while planning spaces were the general LANS and students' bedrooms.

7.4.1 STUDYING AND HE EXPECTATIONS

Studying is a learning activity that all students are expected to perform if they are to progress at university [See Figure 7.5]. It can involve several activities, often defined by lecturers' expectations that students need to perform within a specific time frame and in a particular form. It could include reading or learning content, and preparing assignments and presentations. A student describes how studying starts well but gradually becomes more disorganised as,

the semester goes on... like you start off feeling like all prepared and stuff and like ahead of the game, and then by the time that the end of the semester comes, you just... sort of... churning out your stuff. [Brie_PG] 1

The confidence gained through preplanning is lost as the semester progresses, and workloads increase incrementally. Keeping up with the production requirements of university seems to be out of this student's control, or out of control for the student. The consequent emotional and physical impact on her study space is apparent in this student's reading of her photograph [7C], which illustrates the perceived disorderliness that arises in the process. In the process of production for HE expectations, students learn to negotiate both time and what to prioritise.

Brie's contribution to the concept of studying highlights the need for student submissions and assignments for assessment to be spread out across the semester and not all expected at the end of a semester, thereby overburdening students when already under pressure to study for exams.

This aspect of frantic production is reiterated in other students' readings of the image of the young woman at her untidy desk [Photograph number 7C], "*lots of things, she has to do*", "*work is piling up*" [Hloni_FG] 2, "*busy lives within university*" [Menzi_FG] 3 and "*start doing now*" [Sipho_FG] 4.

Student life is seen as chaotic and troubled, needing to be both self-managed and scheduled to specific timeframes and deliverables. Another participant refers to "*so much happening around even at school*" [Hloni_FG] 2, which suggests that life outside of campus impacts students' lives just as much as life on campus. Another noted issue is the stress that lies in actually producing the work, but less so in the thinking required to support the effort. The aspect of production thus begins to supersede the demand for cognitive growth amongst students [Sipho_FG] 4.

These interpretations do not suggest anything about excelling in academic endeavours, but purely refer to production; as noted by one reader, *“she is determined to finish her work”* [Hloni_FG] 2, in response to a demanding or controlling *“Higher Education system”* [Hloni_FG] 2. One of the participants remarks that failure is the consequence of not working or taking ownership of their epistemic trajectory – *“flop”* [Razeena_FG] 5. Another mentions that we *“get too much assignments get depression”* [Bafana_Ex] 6 and that future-gazing¹³ serves as a means to stay focussed and maintain well-being.

Students’ lives seem to be spiralling out of control to meet academic demands, allowing little time to do anything but study. However, in the process, the doing aspect of studying is swallowing the potential for learning. Students have developed coping mechanisms to manage these demands, but not necessarily to manage their lives holistically. This means that their coping mechanisms contribute to perpetuating the demands of the system, sometimes at the expense of their well-being.

7.4.2 STUDYING WHERE AND WHEN

Spatially, students locate studying in particular places at home, in their residences or on campus and also relate it to specific scheduled times. The student in the image sitting at her desk said, *“this is my life; every single day I literally spend my time studying. If I don’t, if I am not doing something else, like swimming, then I am studying in my spare time”* [Brie_PG] 7. Every moment not filled with some or other activity is a time to study. The reference to spare time suggests that even time meant for leisure is occupied with studying. Students working from home study in their bedrooms or in the lounge or dining room when everyone has gone to sleep. This is when the house is quiet, and there are no distractions.

The campus buses’ arrival and departure schedules affect who uses which spaces and when for studying on campus. *“I go to the law library when off-campus students leave to catch the 4:30 pm bus; if I miss this time I know, I can only go after 11 pm when the last bus leaves for off-campus students”* [Nozipho_Ex] 9. The ebbs and flows of off-campus students leaving to catch the last bus signal the inflow of on-campus students arriving to fill their void. This knowledge of arrival and departure times is evident in conversations around sought after study spaces such as the law library.

On-campus students associate studying spaces with libraries and LANs, but not just any library or LAN. As one student relates, *“it’s very noisy here in the LANs; they watch movies even in exam times, watch soaps, watch ‘Generations’, and all the series. As a student, you can’t function. You can’t tell someone to keep the noise down”* [Sibongile_Ex] 10. Students feel that they cannot dictate the behaviour of others and therefore rely on authority figures to manage the environment. Sibongile gives an example

¹³ Literally out of his window and figuratively toward his future.

of the main library on one particular floor which is considered well managed, thereby making it the best space to work on her laptop, *“in the library it’s much better because there is also Sharon,¹⁴ on level 3, she monitors silence and keeps quiet”* [Sibongile_Ex] 10. Students who do not have access to laptops have to work in the LANs which is not ideal if intense concentration is required to study.

Many students enjoy working in the law library: *“I am able to focus in this space”* [Nozipho_Ex] 8 and it is *“comfortable it’s warm... um... compared to the main library which is a bit cold”* [Thadie_Ex] 11. This space is seen as conducive to learning and providing an excellent quality environment which students actively seek out even though they are not law students.

A participant compared the law library and the LAN space:

law library... is a little bit quiet, is a humbling place to be... in other places [referring to the LAN] I see students struggling with their own work and I will also be struggling with my own work, I don't feel motivated when seeing people working like that. So in the law library, I think people just mind their own business. [Wisdom_I1] 12

Self-motivation and productivity are bolstered in spaces that enable independent self-study. Part of the appeal of the law library space lies in its architecture that encourages self-study through furniture design and in the management thereof which one student articulates as

[f]irst of all the comfy chair and the design of the tables and the screens...it makes it clear that it is your space and you can tell you are at the library. I am doing my own work. This space makes you feel like you are alone. The discipline here and in the other library is not the same. [Nozipho_Ex] 9

In contrast to the library, the LAN is an open plan space with long rows of desks with computers on top. Whatever students are doing in the space is visible to others, which as Wisdom indicated, is both distracting and demotivating. Wisdom will purposefully go to the LAN of his discipline when he needs help as he will find peers who can assist him with something that he may not have been able to address. Such support is reciprocal as he makes himself available to offer support, as was observed on the morning that we took photographs in the LAN. Peer learning is strengthened in spaces that enable collaboration yet are not ideal for individual study.

So when I am now struggling perhaps with my calculations... I then have to go to the [name deleted] LAN. There I meet a couple of colleagues who are doing engineering just like myself. Most of the people studying my course... with me... are sitting there. So whenever I feel I cannot handle this on my own, I go there to find somebody to help me. [Wisdom_I2] 13

¹⁴ A pseudonym.

Peer learning and individual learning necessitate different kinds of learning environments. Nevertheless, providing the physical space is not enough; *student comfort* and a means to *regulate the activities* that happen in that environment, who has access to it and when is also required — achieved through proper design of the space, comfortable furniture and by some form of monitoring of the space.

7.4.3 MICRO PLACE OF STUDYING - THE DESK

Students working from home, a commune or in their residence rooms all relate to their desk and the objects displayed on it as significant signs of being a student in HE. The messy desk seen in Photograph 7C titled ‘Messy but I think there is a method to the madness’ was something most students could relate to,

my room... my workspace. It's like organised chaos, it's like you find things scattered everywhere. But I know where everything else is. It's like yeah. You live on your table. You live on your table. It's not a huge space, but like you kind of relate to it... you know... you make the best of it.
[Msizi_Ex] 15

The space to work contracts as the need to meet deadlines takes precedence, and things begin to pile up on the desk. Working within these limited spatial constraints becomes accepted as normalised student life – “*life of a student*” [Msizi_Ex] 15, which is not what this student imagined student life to be. The student life represented in university advertising failed to reveal any of the struggles students face in meeting the institution’s production expectations [Msizi_Ex] 15. They were sold a dream that masked the reality of the toil required to achieve it.

The desk is also associated with other symbols of academic life, such as the time table, the exam time table and the academic calendar. In describing her room, one participant referred to the calendar as “*to know... like... to be organised. So this is what I need to do, this is what I need to submit. An abstract or anything like that*” [Hloni_I1] 16. Controlling time helps Hloni to manage herself in order to meet deadlines. In capturing the photograph of her room, Hloni wanted to include the calendar because it represented “*the time that I have been there. I just want to meet the deadline*” [Hloni_I2] 16.

As Hloni notes in reading the photograph [7C] of the young woman at her desk, “*have their calendar now. They are now sorting out their work now. Working on their assignment. They are now getting into the higher education system, now. They will have assignments, there will be tutorials that are due*” [Hloni_FG] 2.

The calendar and time tables are the mechanisms to order time to deliver on work and assignments that are due and are representative of “*getting into the Higher Education system*” [Hloni_FG] 2. Higher education is viewed as a structure that students willingly or unwillingly subject themselves to when they succumb to its demands.

The objects that surround the desk are symbolic of knowing the time, studying and realising deliverables according to mechanical time that is structured by HE to meet institutional expectations. The messy desk is then symbolic of the lived reality of the student, where some students prioritise meeting HE expectations over and above time for anything else, let alone leisure time.

7.4.4 OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING STUDYING

Studying is affected by external factors such as finances and access to proper nutrition, both of which can impact on maintaining the institutional pathway. The institutional pathway can also be cut short when students are excluded if they are unable to pay their fees or to perform academically. The consequence of exclusion is noted in this response, “*so because I studied for... like... a semester and then the following year, I did not study, when I came back like I was no longer... like really... interested in everything*” [Nandi_Ex] 17.

The student’s time away from campus and not being able to study was not only a loss of time in waiting to return but also a severing of her connection to her education, with which she could not re-connect when she ‘*came back*’ to it. Her emphasis on not being able to study indicates the debilitating effect of this break and its present consequences within the HE environment. Her body has returned to campus but mentally, she is not ready for her studies. A state of limbo, in waiting for her studies to resume, has consumed her, incapacitating her beyond just academics but also her hopes, dreams and desires as she says she is ‘*no longer interested in everything*’, and does not know what she “*enjoys, likes or wants*” [Nandi_Ex] 17. The past is affecting her future by weakening her ability to engage with her present self.

Exclusion and the subsequent process of reintegration is a stumbling block for many students’ successful assimilation back into student life. The revolving door into and out of university is a reality for many struggling students.

Two first-year students articulated the struggles that students face in terms of the external factors that affect their performance in studying,

the life that they [students] are going through, the things they are going through, the real life. Because it's not only academics, because your background can also affect the way that you

perform in your studying. You could be beautiful in a R2 000 weave,¹⁵ and you got your makeup on, not knowing that you have not eaten. That's how we hide; your physical image hides the reality. [Sifiso+Lungelo_Ex] 18

Students face many hardships while studying relating to where they have come from, what they experience in their daily lives and the struggles they confront. They are simultaneously trying to sustain themselves on campus and to disguise their reality to better integrate into campus life. In Sifiso and Lungelo's view, students do not speak about not having any money to eat; they only speak about things that are "out there" which are in the public domain such as "academics and entertainment" [Sifiso+Lungelo_Ex] 18. The opportunity for more intimate conversations between students in the university is limited and challenging to generate where relationships with other students are often superficial and fleeting. The lived reality of students' backgrounds and how it is affecting their academic performance is only realised through discrete interaction at the level of the individual. In order to address this reality, Sifiso and Lungelo suggest that universities should focus on the individual's mental and physical well-being, not just on academic support. They thus re-direct responsibility to management to address what they regard as an institutional problem that students cannot successfully address alone.

Students are part of the problem, with many adopting lifestyles that are unsustainable, yet aspired to in the process of assimilation in student life. This has dire consequences for their well-being and academic performance.

The assimilation process into and back into university affects students' non-academic selves as much as it affects their academic ones. Their priorities and needs shift to address this change. They opt for cosmetic changes over sustaining factors such as food and other necessities to maintain the illusion that they are living a well-balanced and successful life. The illusion eventually reveals itself, as their ability to study is impacted upon and their academic performance drops. They are thereby unmasking the reality of the limited potential for real success in progressing through HE.

This discussion highlighted the need to more effectively address the process of assimilation both on first entry and re-entry into university in order to ensure more successful integration into the university for the development of students' academic and non-academic self. This would contribute to generating environments that are sensitive to students' needs and enabling. The process would require both administrative support and students peer-to-peer interaction, formulated as a co-responsibility agenda. Such mutual responsibility would assist in identifying and supporting students in need.

¹⁵ A specific hairstyle.

7.4.5 SHIFTING FOCUS FROM STUDYING TO PLANNING

Students' pathways for studying and planning diverge at times and priority is placed on one over the other for whatever reason [See Figure 7.6]. Where the pathway for planning becomes a priority, it is usually financially motivated. The student with a business on campus who was registered for his tenth semester of study knew he was on route to being academically excluded when I interviewed him in 2018. Our interview revealed that he knew that his studying pathway was coming to an end, while his planning pathway outside of HE was opening up possibilities. He rationalised his lack of interest in academics as follows:

Since I started business, I have been lacking on my academics and... but... maybe someone would see this as a bad thing, and I won't be able to get my junior degree in geography. If you want a car, you need money to buy a car. If you want a house, you need money. [Dumiso_11] 19

University enabled his entrepreneurial skills to flourish; he learnt to operate a successful business while on campus. Polarising his academic failure and his entrepreneurial success is not the best way to view his university experience, as one at the expense of the other. Rather, what the HE environment enabled him to achieve in the present and will continue to do in setting up his trajectory for the future, should be recognised.

Making money became a priority for Dumiso, and was necessary based on his background, which he briefly shared. In his first year of study, he was financially excluded when his parents passed away. He applied for financial aid to return to university, using R700 of this money to start his business. Through the income earned from his business, he was able to support his two siblings' material needs [clothes and food] while they were in college.

When I interviewed him in 2018, he spoke of plans to open a bakery in his granny's home in Umlazi, to service customers in the township and at the university, as well as opening a juice bar on campus and studying further in business administration at a private college. Dumiso did not return to campus or his business on campus in 2019.

Students sometimes need to give preference to income generation to support their material needs or those of their family members, over studying for a degree. This suggests that entrepreneurial activities could be viewed not as a deficit to student's education but as another learning process that could occur within the formal curriculum. The campus administration could support and foster an entrepreneurial spirit through re-examining university policies, programmes and space allocation to enable students to support themselves while studying.

7.4.6 PLANNING AS PUTTING IDEAS DOWN TO ACT ON THEM AT A LATER STAGE

If studying is viewed relative to academics and driven by institutional requirements to meet deadlines, planning is seen to be about longer-term life goals and ambitions. Planning is noted in the conversations with students as putting ideas down or on the wall, exploring future possibilities, not knowing, coming to know, making sense of things, going back and re-looking.

A photograph [3C] that is understood by students, and explained by its author as relating to 'planning' is of a man pointing at some notes on the wall. Wisdom explains the photograph as,

most of the time... I spent my time here on campus and... I do not have such personal space, where I could do all my plannings. Most of the items on that border are in my own way what I perceive to be my perspectives, in search of the current affairs and the problems that I wish to somehow interactively deal with when I get out of this institution. [Wisdom_PG] 21

These ideas keep accumulating as notes on his wall; ideas and thoughts that address contemporary concerns that he does not want to forget. Yet the activation or realisation of these ideas is constrained by both the physical space of his residence room and by wanting to finish his studies first. In obtaining a degree, he would not only be freeing himself from his institutional obligations; he would also be free to tackle ideas that are of direct interest to him as well as society as a whole.

The small rooms that students have access to and in which they spend a great deal of time are their only private space, which is further limited when students share rooms. Making space to pin up ideas and thoughts to re-look and build upon them regularly is very difficult to achieve in the current university accommodation. There is thus potential for the institution to review space allocation and increase students' private space to retreat to when need be, to think and generate or accumulate ideas.

Wisdom explains further as to what is written and attached to the wall,

it is for me, or anyone, at any point in time, in my future, who would like to understand maybe the decisions of... let me say... the investment decisions I would take, or the field I would take to participate in. If you really want to understand that, you will be able to pop back in time and understand... eh... the position I was in, when I had all those things. Hence the title 'Future Background.' [Wisdom_PG] 22

What is on the wall is both a road map for Wisdom for his future becoming as well as an explanation to others that follow, as to the decisions he might make in the present that will define his future. Wisdom illustrates how his current situation and the issues that he is exposed to are mediating the relationship

between the future and the past. The present will become the past and will serve as a record for the future.

In the plenary discussion, the person in the photograph [3D] is identified as “*empowering himself*” [Nokwanda_FG] 23 not just by being at university and gaining knowledge, but by taking control and ownership of his future. A student in the focus group interpreted the notes on the wall as a means to document their goals because it is crucial to understand where they are going in life. Hloni’s explanation is as follows, “*so this person now... is... has a plan on the ground. Because as a student you need to have goals, you need to have aims, you need to know your purpose, you need to know where you are going*” [Hloni_FG] 24.

This student firmly believed in having a sense of direction; ‘*you need to know where you are going*’ and to know ‘*your purpose*’; in other words, the end goal. Hloni held the view that in making your goals visible and establishing precise time frames and deliverables for achieving these goals, you will unequivocally become what you set out to become.

Possessing their future is very much rooted in management of the present. Planning can be integral to students’ academic pathway or can inform their non-academic pathway. Planning requires not only the space to generate ideas but the physical and mental space to imagine and actualise them. For students, planning ahead serves as a conscious road map for their *aspirations* as well as a guide for others to follow. The concept of ‘Becoming’ which is related to planning for aspirations is discussed further in Chapter eight.

7.4.7 PLANNING FOR A CHANGE IN STUDY PATH

Planning and studying assume a linear trajectory, in that students know what they are doing or where they are going and the necessary steps that need to be taken to get there. This does not take into consideration that many students who come to campus, find that this is not the career path for them and that they then need to discover alternate paths. Langa clarifies, “*it’s more like I got here and whatever I did, it made me realise the thing I really want to do in [the] future*” [Langa_Ex] 27, while Nhlonipho said, “*I am in that state where I am trying to find my passion...I am half way there. I have some things that I am really interested in*” [Nhlonipho_I1] 28.

Arriving on campus can serve as a pivotal moment for students in which they realise that the course they are studying is neither their passion, nor is there any guarantee of it securing them a job after university. Students then sit in limbo trying to identify what interests them. In this in-between state, they spend time looking for their passion while trying to maintain their academic performance.

Entrepreneurialism often came to the fore in these discussions, wherein students indicated how university resources such as people and the internet were useful in helping them to recognise their interests.

Access gained to the university could be viewed as a passport into a space that offers resources in which to hopefully find one's passion and search for self-employment opportunities. These resources are preparing the student for life after campus, not necessarily life in campus. What follows below is a discussion on how students utilise the resources the university offers in the process of planning for their future.

Some of the students were astute enough to realise that resources that are offered on campus can assist them in trying to find their passion, such as the internet where *“even if you chose a wrong path here you can also have access to the Internet there are lot’s of answers there”* [Nhlonipho_I1] 30. The internet serves as a means to compensate for a poor career path choice or a degree that is not of their choosing.

These resources are not limited to the internet but include particular LAN spaces, particularly general LANs that are not specific to a discipline. Nhlonipho explains why he uses the general LAN,

I chose that one. I am now in a phase where I am trying to find myself a place where I can be... without the pressure of someone who is doing this, and not started that... that occurs in the engineering LAN. [Nhlonipho_I1] 29

Finding a space away from other students registered for his course and hence free from the pressure to perform, enables him to be himself, thereby creating an ideal environment for his planning. The reason students prefer utilising the general LANs is that they don't associate these spaces with the responsibility to fulfil academic expectations [such as completing assignments and readings], a practice which they regard as stressful and associate with utilising the discipline-specific LANs.

Furthermore, Nhlonipho sees the internet, not his education, as a means to find out who one really is and what one wishes to be: *“this where you find who you truly are”* [Nhlonipho_Ex] 30. When I asked him how his education could do this he responded,

Nah high school doesn't, even university doesn't. You decide you have access to the Internet here... eh... you can search whatever you want... you like. If you are interested in sport you can research about it, if you are interested in photography you can research about it, if you are interested in architecture you can research about it. [Nhlonipho_Ex] 30

Nhlonipho's home and prior schooling experience were in a rural area of South Africa on the border of Mozambique where internet access was limited. Access to the internet upon coming to university, was life-changing. In the confines of the university with free internet access, he could explore many interests.

The internet can therefore empower students with knowledge in many fields of interest and career paths, assisting them in identifying possible alternate career paths from those which they currently find themselves in. However, such exploration can only occur in environments in which they feel relaxed and free to discover different interests.

Nhlonipho also believes that the answers for one's future becoming lie in what the internet has to offer and that the internet transcends financial and spatial barriers. He [Nhlonipho_FG] 31 explains that *"where you are [referring to his rural background] does not restrict you, does not determine how your life will be. You are the decider. Even the money does not limit you."*

The internet liberated Nhlonipho from several barriers that defined him, i.e., his past and his financial situation. His past as situated within the deprived and poorly resourced rural area, and the uncertainty of his present situation can be overcome through the acknowledgement that the decisions and choices he makes in the present will ultimately determine his future, not his past. The emphasis is on his agency to shape the future. The power students ascribe to the internet in resolving life issues is somewhat unsettling. It is not clear what students are capable of doing with the new knowledge that they glean from the internet and whether they use this vast information resource efficiently or effectively.

Internet access is sometimes abused. Langa [Ex_25] acknowledges that when he first arrived on campus he abused this privilege *"yah... I come from the rural areas and the Internet, that that blew my mind... out there."* Access to the internet is new for many students arriving on campus from under-resourced areas. A whole new digital world opens up for them and they devour this resource. Once the novelty has worn off, students learn to use the internet more responsibly. Langa says he now uses the internet to *"search for stuff that relates to what I want to do"* as you *"don't realise the importance of them that could provide out there in the world"* [Langa_Ex] 26. As the pure entertainment value of internet use wanes, students begin to realise how it can be more purposeful and have a broader impact beyond the university in the working world.

A student's life beyond university can be enabled by the internet and the people they meet while on campus. As Langa explains, these are the 'other' resources that students have access to on campus

which can have long-term impacts on their life post university in the working world. Langa clarifies further,

other stuff you get here are the ones that actually means a lot, that would actually carry out throughout your life, like the people you meet. Yeah, the... I mean some have mentors that are here, and all of those friends... um... the right people you meet maybe your partner in business.

[Langa_Ex] 25

Meeting the 'right people' through or in the university is a critical resource for students. These introductions could lead to relationships with mentors that provide academic and business support to students or lead to potential business partnerships.

Certain people on the internet can also serve as virtual mentors in contrast to or alongside the physical mentoring opportunities enabled on campus by the happenstance of being in the same space and time. The people on the internet are seen as *"interesting there, and we can learn from them how they do it"* [Nhlonipho_I1] 31.

The internet is an invaluable resource for students not only in what they can learn from it but whom they can learn from, through this platform. In using the internet as a means to support their planning for the future, students are hoping to be masters of their own destiny. Their formal education will be there, but there is no guarantee that it will be useful to them once they graduate.

The paths students set out to study in coming to university and what they end up planning to do when they leave are not necessarily aligned. Recognising this potential for divergence in their pathway is an exciting way to look at university as a portal to resources which allows students to explore self-directed learning in other avenues of study or interest not confined to their discipline or field. Pathways are re-stitched through access to resources as opposed to being broken by incompatibility between studying demands and planning desires.

This highlights the importance that the internet and people play in supporting students' academic and non-academic pathways through HE. Furthermore, students have the potential to access resources in HE to enable their working life outside of it. These include access to social networks, the internet both for content and for access to key influencers, and, very importantly, access to space in which they are free from the pressure to perform.

7.4.8 CONCLUDING COMMENTS: *STUDYING TO STAY OR PLANNING TO LEAVE*

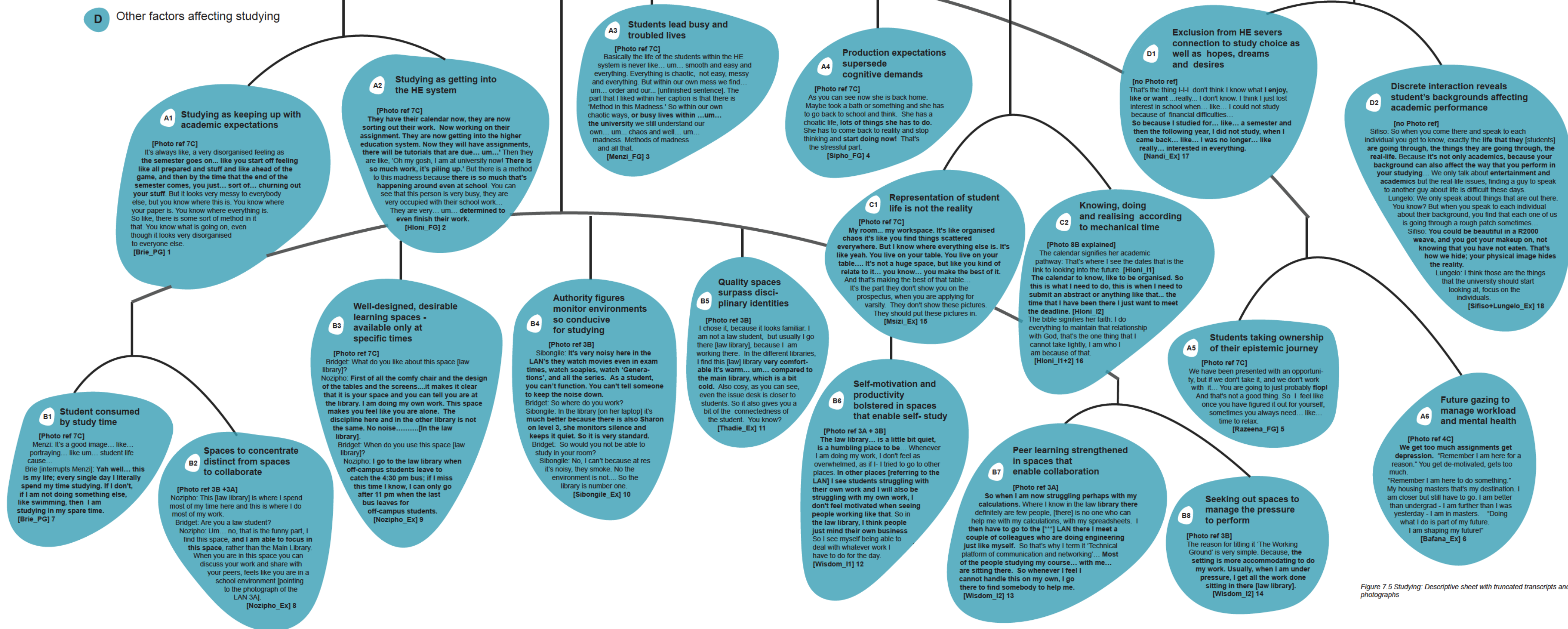
Studying refers to an institutional system of managing, and the practice of maintaining curriculum outcomes and expectations. The practice of studying is predominantly *production* orientated, as noted by the negative connotations of churning out and piling up, which are caught in the present realities of the life of a student. The most obvious signifier of being a student is the *messy desk*. Institutional systems themselves impact on the spatiality of studying through the management and design of learning spaces and the timing of space use through calendars and schedules. Factors that debilitate the practice of studying are university policies of exclusions, both financial and academic, incompatible roommate allocation and inadequate financial resources.

In contrast, planning is with regard to the discovery of new practices and knowledge's that can contribute to new learning relations and *new future possibilities* in life. Resources such as the internet and networks of people serve as alternate knowledge sources and as a possible means of securing a better future outside of HE.

These experiences suggest that studying and present and future life choices are consistently in dialogical entanglement. Students' university life experiences are sometimes mediated to a large degree by finding possibilities to eek out financial stability, or even income generation to sustain their presence in this environment. The theme of *Studying and Planning* thus speaks to a divergence in pathways, as one of being stuck in the present *real-life issues* of being a student, while at the same time attempting to move forward with regard to future *possibilities and aspirations*.

Studying

- A** Studying and HE expectations
- B** Studying where and when...
- C** Micro place of studying - the desk
- D** Other factors affecting studying



Photograph 7C
Messy but I think there is method to the madness



Photograph 4C
I may not have not reached my destination yet but I am closer than I was yesterday



Photograph 3A
Technical platform of communication and networking



Photograph 3B
The Working Ground



Photograph 8B
Faith and Education

Figure 7.5 Studying: Descriptive sheet with truncated transcripts and photographs



Photograph 3C
The Future Background



Photograph 5B
My relaxing space this is where I get my energy back

Studying and Planning

I got to the law library late last night around 11pm after the last campus bus left for the night, taking with it the off campus students.

[Nozipho_Ex] 8

I don't like working in our LAN everyone looks stressed out, how can I work like that when everyone is struggling.

[Wisdom_PG] 12

It's quiet and comfortable here, in the library, so I managed to finish my assignment for today I will drop it off soon and then you can come and see my room and the ideas I have on my wall. It's a quick 5min walk to my res room. It's a small space my room but it's all mine with my ideas on big sheets of paper that fill one whole wall.

[Wisdom_PG] 20

They are just some ideas I am playing with, some things I would like to work on when I have completed my studies.

[Wisdom_PG] 21

I have some ideas about recycling and other business opportunities. Other than that which is on the wall the only other things in the room that belong to me are a small bar fridge, a kettle and toaster. If I want to cook I use the communal kitchen. I didn't know how to cook when I came here but I soon learnt how to cook for myself. I now cook a big pot of food that will last a few days, I just need to warm it up when I want some.

I have been here for nine semesters now and still don't have my undergraduate degree, I will be academically excluded if I don't pass this semester. I have been here longer than I should of because I came here after being accepted for engineering but I found out along the way that I did not like engineering so I am trying something else to see if this could be my passion.

[Nhlonipho_11] 30

A Shifting focus from Studying to Planning

B Planning as putting down ideas to act on them at a later stage

C Planning for change in study path

A1 Preference given to income for the future - over gaining a degree

[No Photo ref]
Since I started business, I have been lacking on my academics and... but... maybe someone would see this as a bad thing, and I won't be able to get my junior degree in geography. If you want a car, you need money to buy a car. If you want a house, you need money.

[Dumiso_11] 19

B1 Self-assessing cognitive growth

[Photo ref 3C]
Wisdom: OK, if you get into my room you would find something like this, a room with papers pasted and ideas. I call them my thinking box. I like to think of them like that. I think that is the most identifiable thing you can find in my room, other than my laptop and my small speakers.
Bridget: Are they stickers?
Wisdom: It's not stickers they are A0 papers I think three of them pasted on to the wall. So every now and then when I have an idea that intrigues me and then I write it down. Then I come back to reflect again to see, to see how I am thinking is there any growth, any direction. Is there any ideas I can harness from those thoughts. I like to see everything at once.

[Wisdom_11] 20

B2 Planning limited by spatial constraints and by inability to actualise ideas while within HE

[Photo ref 3C]
[Most of the time... I spent my time here on campus and... I do not have such personal space, where I could do all my plans and a... And why did I title it 'Future Background' is because most of the items on that border are in my own way what I perceive to be my perspectives, in search of the current affairs and the problems that I wish to somehow interactively deal with when I get out of this institution.

[Wisdom_PG] 21

B3 Planning a road map for the future and a blueprint for those that come after

[Photo ref 3C]
[It is for me, or anyone, at any point in time, in my future, who would like to understand maybe the decisions of... let me say... the investment decisions I would take, or the field I would take to participate in. If you really want to understand that, you will be able to pop back in time and understand... eh... the position I was in when I had all those things. Hence the title 'Future Background.'

[Wisdom_PG] 22

B4 Planning as taking control of the future, becoming empowered through knowledge

[Photo ref 3C]
[If we have to look at the apartheid system... African or black people were not really given a-a-a an opportunity to educate themselves and if they were it was... um... according to the government... um... rules so there was like a lot of segregation. People were actually told what we should study, but it's not a way of colonizing us. So I think it's a powerful picture he's empowering himself and... um... he is the future. The entire picture depicts him as the future.

[Nokwanda_FG] 23

B5 Planning, as knowing where you are going in your academic life, providing a level of certainty

[Photo ref 3C]
So this person now... is... has a plan on ground and they are now writing down their ideas on the board and making time frames of, 'How do I want to pass?' Because as a student you need to have goals, you need to have aims, you need to know your purpose, you need to know where you are going.

[Hloni_FG] 24

C1 Social networks made in HE - meaningful beyond formal education

[Photo ref 5B]
Langa: It's [HE] not doing alot, but there are so much resources here in the the institution that you can use... ah... to get yourself out there, and this is sort of a journey also... The-the institution itself it's not just about formal learning. I think the other stuff you get here are the ones that actually means alot, that would actually carry out throughout your life, like the people you meet. Yeah, the... I mean some have mentors that are here, and all of those friends... um... the right people you meet maybe your partner in business. Yah I guess it's just the people and the resources that mean the most. Yah... I come from the rural areas and the internet, that-that blew my mind... out there. Now I am used to it [laughs].

[Langa_Ex] 25

C2 Resources provided within HE seen as meaningful for the world outside of HE

[Photo ref 5B]
When I came here it was something real big and... ah-ah... sometimes you abuse the resources. Here you can't relate... don't realise the importance of them that could provide out there in the world. So yah, the institution outside of the formal stuff, I think there is alot to learn... Also just interaction with people, using resources provided by the institution.

[Langa_Ex] 26

C3 Awakening to future becoming

[Photo ref 5B]
Langa: I see myself as an entrepreneur first.
Bridget: Is that because you are seeing the future, more than you are seeing the present?
Langa: I think so, I think so... I think it's just a path way to... it's more like I got here [HE] and whatever I did, it made me realise the thing I really want to do in [the] future... and this is just a part of the puzzle... not to say its useless it's really contributing alot to the things I really want to do after I am done here. Even though I am doing them a bit. You know. Like I say, using the resources. Like my mind has just been opened. Now I use the internet really usefully now.

[Langa_Ex] 27

C4 Passion - not necessarily aligned with degree

[No Photo ref]
Nhlonipho: Right now, I did not get into engineering because I like it. At first it was because of money and stuff. Because I know engineering is paying. But now I get some interest in electricity part and stuff.
Bridget: What is your passion?
Nhlonipho: I am on that step right now. I am in that state where I am trying to find my passion... I am halfway there. I have some things that I am really interested in.
Bridget: Tell me a bit more. Like what?
Nhlonipho: I am interested in entrepreneurship, actually Like real estate and some other stuff.

[Nhlonipho_11] 28

C5 Finding space for passion

[No Photo ref]
General LAN- I chose that one. I am now in a phase where I am trying to find myself a place where I can be... without the pressure of someone who is doing this, and not started that... that occurs in the engineering LAN.

[Nhlonipho_11] 29

C6 Internet access providing possibilities for new becoming

[No Photo ref]
Nhlonipho: This [HE] is where you find who you truly are.
Bridget: Does the school education not allow you to do this? To think about what you could be?
Nhlonipho: Nah, High School doesn't, even university doesn't. You decide you have access to the internet here... eh... you can search whatever you want... you like. If you are interested in, sport you can research about it, if you are interested in photography you can research about it, if you are interested in architecture you can research about it. Even if... it does not mean... even if... you chose you an architecture, but you have like an access. Even if you chose maybe a wrong path here you can also have an access to the internet. There are lots of answer there.

[Nhlonipho_11] 30

C7 Actions taken in the present define the future - access to internet is key

[Continued from C6]
Nhlonipho: I come from the rural areas. I did my High School in the rural areas.
Bridget: You still got 100% for math!
Nhlonipho: Yah, that is what I also realised. Where you are does not restrict you, does not determine how your life will be. You are the decider. Even the money does not limit you. Like I was saying, maybe you want to learn how to be a good photographer maybe you don't have money to go to a photography class you can go to Youtube search about it and get tutorials and get the answers there.
Bridget: Internet access is key for you?
Nhlonipho: Can also find people that are interesting there, and we can learn from them how they do it.

[Nhlonipho_11] 31

Planning

Figure 7.6 Planning: Descriptive sheet with truncated transcripts vignettes and photographs

7.5 SYNTHESIS OF THE CHAPTER

The three themes [*Immobilising and Mobilising; Controlling and Freeing; Studying and Planning*] address students' lived experience of campus spatialities in the *present* as a consequence of their backgrounds.

Students' lives as lived are constantly on the move [*Mobilising*]; physically navigating between places of learning and places of residence, exploring their newfound independence [*Freeing*], engaging with fellow students and self, and mentally progressing [*Planning*] through the rungs of the education system. The students' lived engagement with campus life is influenced by their ability to negotiate the choices [*Controlling and Freeing*] associated with living at home or leaving home [*Immobilising or Mobilising*], with what is expected to meet HE demands [*Studying and Planning*]. Their *institutional* lives, *personal* lives and *academic* lives are in constant entanglement as they try to manage time and space both on and off campus to *meet HE expectations* and their desire for *financial freedom*, and to plan for *life after HE*.

Students' experiences of campus spaces are, however, not equitable, with financial constraints [*Controlling*] dictating not only their campus life experience but also which spaces privilege or not particular groups. Informal spaces of lawns, cafeterias, bus stops and car parks are occupied by homogenous groups of students based on their *socioeconomic class* [*Controlling and Freeing*]. This allows little opportunity for divergent groups of students to engage outside of the formal spaces of the classroom. Nor is students' mobility through HE experienced as equitable as it is affected by *where students live*, their access to varying *mode choices* [*Immobilising and Mobilising*], the *degrees of independence* [*Controlling and Freeing*] gained or lost by staying or leaving home, and by their *capacity and capability to navigate pathways* through HE to satisfy both *present and future* [*Studying and Planning*] goals.

This chapter brought together three pathways that affect student navigation through HE: **the institutional pathway, academic pathway and the non-academic pathway**, which are all entangled in their experience of being a student in HE.

Institutional pathways [an imposed pathway] through HE are conceived as outside of students' control and are perpetuated and reproduced through the scheduling of time, through transport solely connecting places of learning with places of residence, through the polarising of spaces provided for learning individually from those for learning collectively and by institutional policies of exclusion, housing allocation and administration of student-owned businesses.

Students reinforce the institutional pathway through their **academic pathway** in prioritising meeting deadlines as timetabled and through managing their time and space on and off-campus for learning [*Immobilising, Controlling, Studying*]. Their **non-academic pathway**, however, is enabled by finding spaces that enable their personal self to be free of their academic self, in seeking out spaces that encourage heterogeneous groupings of students in differentiated [general LANs] learning or leisure spaces [*Mobilising, Freeing, Planning*]. In planning for their future, students attempt to independently generate the route map for their future self-development (De Certeau, 2002).

Students' liberty to navigate their academic and non-academic pathway is, however, dependent on the freedoms afforded and their agentic ability to overcome the limitations imposed upon them. The more limited one's freedom, the fewer opportunities the student has to fulfil their function of maintaining control of these pathways. Their freedom to function (Sen, 1999) is then influenced by both managing their financial constraints and their HE expectations alongside their agency to leverage resources that are at their disposal to achieve their goals and actively bring about change in their academic or non-academic trajectory.

The following chapter explores the aspirational aspect of students' non-academic pathways further by describing and analysing students' dreams and hopes for the future [*Reflecting and Dreaming*]. It also illustrates students' practices for maintaining their academic selves and how their relationship with fellow students contributes to both their feeling of *Belonging and Becoming* on campus.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a continuation of the previous chapter in describing and exploring the various themes generated from the research data. What distinguishes this chapter from the last is that it addresses students' aspirations (Gale & Parker, 2015) for the future and the significance of spatiality in identity construction (Edwards & Clarke, 2002) as students transition in and through HE (Briggs, Clark, & Hall, 2012), as opposed to being purely entrapped within the daily lived academic and non-academic (Cross, Shalem, Backhouse, & Adam, 2009) experience of being a student. The chapter focuses on students' dreams for the future and how they aspire (Parker et al., 2015) to realise their dreams (Walker, 2018) through the process of knowing, being and becoming (Barnett, 2009) a student in HE.

The two themes discussed are:

1. Reflecting and Dreaming
2. Belonging and Becoming

8.2 REFLECTING AND DREAMING EXPLAINED AND EXPLORED

Reflecting and Dreaming are two cognitive activities that were expressed quite often in the conversations with students across the different phases of data collection. The Oxford Learners Dictionary (Dream, 2019) notes that *Dreaming* is to "imagine and think about something that you would like to happen", while *Reflecting* (Reflection, 2019) is to carefully "think about something, sometimes over a long period of time". The concepts of *Reflecting and Dreaming* are connected to the rational actions of *Studying and Planning*. For students, reflecting on what they dream of becoming is the genesis of what to plan for in the future, or what to aim to achieve academically or non-academically.

Reflecting is an important process for students to learn from their experiences. Amulya (2011, p. 1) defines reflection as "an active process of witnessing one's own experience to take a closer look at it, sometimes to direct attention to it briefly, but often to explore it in greater depth." Reflection can occur as an independent activity or while one is busy with something else. The key aspect of reflection is not just for the student to live the campus experience but to examine their actions and experiences and learn from them. The potential of reflection or reflective practice is for students to "know what they know" (Amulya, 2011, p. 5) from their experiences; to realise the power of this source of knowledge in determining what actions they may take and what decisions they may make while they navigate the HE system and life choices in general.

Dreaming can be aligned with what is being studied on campus and thus relates to students' professional becoming, as a housing professional, a lawyer or an engineer. However, students also dream about fulfilling other desires for the future both for themselves and others such as a becoming a "billionaire", a "revolutionist for my people" or to "make my parents proud"¹.

Reflecting and Dreaming are activities that students practise when alone. Whilst reflecting is looking back at the distant or recent past, dreaming is often connected to the future and future desires. Both necessitate an affinity with time whereby students need to find the time, make up time or in the process lose a sense of time.

8.2.1 SPACES FOR OR OF REFLECTION

The kind of spaces students go to reflect are quiet, with not many people about [See Figure 8.1]. As a student explains, this sometimes means occupying spaces when most students have left campus,

So it's usually noisy: not suitable for the type of environment I want ...to - to think. But yah, during... at night... at 6 pm it's usually ...quiet. [It is in this space that the student describes that] I find peace and comfort every time I'm gonna be sitting there... [he sits there with earphones on] ..and I have a whole perspective on what is currently going on in my academic performance and everything. [Kagiso_Ex] 2²

Sitting alone in a space when most off-campus students have gone back to their residences and putting earphones in, signifies he is not open to conversation and enables him to "put the pieces together academically" [Kagiso_Ex] 2. Shutting out all that is around him as well as the mental process of reconstructing the puzzle that is his academic life illustrates how he gains knowledge from his reflective practice to inform his academic life going forward.

Another student who does not share her residence room can reflect in her room, and for her, it is about managing her emotions, as much as it is about keeping tabs on what is expected of her academically, "Just being by yourself and - just thinking about everything: your deadlines I do get that time to play music, check my work and just calm down." [Buhle_Ex] 4

Students' reflections on the past are also ingrained in the epistemic thresholds crossed to make it to this university in particular and what this means for their future, that access to this institution

¹ These responses were noted on a chalkboard which was positioned outside students' residences on campus. This exercise was part of the initial phase of data production to find participants. The chalkboard posed a statement for students to complete "I dream of becoming...to reach this dream I need..." [August 2018].

² The referencing for each quotation is ordered as follows - Name of student [pseudonym where consent not given], where data source is drawn from, [Data sources include: PG – plenary group, FG – focus group, I- interview [numbered 1-3], Ex- exhibition interviews] and a number that relates back to the 'leaf' of the mobile on which the fuller transcript can be viewed.

guarantees that one has made it in life. Once at the institution, mobility is guaranteed. *“It’s actually that you are here and the part that it’s 28 points³ to get here, you know.”* [Sibongile_Ex] 6

Questioned about artefacts of the past, such as the colonial buildings on campus and their relevance to her, Sibongile’s response was: *“You have made it in life. Nah it’s not about the past.... Nah. If it was about the past then we would take pictures of the statue... which has no significance.”* [Sibongile_Ex] 6

Sibongile argued that gaining access to the institution was a priority. She was less concerned about how the past was influencing her future possibilities or opportunities. She claims that the main threshold was gaining the entry points to be admitted to the university and identifies this as a successful start to her future.

Sibongile’s views on the statues on campus are contentious and not shared by all her fellow students. The defacing of symbols of the past characterised resistance movements such as the #Rhodesmustfall campaigns that swept through universities in South Africa in 2016. Students disapproved of reminders of the colonial past and the oppression associated with it and called for the removal of all these artefacts (Jansen, 2017; Habib, 2019; Ahmed, 2019). These protests seemed to focus on artefacts – statues and paintings of colonial and apartheid related figureheads – and less so on the buildings which represent the colonial heritage of the campus. Sibongile’s priority was to move ahead drawing on her success in gaining access to the university.

Menzi’s view on the statues is as an ever-present reminder of the past, which he cannot associate with and would hence rather not see on campus. The past and artefacts of that era, deeply affect his reading of the spatial environment of the university. The transformation of the university has seen a fundamental shift in the racial demographics of the institution, yet artefacts of the past have remained immobile. He articulates a common view [unlike Sibongile above] that the symbols of the past are constant reminders of historical exclusion and the suppression of success for Black students. Menzi notes that the racial demographics on campus have changed and questions why the objects in the space have not changed or been removed.

I think this university was not built with us, Black people at the core. With us now being at the core, whereby we are the main users of this facility now, rather change or remove anything that reminds us of the negative past, you know. Or just take those things that might be some people’s heros and just place them in one place where they can go there and praise them in one place... there... wherever? [Menzi_I1] 8

³ Also known as the Admission Point Score (APS), the points required for university entrance.

Reflecting on the spatiality of the campus is a reminder of the students' growing dissociation with the spaces of the past and the stuckness or staticness of the space and objects in it in the eyes of the changed and changing community that now occupies the space. For these students, the past is an ever-present reminder of their own [and fellow Black students'] educational oppression. The new environment draws people of varied backgrounds into its space, but the physical space is still characterised by the old. The lack of overt representations of tangible artefacts of the new worldviews of a democratic system predisposes Black students to interpret the university space as not fully evolved to embrace the new order, and by implication as not including them. However, one needs to question if the students' preference for old artefacts to be replaced with new ones, or the ghettoising of the old into exclusionary repository enclaves is an all-embracing, inclusionary solution. Could a conscious effort be made to layer both the old and the new in dialogical juxtapositioning? It appears that the strong sense of resentment of the old dominates to such an extent that exclusionary resistance is dominant. Would this exclusionary bipolarising constitute a replacement of one set of dominant worldviews with another, leaving the old and the new as dichotomous opposites?

Reflecting is also a way of making sense of the present and as much as it is a cognitive activity, it is not only reliant on a cognitivist inner mental space, but also a physical space in which a student can be alone and undisturbed to enable reflective practice. This physical spatiality is not easy when students have to share rooms and when the spaces on campus are already under pressure for academic related activities. Reflective practice in support of students' academic and non-academic self in terms of their wellbeing, cannot be expected theoretically, but unsupported pragmatically. This highlights the need to review what kinds of physical spatial arrangements prevail to support deeper reflection.

Reflection is furthermore, associated with what is viewed as a life-changing experience (Palmer, O'Kane, & Owens, 2009) of being accepted into the institution of choice. Students are likely to succeed in terms of their academic well-being if the institutional ethos is able to provide deep recognition and acknowledgement of choosing them and catering for their development. The HE institution should promote the view that the space is not just 'on loan to students', but also that it equitably belongs to all those invited into its ambit. This intersects the students developing their academic self [an academic pathway] with the broader institutional climate and ethos [an institutional pathway]. Students' success in university is a co-responsible agenda in which the personal mind-set and development of students as developing individuals, as well as the institutional responsibility of those who design the institutional climate and the spaces for activation of that success, are co-responsible. Both are agents of new pathways.

8.2.2 REFLECTING [ON ACADEMICS] AND DREAMING [OF THE FUTURE] BECOME ENTANGLED

Dreaming and reflecting are not mutually exclusive activities, but are entangled. Conversations to this end were sparked by a photo in which a student is seen staring out of her residence window. Students looking at this image raised the importance of having distractions as a necessary reprieve from academic life.

Sitting alone and thinking about you and your future, your studies... staring at the window watching things go by just for about 10 minutes. Then, I go back... Little moments to bring you back to your senses. Like saying hello to someone passing by... My Housing Masters... that's my destination... Doing what I do is part of my future. I am shaping my future. [Bafana_Ex] 10

The interrelationship between these two concepts, of Reflecting and Dreaming, entailed a looking back and a looking forward. A student's conception of the future is tangled up with his/her academic performance and the desire to complete a degree. His/her destination is the qualification in itself, the object of his/her foreground. However, ever-present is his/her potential occupation post-qualification, his/her aspiration looking forward. Both the present and the imminent future are entangled in this reflection and dreaming. The student stands poised at co-responsibility both for the present and the future. Skovsmose (2016) and Appadurai (2004) comment that this entanglement constitutes a "brittle space" intersecting a limited and bounded space to an imminent and future horizon. One notes in these theorists' comments the relative distancing of the past, whilst foregrounding the present and future spatio-temporal dimension.

However, it appears from the data collected for this study that the past [both personally and systemically] lingers as an ever-present phantom. For the students that participated in my study, the university is also perceived as a transformatory opportunity in which, through the academic choices they make, they feel they can alter the trajectory framed by their past and consequently their future becoming. The phantom can be challenged, consciously crafting a new tomorrow.

Ayanda notes the potential to activate a change in her destiny, through the transition to university "[s]o coming to university is like starting a new life. Shaping your future into the direction you would like it to take" [Ayanda_Ex] 12. The transition served as a trigger to awaken her to the responsibility of forging her own path. Similarly, Bafana is dependent on his individual agency, "doing what I do," [Ex] 12 to achieve his dreams.

A student's future after high school relative to university and life in general, was explored in the focus group. One of the students made the following comment about the silhouetted outline of a young man staring out at the rising sun [Photograph 4C]:

[S]o I am seeing someone... maybe... who has just come out of high school who is... just... thinking about their future.... even in what they want to do... even in university they are still considering and pondering. That what... “Which steps should I take now? What do I want to be in life? And what... um... purpose do I have in life?” [Hloni_FG] 13

This interpretation of the photograph reinforces the ongoing nature of the interpretation of the image using the present participles of ‘*thinking*’, ‘*pondering*’, and ‘*considering*’. The reference to leaving high school where one needs to think about one’s future in life and university implies that future life choices are entangled with the academic choices that are made.

The recursive activity of reflecting, planning and future ambitions can be interconnected, as this student comments,

Sometimes you need time to yourself, maybe to push yourself. Yes, mental - mental whereby you can sit and reflect, and you can plan your future by yourself, for yourself, and like where do I see myself after this degree.... long term goals you get to make them by yourself for yourself. [Solomon_Ex] 14

The emphasis is on students not being complacent. They are consciously aware of the need to establish their pathway through HE, and it is a decision that they need to make independently. However, this comment does not take into account whether all students have the aspiration, the will, the capacity or the capability to do so.

Reflecting and dreaming thus become entangled in reflective practice which gives students the mental space to plan for the future.

8.2.3 DREAMING WITH [THE SUPPORT OF] OTHERS

In contrast to Solomon’s view of dreaming of the future, Peter expressed that dreams [See Figure 8.2] need not be constructed alone in one’s head but explored as an open conversation with friends in spaces between lectures, on the lawns overlooking the city,

[A] lot of conversations about the future. About what you are doing now and where it is taking you. There was a lot of conversation taking place outside of lectures on the lawns be it both at University A and at University B,⁴ talking about your futurewhere you are going. [Peter_Ex] 15

⁴ Peter’s undergraduate experience was at another university, while his postgraduate experience was at the institution in which this research was undertaken.

These conversations illustrate a destination-orientated focus that extends beyond the students' immediate horizons of completing their degree. While Solomon recognises that students need support from others to enable their dreams to become a reality, he refers to the ephemeral nature of the dream and its connection to a student's private sense of insecurity.

[B]ecause of being shy and afraid of being judged, that is where dreams vanish. "I cannot even do this; I cannot do that." You need to identify or find a person that will encourage you or push you... to start going after your goals and dreams. [Solomon_Ex] 16

Without someone to support them in discovering and reaching their dreams, the dream is likely to disappear. Thus, while dreaming may be an individual pursuit to plan a path forward in life, it also requires collective support and knowledge to be realised.

8.2.4 DREAMING – AS A METAPHOR FOR MOBILITY

The bus was often used in conversations with students as a metaphor for mobility. While it primarily constitutes a means of transport, further analysis of the use of this metaphor suggests that the bus journey, catching the bus and the trauma of its rhythmic presence regulating their social and academic conduct was more than just a physical mobility exercise. The bus constituted a metaphorical journey of the student as they mediated through the spaces of HE. As an abstract comparison, it equated with their conceptions of HE as a destination in itself. Reflecting on the images of the bus in the photographs, Razeena extended the notion of the bus to equate with her arrival within the university: *"But I am in university, so that means I made it"* [Razeena+Nhlonipho_PG] 21. She implies that she has 'caught the bus'; the journey of accessing and engaging with HE.

One photograph that seemed to prompt this was of a young woman sitting at a bus stop, titled *Journey to the future* [photograph 8C]. The author of the photograph overtly declared that the photograph aimed to portray *"[W]aiting for the bus to take me to my future"* [Hloni_PG] 19. Another student interpreted this photograph as *"Waiting for this car or vehicle to take you to the next place where you can achieve your dreams"* [Ulwazi_Ex] 20. The photograph depicts a student sitting passively awaiting passage from the present to the future, from reality to the student's desired aspirations. For the participants, the bus/vehicle constitutes both a medium and a guide to take them to the future. They wait in anticipation of this forthcoming event.

Hloni's use of the mobility metaphor much more expansively relates negotiation of the shifting of spaces from the temporal present to the aspirational future. She is clearer in her targeted destination, which she associates with a specific campus destination where she believes her future will be realised.

*[S]o waiting for the bus...um... to take me to my future... because um... I do go to ***⁵ campus, so that is where my future has been moved, so I am waiting for the bus to take me to my future. So it's a journey to the future. [Hloni_PG] 19*

Hloni's undergraduate experience was on the campus where this research was undertaken. Her postgraduate registration and supervision sessions are, however, facilitated on another campus, which explains her present experience of campus as one of purely passing through in order to access the transport infrastructure that connects the two campuses.

The use of the journey metaphor reflects a clear intent to move towards a defined destination. In stating that, *'my future has been moved'*, Hloni does not mean that her future itself has changed, but the site where she is now registered to study. The physicality of the institution's location and the association with the education received relative to that particular place informs her future but does not necessarily dictate it. Her future is independent of the spaces she occupies. Each space contributes to her future, but does not necessarily change it.

A purely concrete association with the journey metaphor could become entrapped to refer only to the physical activity of coming to campus and the anxiety expressed therein. As Siphon explains,

[E]very day is the start to a new journey which you are not sure how it's going to end up ...so like every day you see ...you are coming to campus all in good hopes, but not sure what's going to happen today. [Siphon+Hloni_PG] 22

Siphon's description of his journey is *'every day is the start of a new journey'*, a perpetual recalibration of starting over in the same space on a new day with no sense of *'where it is going to end up.'* His statement that, *'so like every day you see ...you are coming to campus all in good hopes but not sure what's going to happen today'* reflects his anxiety that university life is not predictable and stable. His metaphoric abstract journey essentially refers to a recurring cycle, an inability to move forward since he claims that he is prospectively unable to fully calibrate all possibilities. Siphon is searching for certainty and stability in an environment in which he feels academically and possibly socially, overwhelmed and out of place. What is certain is the uncertainty of HE (Barnett, 2007) which when loaded on the students' shoulders atop epistemic readiness and personal development issues, can become too much for students to bear, toppling them over and necessitating their return to the safe place of familiarity. Menzi, the author of Photograph 4C, titled *"I may not have reached my destination yet, but I'm closer than I was yesterday"*, explores a mental moving toward the sun as a metaphor for the *'ultimate goal'* or *'dream'* which is within sight, but not within reach. He claims in his interview that the target is *'out*

⁵ This university has five campuses situated in two cities, with some courses offered on more than one campus.

there, right there' and that he *'see(s) it...far away all the time'* [Menzi +Brie_PG] 17. He acknowledges that this ideal goal will be achieved at some undefined future time, *'one day'* through a process of first achieving *'small particular goals and um... steps and small achievements'* [Menzi +Brie_PG] 17. He is striving for something, but at the same time realising that it is unattainable. To satisfy his need for gratification, he looks to attain the smaller goals in the hope that these will lead to the ultimate one. He also acknowledges that he is not certain what that final goal might be nor what the smaller goals might be, though I speculate that smaller goals would include acknowledgement of his struggles as a student in HE by staff and his family alike. Menzi is in perpetual motion, moving from one achievement to another over an ever-increasing undefined timeframe towards an unnamed goal. Achievement of goals is seen as moving forward, shifting time through the reflection of accomplishments,

So, I achieve what I achieve yesterday. That's where I was. But today, I am closer than I was a week ago... [than I was] two days ago. [Menzi +Brie_PG] 17

Menzi's view is of concern as it is not about achieving, but a perception of having achieved when viewed in hindsight. Menzi struggled through the transition from undergraduate to post-graduate studies, academically as well as non-academically. The expectations imposed by his post-graduate studies curtailed his leisure time, with less time for the things he enjoyed such as playing sport. Family financial issues as well as the poor health of a key family member placed further burdens on him to step up and assist on the home front. Engagement in his academic work became even more constrained with the unsympathetic responses he received from lecturers when he tried to explain his home struggles and their effect on his work. Slowly it was beginning to dawn on him that his degree was something he is obliged to obtain rather than something he necessarily wants to do in the future – photography was becoming his passion.

Brie's dream is to *"to swim in the Olympics. And it's always like...far away. But it's close enough that you can see it. Still [see] it... But it is always far away all the time."* [Menzi +Brie_PG] 18

Brie's dream shares characteristics with Menzi's in that it is visible, *'you can see it'* but not attainable, *'far away all the time'*. However, unlike Menzi, she defines what she wishes to become, an Olympic swimmer. Menzi is not certain of [or does not want to name] what he hopes for and is perhaps more hesitant to name its characteristics. It is also noted that Brie comes from a more economically stable middle-class environment and that Menzi does not.

Menzi's passion for photography grew incrementally after his involvement as a participant in this study. He also gained some financial independence, as a hired photographer for events and special occasions.

However, this passion could not be attributed to a degree. Obtaining a qualification was a factor his family valued greatly in his educational trajectory.

Brie and Menzi's aspirations are linked to their home and family backgrounds, which allow and suppress the possibilities to dream alternative and aspirational futures. Both dream, but the potential realisation of their dreams may differ.

Mobility as a journey to or through HE takes many forms; as being transported to, led to, in perpetual motion with no end in sight and in moving to a destination with no means of achieving it or no clarity as to what it is. These characteristics suggest the almost nomadic nature of students as always in motion even when there is no clarity as to where to go, how to get there or how long it will take.

Dreaming is entangled in social relations, life choices, academic decision making and in the projection of students' horizons. Some horizons are limited by immediate or short-term goals linked to academic achievement, which are seen as hurdles to overcome. With no long-term goals, let alone intermediate steps other than qualifications, students' pathways through HE are tentative and fragile.

8.2.5 CONCLUDING COMMENTS: *DREAMING DEFERRED*

Reflecting refers to individual practices in the present that could affect enactment in the future. It also highlights the meaning attached to being a student on this particular campus and how reminders of the past are both aspirational as well as contested. By contrast, *dreaming* refers to independent aspirations or end goals for the future and the exploration of possible pathways to get there.

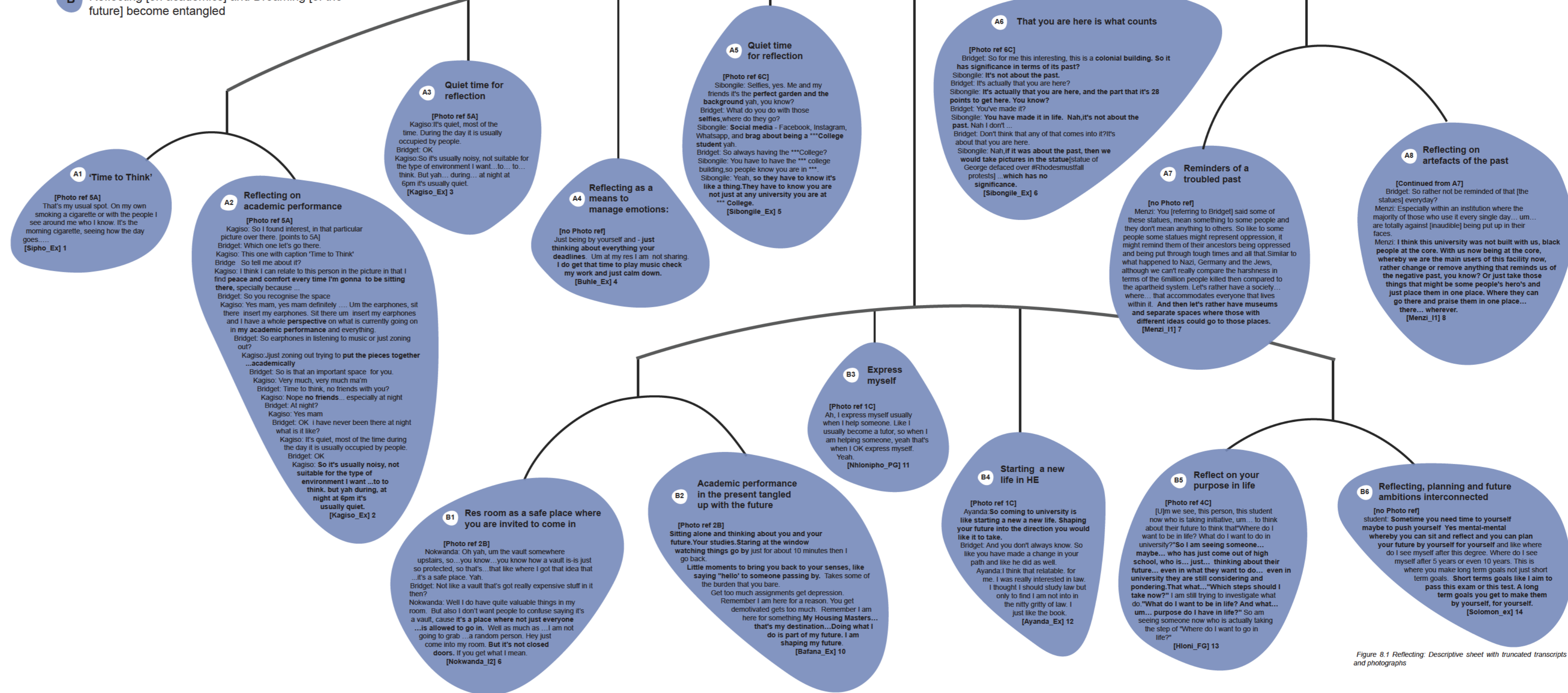
The key ideas emerging from the theme of *reflecting and dreaming* suggest that students' re-evaluation of their current selves and their academic performance is in dialogue with their future goals and ambitions. They have set destinations and goals along the way, but the means and the mechanisms to get there, are not always clear. Many students of lower socioeconomic status are first-generation university students, with little to no family or community experience to draw on to access knowledge of university life and how to navigate its complexities. As there is no clear pathway or map to guide (De Certeau, 2002) them along the way, students rely on their peers to provide knowledge or experience of the path or at best to motivate them to stay on it. Their interaction with others thus shapes their aspirational possibilities (Walker, 2018). Failing to interact with others means that their success or failure within higher education is solely dependent on their academic performance and where the opportunities or possibilities therein may lead. However, not all students are passive recipients of their lived campus experience, and, as discussed in the concept of *planning*, some are able to find a voice

through seeking out resources and spaces that contribute to their *becoming*. This concept is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Having time alone and physical ambient spaces to reflect on their academic performance so as to remain focussed on what their end destination or goal may be is a critical part of maintaining students' academic trajectory as well as their mental well-being.

Reflecting

- A** Spaces for or of reflection
- B** Reflecting [on academics] and Dreaming [of the future] become entangled



Photograph 5A
Time to Think



Photograph 6C
Content



Photograph 2B
The Vault / Somewhere upstairs



Photograph 1C
This is where I express myself

Dreaming

- A Dreaming with [the support of] others
- B Dreaming – as a metaphor for mobility



Photograph 4C
I have not reached my destination yet, but I am closer than I was yesterday



Photograph 8C
Journey to the Future



Photograph 5C
Start of a good day

Reflecting and Dreaming

I have had this dream to be in the Olympics since I was in high school. The dream is within sight, but I am just not there yet. [Brie_PG]18

I train every day, for four hours a day, waking up early to get two hours in before lectures and then in my spare time I study. Sometimes, between lectures, I sit in the back of my car in the campus parking lot. I put some music on and eat the lunch I made – it's always something healthy I have to be careful about what I eat. The music calms me down, and I can then think about how I am doing academically, what I have done and what I still need to do. [Buhle_Ex]4

I can also think about how I am doing in my training and what steps I need to take in the future to reach my dream.

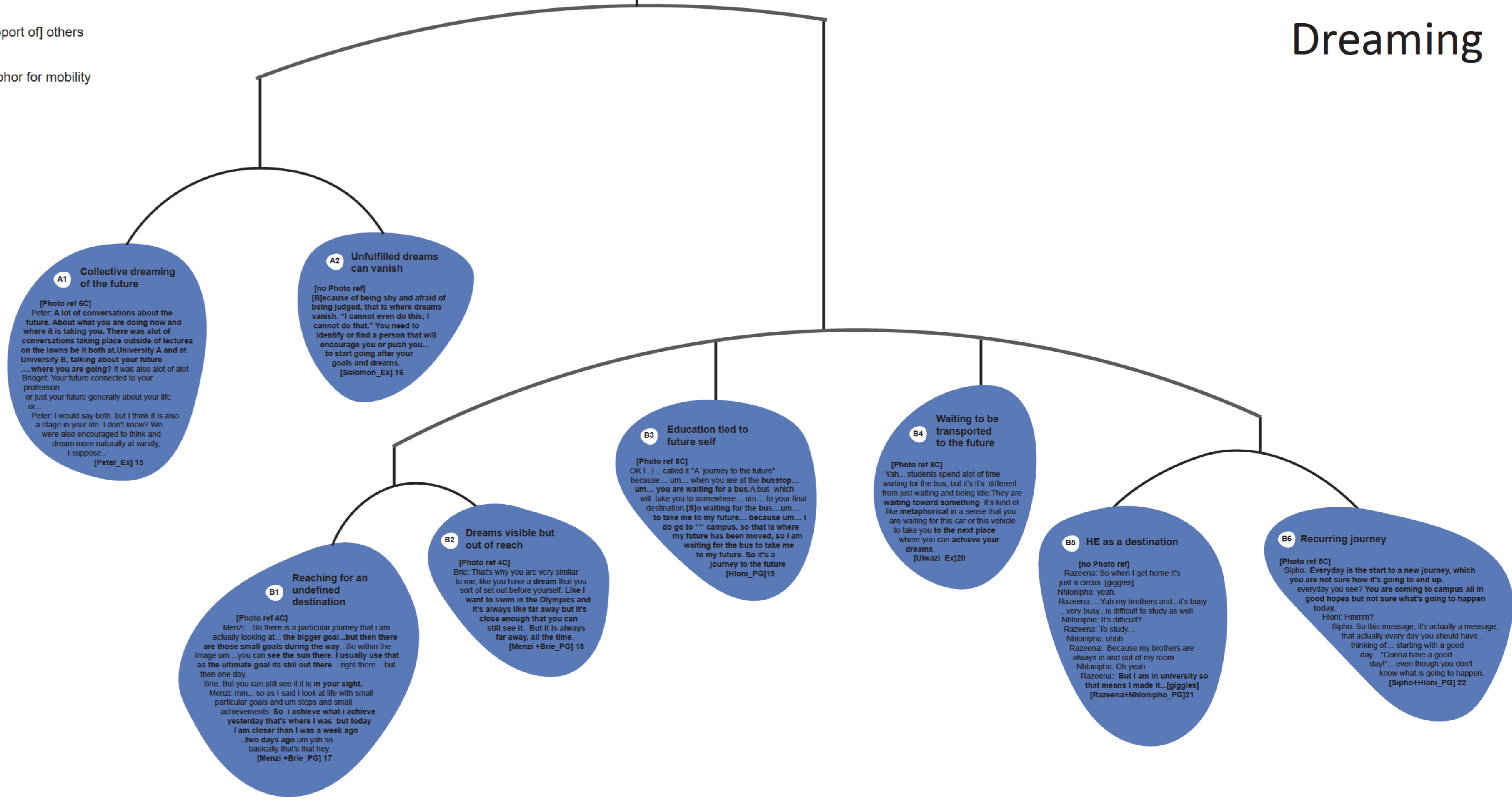


Figure 8.2 Dreaming: Descriptive sheet with truncated transcripts vignettes and photographs

8.3 BELONGING AND BECOMING EXPLAINED AND EXPLORED

Belonging refers to a connection and rootedness to a particular place and affinity with the people of that place, which, in the context of HE, relies on a student's ability to make meaningful connections [people and place] to fit into university life (Palmer, O'Kane, & Owens, 2009).

The transition from high school or home to HE can contribute to a feeling of not belonging amongst students, which is most notable for those in their first year of study. During this transition, students feel a sense of placelessness as suspended between one place and another. Belonging is a process that takes time and in some instances necessitates 'turning point experiences' [an event or experience] or a 'critical thread' [symbolic objects and friendships] to activate that sense of belonging (Palmer, O'Kane, & Owens, 2009). Palmer (2009 , p. 47) notes that, in this feeling of placelessness students "unmask, build or redefine.... [or] reinforce existing identities of university life."

In contrast, *becoming* is a process by means of which one comes to be through mental growth and development. In the context of HE, *becoming* occurs through interaction with the curriculum, which is essentially epistemic growth or growth in content or discipline knowledge through what is learnt at university (Barnett R. , 2009). Fataar (2018) refers to this notion as an "epistemic becoming" which acknowledges the process of negotiation of the multiple worldviews and perspectives formally [and informally] presented within the HE space. Becoming, in the context of this thesis was also explored as an awakening or a coming to know, with particular attention to personal growth. This latter "becoming" tends to foreground individual, personal learning points that develop one's character, personality and social actions.

Similar to belonging, becoming can also be fostered through interaction [or not] with other students and resources in campus spaces. The current research paid particular attention to food, accommodation and transport-related spaces in order to understand students' engagement with one another and university spaces of their own free will and how this personal growth as emerging from outside of these formal learning spaces could constitute itself as an-other becoming. This does not negate the above areas of focus of becoming explored by other authors; my selection was motivated [as discussed in Chapter two and three] by the relative dearth of research in this interactive spatial and informal learning context. The interaction between these more formal and informal spaces is, nevertheless, a recurring refrain across my study.

If *belonging* is about attachment and rootedness to place based on a connection to the people and the place, *becoming* is about a movement or a growth out from a place. Belonging contributes towards inertness, becoming towards mobility.

8.3.1 BELONGING AS ABOUT CONNECTION TO A PEOPLE AND PLACE

Students' ability to nurture or even foster relationships with peers contributes to their feeling of belonging on campus [See Figure 8.3]. Students describe their relationships with their peers as "*being alone*", "*always alone*" or "*with friends*". As discussed within the theme of '*Reflection and Dreaming*', being alone is a purposeful and conscious action taken by students to avoid others in order to reflect, study, plan, dream or engage in another activity. By contrast, being 'always alone' or 'lonely' is not a conscious action, but a consequence of not feeling that one fits in with other students on campus. Astute students can adopt strategies to fit in with both people and place. Not fitting in and adapting to fit in are discussed in the paragraphs below. These conceptions reflect different conceptions of place and how these can contribute to the feeling of belonging.

8.3.1.1 PEOPLE

A student describes her transition to university: "*[w]hen you first enter university, you do find that you become lonely, but there is an opportunity for you to make friends.*" [Hloni_FG] 1

The feeling of social exclusion becomes even more apparent when surrounded by others one doesn't know. Belonging relies on the student's ability to turn the possibility of relationships with other students into reality. Not all students are able to do so or are capable of doing this. In this sense, not all students' experiences of their peers are the same. Some feel like they are part of a family and that they are accepted into this family without any judgement, "*I like it; we are all like a family. ... on...at *** I really like feel very welcome. No-one ever looks at you... like what are you doing here... sort-of-thing.*" [Razeena_I1] 2

Another student describes how she felt she did not fit in for two years. She then came to accept that she did not need her fellow students to feel like she belonged on campus.

I don't know.. maybe... I just realised that I... did... didn't need people for me to feel like I belong. Cause I think for the first two years it was... yah. I did not think... like the university... I fitted in with the people here. Yah. [Ayanda_Ex] 3

The same student expresses her lack of visibility on campus, "*I can tell you I don't think any of the people in my class ever recognise me. But I can recognise all of them.*" [Ayanda_Ex] 4

To feel that she does not fit in, and that her peers do not acknowledge her presence or do not even see her, is a troubling perspective of this student's relationship with her fellow students. It took two years for her to realise she did not need friends in order to 'belong' on campus. As a consequence of her feelings, she did not fit in. Her belonging to the university, as a place, has become severed from its connection to the people of that place.

When students first arrive at university from high school, they adopt certain strategies to fit in. As a student describes below, such strategies aim to enable one to fit in with one's peers and the culture of the institution. The student describes his awareness of the fact that the language spoken on campus is different from that of his home background. His initial approach was to observe the different cultural norms. While English is the predominant medium of instruction at the university, he opted to learn the language of his peers.

Well for me when I came here... in [name of province]⁶... for the very first time. I am not going to lie to you. I was shy because I was in another province. For the very first time... it was a different language. I speak Swati and it's [the university] [name of language] speaking nation. And for me, I was shy and reserved. During that process, I spent a lot of time observing the life and the society, and all of that, and university as a whole. [Solomon_Ex] 5

He learnt the language and joined various clubs and societies that the university had to offer to build his confidence in interacting with his fellow students,

Because when I came here, I joined such club and societies programmes in my first year. First-year, first semester I was still observing. And the second semester, I started attending programmes as well to see how things are done here. I spent a lot of time learning the language as well. [Solomon_Ex] 6

Some students adapt and develop strategies to fit in. Others are not able to do so and in the process, lose their sense of self-identity. They claim they become invisible.

The transition from high school to HE is difficult for some students. Observing how things are done, and being able to shed the unnecessary baggage of one's past and assume a new identity that conforms to the expectations of those on the inside is a necessary survival tactic upon entering the HE institution. Once the rules of the game are clear, the student can move from observer to participant to actively engage in the life of a university student.

⁶ Name of province and language kept hidden to maintain anonymity of the institution.

8.3.1.2 PLACE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The place of HE is about both the physical lived place as well as the virtual one. Moreover, the conception of “place” signals what this particular institution signifies to a broader student community.

“Place” as physical-lived space includes the campus itself, as well the residences both on- and off-campus. Students describe the place of HE as *“feeling at home”* [Nokwanda_email] 9, *“like being in prison”* [Wisdom_l1] 11 or as *“you are not just at any university, you are at a particular university.”* [Sibongile_Ex] 8

Some students feel a real connection to particular spaces on campus. One of the participants in the study chose to photograph her friends on a lawn in front of an old colonial building from which the campus gets its name. In explaining her attachment to this place, the student referred to the lawns in front of the campus as *‘more homely’* and the people on campus as *‘like a family.’* She spoke of being accepted for who she is and where she is on this campus,

*I like being on the grass, and things do not feel like you are on campus. [It] feels more homely... I like it; we are all like a family. .. on...at *** I really like feel very welcome. No-one ever looks at you... like what are you doing here... sort-of-thing.* [Razeena_l1] 2

While this space of lawn on campus is experienced as ‘homely’ for one student, for another, its significance lies beyond the immediate student community. For the latter, the lawn comes to represent a marker of the new social and systemic space, which she now occupies. She regards the lawn as emblematic of this new particular institution, and what the institution represents to a broader student community. This latter student refers to the informal space as a *“perfect garden and the background”* [Sibongile_Ex] 8. Here she emphasises that this space [and its backdrop of the colonial building] is, for her, a popular place for students to take selfies. These images are then posted on social media sites. In her view, the selfies, firstly, help to prove and then to brag that one is *“in **** [name of institution] college”* [Sibongile_Ex] 8. Here she is referring to the space as an acknowledgement of having met the institutional admissions requirements. She is acknowledging that she has met the epistemic requirements [her becoming] to make it here. She has the right to claim the physical space as a form of demonstrating belonging to the community. She claims to be known as *“**** [name of institution] Student.”* [Sibongile_Ex] 8

These students’ responses raise the possibility of belonging as both as a virtual affirmation, through a social media community, of association with a particular place of HE as well as a real tangible connection to particular spaces on campus. It is envisaged that these social media depictions of the university spaces [and the students’ interconnection therewith] ripple into other social spaces and networks with

which the student is linked beyond the immediate academic community. The HE space and the students' representative depictions and use thereof, become a connection into, and communication with this wider world.

The campus grounds are not the only spaces students spend time in. Quite a lot of time is spent in the residential accommodation the university provides both on and off-campus. The following section examines these other spaces.

8.3.1.3 RESIDENCES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Students have differing associations for their on- and off-campus accommodation. The significance they attach to these spaces is influenced by whom they share them with, and where the residence is located. A student staying in residence on campus, who does not have to share, says of her room, *"My room is home for me: it's where I get to be comfortable. It's a place where I've shared so much laughter and shared so many tears."* [Nokwanda_email] 9

This student not only feels enabled to share her emotions with others in this space but has also made an effort to re-create the feeling of 'home' in her room. She has decorated the walls with little objects, and has pretty linen on her bed, thereby making it a space in which she can relax and entertain friends. Being able to personalise her space to feel like 'home' contributes to her sense of belonging to this space and to the community of university friends she has made.

Another student living in a commune, sharing her room with one other person, commented, *"my section is my vault."* [Isisa_Ex] 10 Her portion of the room is a space she does not just use but possesses exclusively for herself. It is her world, *"It's basically [the] left, or [the] right. The left section is mine. It has all my things. Even my cupboard: This is my own little universe."* [Isisa_Ex] 10

Isisa's sense of belonging is associated with possessing her section of the room. Students that share assume only partial ownership of their residence space, in contrast to those that have their own rooms. The focus in this shared space is about distinguishing what is actually yours to have access to and use of as a means to negotiate the relationship between the different users that share the space. Of less concern, then, in a shared space, is the ability to personalise the space or the kinds of relationships formed therein. Belonging in a shared space is about being able to manage the spatiality of the residence room.

Preference for sharing or not sharing in terms of fostering belonging to the place of HE is not simply a matter of choosing one means of habitation over the other. Both could contribute to a sense of

belonging but it is important to acknowledge that they do so in different ways with different focus. Students make a meaningful connection to places when they can both make changes to spaces to make them their own and when there is clarity as to ownership within the space.

A student who has lived both off-campus in the city, and now on campus refers to the location of residences in the city as not conducive to studying. Firstly, he argues that the city residences are located in the heart of a public social space consisting of numerous drinking places. He also comments that access to the main campus from the city residences is not easy. He relates the frustration of not being able to choose where to live or with whom as like *“being in prison”*,

For some, it feels as if university feels...eh...more of like a prison. Because you never had a choice to choose where you want to [stay] ...And when you come here [residences], they [the institution] just put you with people who you don't know, and who you do not like the way of living. And you have to adapt orthere is no alternative. [Wisdom_11] 11

Having to adapt when there is no sense of attachment to the place, is a tall order for a student arriving to stay in residence for the first time away from home. There is little to no potential to foster a sense of belonging for a student when he or she is feeling out of place.

Another student shares this view of the environment of the city residences as poor, describing her off-campus residence in the city as, *“The dingiest place you could ever think of”*, yet she still acknowledges that *“this is a place where I can be myself.”* [Scarlett_Ex] 12

The physical accommodation space is deemed uninhabitable, but at the same time studying away from home has enabled her independence from family intrusion. The connection to space is not linked solely to its specific physicality, but also the social prospects that it renders to address personal histories and circumstances. The space makes sense in relation to these sociological legacies [past], but also offers new possibilities to reinvent an alternative [future].

The space of the students' rooms is reinterpreted in a wider sociological trajectory or carved up with degrees of independence within a portion of that space to assert personal identities and choices. When they cannot reimagine their physicality of space, they relinquish some of their individuality and adapt to suit the norms and behaviour of others. If leaving home and living away from home is meant to be a means of contributing to students' independence and growth into adulthood, a unique irony emerges from the data in this study. Paradoxically, the place of habitation [within campus residences] helps mediate distancing from one's historical past and contributes to alienating students from their social roots. Independence arises out of *leaving* home, not necessarily *coming* to university.

8.3.2 BELONGING - ALWAYS ALONE AND FRIENDSHIP – [COMFORTABLE, HAVING FRIENDS]

This section explores belonging as the relationship ‘between students’ and ‘between students and place’. The themes that emerged from an analysis of the data suggest particular comparative notions of being ‘*always alone*’ and ‘*having friends*’. This social aspect of university life is an often-underestimated focus in the academic literature but was an important dimension of this study for students. My methodological choice to focus on spaces outside formal learning spaces may have contributed to this finding, but the participants tended to offer specific views on the transition from the place of the high school to the university. Once within the university, the students had to reinterpret what the use or not of friends or loneliness meant.

8.3.2.1 ALWAYS ALONE

Loneliness, as opposed to consciously being alone, is a very real factor for students in their transition from high school to HE. This transition is seen as a major adjustment academically as well as socially. A student from the exhibition phase of data production speaks very openly about loneliness. Extreme loneliness also has its space, distinguished as the corner of the computer LAN, seated alone, immobile, with no possibility of other students passing by.

Ayanda’s experience of transitioning from high school to university speaks of a spatial change, an identity change from learner to student, and a social change from knowing everyone, to knowing no one. The important challenge in this transitioning was dealing with the erroneous assumption that one’s old [former school] identity would remain intact.

In high school, you knew all of the people almost personally. In coming here [university], you don't know anyone. You have to start making friends and meeting new people. Well, I think for me, I thought what I was in high school I was going to be in university. [Ayanda_Ex] 23

She further alienates herself in the university environment by locating herself in spaces that she describes as “*private spaces not exposed to people and stuff*” [Ayanda_Ex] 20, such as in the LAN “*in the corner.*” [Ayanda_Ex] 21 In a corner, no one can walk past her, thereby rendering her invisible. For her, the spatial and social nature of the LAN was where students could work in isolation. It is seen as an antithesis to the bus stop [Photograph 8C that prompted the discussion on loneliness]. For her, the bus stop was an outward-facing visible space; it constituted a public space that all passers-by can inhabit or invade. The LAN was her secure private space.

Not fitting in ‘*with people here*’ is exacerbated by her unique circumstances. She lived far from the campus and spent an inordinate number of hours commuting back and forth to university. This allowed her limited time to interact with fellow students since she became preoccupied with overcoming the

home-university distances and was reliant on public transport with its attendant unreliability and insecurities. This affected her ability to interact with fellow students: *“One of the reasons why I am always alone...so when you get to travel every day, you hardly get to make any friends.”* [Ayanda_Ex] 22

Disconnection from peer interactions is a recurrent concern of some of the student participants. They resort to interpreting university as a space of loneliness, no doubt influencing not only their non-academic but also perhaps their academic growth. Furthermore, being lonely on campus is noted in several discussions with students who walk aimlessly on campus. If the LAN is not chosen as a hiving off space, some students who own cars, chose to sit in their vehicle in the car park where they work alone. As Dumisani says *“I don't have too many friends. I can relate to walking around, sitting in your car to work.”* [Dumisani_Ex] 24

Overcoming this loneliness is necessary if one wants to persevere and meet the goals one has set oneself. As noted in Menzi's reading of the photograph of the young woman at the bus stop [8C], *“People have abandoned you or your friends that were there with you... [You] are no longer there. Do not forget the ultimate goal.”* [Menzi_FG] 25

Here Menzi is commenting that, despite the young woman [a university student] in the photograph sitting in a public bus stop located within the university space, she remains disconnected from the institutional world around her. He is recognising that the university is commonly experienced as being a lonely world.

However, the university environment can also foster the making of friendships. The data from this study reveals that the positive counter to loneliness is activated through familiarity and recognition that arise from repeated interactions with fellow students within smaller classes, and in students sharing several classes. As Brie explains,

The first year you... um... you have [a] shuffle of subjects sort-of-thing. And everyone is...like...doing everything. And you don't get to know anyone really. Like you know lots and lots of people, but you don't actually have a connection with anyone. So second year...now...um...you start finding yourself doing the same subjects as certain people [be]cause now you all want to start doing this type of psychology, and you want to do that type of psychology. [Brie_I1] 26

Brie critiques the large class sizes of first-year programmes which produce further alienation for a newcomer to the university environment. She suggests that massive class sizes promote invisibility and fuel loneliness. For learners coming from relatively small high schools, the university's scale of operations involves making transitions that are often underestimated by those familiar with discourses

of space and time in HE systems. Simply negotiating the self-regulated time and spaces of university lecture venues, timetables and tutorials is a major transitional learning for the first-year student. This is besides the level of epistemological engagement that HE entails.

This theme re-emphasised that always being alone is not desirable; it is a consequence of not belonging, which is aggravated by several factors such large class sizes, time spent commuting and the inability of students, especially new students, to redefine their identities.

8.3.2.2 HAVING FRIENDS

In contrast to being 'always alone', having friends on campus is associated with many positive feelings such as happiness "*a bit of joy in life*" [Brie_FG] 13, freedom to be yourself "*to express herself with her friends*" [Nhloniphi_FG] 14 and to have fun, "*I can feel like I can laugh and talk*" [Razeena_PG] 15. Friends provide a much-needed support network "*to talk about her problems*" [Nhloniphi_FG] 14 and access to leisure time, "*to chill*". [Razeena_I1] 16

Referring to the photograph of her friends [6C] on the lawn on campus, Razeena explains how having friends enables access to leisure time and leisure spaces on campus,

This semester I finally found my feet. I have a close-knit group there are only...like... four of us. I like that, you know, support around you all the time. If you are alone and you done with your lectures, you can just phone and say, "Hey are you done? Do you want to chill?" Because last semester, I felt very...not outcasted... because I did have friends, but...like...no one that was very close to me. So a lot of the times, if I did not have any lectures...or... um... and stuff like that... I would just ask my mom to come fetch me. Because there was no reason. [Razeena_I1] 16

Having friends on campus is significant to Razeena as something she can also reflect back on in the future, "*we are making memories. You are not going to remember [the] test you had or the assignment due, but... but... [you will remember] time spent with friends, the food.*" [Razeena_I1] 2

Eating food on campus is associated with other people or friends. Razeena would not have eaten on campus if she did not have friends to eat with. Similarly, Wisdom will only buy lunch when he is working with other people, "*buying lunch is something that I don't do when I am alone*" and then it is from students making food in the residences, "*now students are selling different things at residence*" [Wisdom_I1] 17, not at the food outlets on campus.

By contrast, Sipho sees the matter of food as activating personal challenges. He avoids eating in public because he "*[does not] feel comfortable... like... in open spaces and eating.*" [Sipho_I1] 18 He even

avoids going to some of the food outlets on campus as these are associated with ‘cool kids’. He comments on the food outlets: “it’s a cool people place and the cool people hang out there.” [Sipho_11] 19 He does not feel he belongs to this kind of community. Sipho and his friends claim that they do not like the public spaces of the university very much. They either gather in the university park, hang out in the residence, or leave and go off-campus.

Underlying Sipho’s critique of the current food outlets is a sense that they do not allow a person of his ilk to feel welcome. He comments that the food spaces are spaces which are a public demonstration of students who are keen to assert their confident personalities. This is something he is not yet comfortable to do. No mention is made as to whether financial reasons for non-participation in these food spaces regulate his conduct. It appears that he simply chooses to declare that he does not eat in public spaces. He and his friends disconnect into private [less visible] spaces to assert their individual personalities.

Food on campus is a means to bring people together but also to segregate students into different groupings based on socioeconomic class and popularity.⁷ Walking or wandering on campus is associated with loneliness, seeking out spaces to pass the time, while the more immobile sedentary activity of occupying leisure spaces is associated with having friends. The potential to nurture these relationships to form long-lasting friendships is enabled in the informal spaces of HE. However, the possibility or opportunity of igniting friendships requires a spatiality of familiarity and students taking or being enabled to take the initiative.

8.3.3 BECOMING THROUGH EPISTEMIC GROWTH AND PERSONAL GROWTH

Students experience their becoming as both personal and epistemic growth within HE, the former in support of the non-academic self and the latter in support of the academic self [See Figure 8.4]. The factors that contribute to their becoming such as peer support, accommodation arrangements, and relationships with others are discussed below.

8.3.3.1 EPISTEMIC GROWTH

A master’s student’s reading of the photograph [3C] of a man pointing to a wall to which are attached many notes of varying colours, was reported as follows. The respondent suggested that the person in the photograph was confirming his university experience as an epistemic journey, a coming to know and be as an academic process. This process was not necessarily considered as related to a specific career or a degree, but as gaining knowledge and learning how to learn. The respondent said the following of the photograph,

⁷ This was discussed in more detail in Theme 2 Controlling and Freeing in Chapter seven under the subsection ‘Food Choice’.

[It] [!]looks like a whole lot of ideas that don't necessarily make sense at the time, but you are putting them together: making sense of them, explaining them, questioning them, having to...kind of...own them. Knowing that you don't know a lot. That's about a whole journey of knowledge and learning processes. [Peter_Ex] 27

Another student's reading of the same photograph relates students' becoming within the university as more directed towards professional development and notes that attaining 'lawyer, engineer, architect' status requires both pre-planning and academic performance.

This is how I aim to become this lawyer or engineer, this architect...architecture student, so this person now... is... has a plan on the ground, and they are now writing down their ideas on the board. And making time frames of... "How do I want to pass?" [Hloni_FG] 28

These two responses attest to the divergent views of becoming as the growth of knowledge or a skills set to prepare students for the working world. Which views students should aspire to is debatable, but what this research can attest to is that what is driving some students' epistemic growth is not aspirational, but the fear of becoming a failure.

Epistemic growth as propelled through fear of failure, not through the potential of success was noted in the students' responses. Brie highlighted how her family would perceive her should she not succeed academically.

It's not like an obvious thing. If you don't take the initiative and do your best and stuff, then you are almost a failure to your family. So...um. So, I want to do the best in everything I can do because I...um...don't want to land up not getting somewhere in life. And I suppose, I don't like the idea of becoming a failure. [Brie_I1] 31

The danger of becoming a failure in the eyes of her family was a key driver in maintaining Brie's academic performance.

Support in fostering epistemic growth within student residences could occur through careful pairing of roommates. Regarding roommate preference, two first-year students from different disciplines, who shared a residence room, agreed that they needed to share with someone with the same self-drive and ambition as themselves. However, given a choice as to that someone being from the same discipline, they both unequivocally saw the benefit of this. The primary reason was their immediate desire to fulfil their academic obligations as it "helps you academically". [Sifiso+Lungelo_Ex] 29 They felt that being from the same discipline would be beneficial both from a space-saving perspective and from an academic one, in being able to share information and "motivate[s] each other." [Sifiso+Lungelo_Ex] 29

Having roommates that share one's ambition can support epistemic growth while spending large amounts of time and energy travelling or moving between campus and accommodation can thwart that growth, *"I stay in a commune... it's far... it's almost 30 minutes walk."* [Mhambi_Ex] 30

As this student relates, the time lost makes becoming feel unattainable, *"Yeah, we don't have um time to recover. We don't have time to-to-to become."* [Mhambi_Ex] 30

Students perceive the epistemic journey of becoming as both a process and a destination, in which social relations with others and family pressure can enable mobility, yet they can also be crippled by time, where there is not enough time left in their daily lived experience of campus for academics, or for self.

8.3.3.2 PERSONAL GROWTH

Becoming on campus is also about non-academic realisations and learnings that occur through interactions with fellow students and an understanding of self on campus. This could be sparked through academic choices, such as the realisation of an incorrect or inappropriate path chosen in gaining access to the university. As one of the participants noted in the first interview, he was still looking for his passion, as he was not finding it in his course.

Ironically, his passion [Nhlonipho_I1] 33 is entangled within what gained him access to the university in the first place, namely his natural talent in maths. This skill made him a good candidate to tutor first-year students in a module that was notoriously difficult and aptly described by another participant as a *"welcome to university"* module [Wisdom_I1] 34. In helping and supporting his fellow students, he is beginning to realise how this tutoring is contributing to a personal realisation of his becoming, which he explains as follows,

Ah, I express myself usually when I help someone...like...I usually become a tutor so when I am helping someone. Yeah that's when I...okay...express myself. Yeah. [Nhlonipho_PG] 35

Becoming as a realisation that you are not who you thought you were, and that your sense of self was a construction by your friends in high school, turns out to be glaringly apparent for some students when they enter university for the first time. Within this new community, students confront their own identity and what this might be. Confronting head-on all the discomfort and distress that this brings, is explained by Ayanda,

[B]ecause high school was our comfort zone. Then when you got out, you got to discover what kind of people we are, what exactly do we like, not what our friends tell us what we should like. I had no idea what was mental health, what was what. You see when I got here I realise...gosh...

I have been facing these issues for a long time now. And I never really understood what it was. So, I think a university for me, has been like a great change. [Ayanda_Ex] 37

Ayanda spoke of the transition between the contained ‘comfort zone’ of high school in which she knew everyone, and leaving, when she ‘got out to discover’, the space of HE in which she had to start making new friends. When speaking about the ‘new life’ afforded at university and the ‘comfort zone’ of high school she refers to the collective ‘our’ and ‘people’ and then switches back to the first person ‘I’ when referring to mental illness. The use of the collective pronoun could be to emphasise that she is not alone in these views. She acknowledges that the transition to university has been a great change, but through this process, she has become aware of the state of her mental health. Regarding her comment on “*certain kind of space to figure out who you*” [Ex] 37, Ayanda could be referring to the clinic or psychologist on campus that would have advised her about her mental health issues. Attending to students’ health and wellbeing is an example of the growing welfare needs provided by the university.

In contrast to Ayanda, Scarlett has an incredibly strong sense of who she is, what she wants to become, and with whom she will associate in the process of becoming. “*If they do I tell them where to get off, I am like... this is me. This is Scarlett. If you think I am this type of person or that type of person. Go leave me alone.*” [Scarlett_Ex] 38

Scarlett’s becoming is fostered by a clear sense of who she is, what she enjoys doing, and how this will influence her post-graduate degree choice. Scarlett’s becoming affects her epistemic becoming; as she explains, she has mapped out her career path, “*I am going to pursue a post-grad in drama, acting and directing [be]cause I love creating where people speak their voice, other than standing up here and speak[ing].*” [Scarlett_Ex] 38

Becoming academically and becoming non-academically are two different things. The first is an identity alignment with the chosen area of study and what that means for the student. The second is a sense of self and being in touch with one’s mental health, including dreams and desires. The academic becoming can awaken the non-academic becoming of a student, failing which students will either look elsewhere academically or look elsewhere to fulfil their non-academic becoming. What this begins to allude to is the importance of the development of the whole student.

8.3.3.3 ENCOUNTER WITH DIFFERENCE

Universities should be places for encounters with difference, where students are exposed to different views and cultures with the potential to shape and transform them for living in a multicultural/pluralistic society. Students have opportunities both on campus and in their accommodation to spend long

periods of time with fellow students. This can sometimes have negative consequences, as in the case of the misfit between Ayanda and her peers on campus, thereby contributing to her experiences of loneliness. Other times, as it dawned on Nozipho, the homogeneity of the society that lives within the residences is an awkward realisation where opportunities for interacting with students of diverse races, cultural groups and nationalities have become slim. The conversation was centred on a photograph of a student seated at her desk in her bedroom [7C]. Nozipho knew straight away this was not of a room in a campus residence and why. Our conversation follows on from where Nozipho begins to associate students in residence with race groups: *“I have seen Indians, I have never seen white... I am lying, oh my God, I am lying... I forgot Addison. Only international students stay in res. Only international students.”* [Nozipho_Ex] 39

Her realisation is that being white means you don't stay in residence unless you are an international student and even then this is so infrequent that it is likely to be forgotten. Nozipho's reference to 'Addison' also alludes to the insider or outsidership (McNess, Arthur, & Crossley, 2015) of residences and how students group and categorise each other through race and space. In so doing, the category 'international student' signifies being both exempt from racial classification and not being from this place [South Africa]. Addison is an outsider. By contrast, 'Indian' reflects being from this place, a South African, bound to the racial classification norms that this designation infuses within it – Indian are insiders but not insider-insiders.

Tariq [Ex] 40 notes that in his discipline,

[Y]ou only stick with the group you are with otherwise you don't see anybody else. It's hard to interact with other people, if you don't see them on a daily basis. Because you are so comfortable with the people around you.

Nozipho raises the matter of homogeneity of race in the residences while Tariq raises another form of homogeneity that of discipline clusters. Students of similar disciplines stick together as their time tables, lecture venues and daily activities occur within similar spaces and times. This enables friendships to form from these fluid interactions between students. The ease of this familiarity accounts for students' sense of belonging within their discipline cluster. However, this could also be seen as limiting relative to their potential becoming as opportunities to encounter differing worldviews and networks across campus are restricted to their discipline-specific 'comfort zone'. Tariq's 'comfort zone' is a consequence of both where his discipline is located on campus, in an isolated space, as well as the comprehensive facilities provided in this location. This affects the student's enthusiasm to move out of his space. As Tariq notes, *“there is no need for us to go anywhere else; our space is there, we can relax, we can do our work, and it's more conducive in the studio we got wifi, laptop.”* [Tariq_Ex] 40

A counterpoint to these interpretations of homogeneity is found in Solomon's response to a photograph [6C] of three students of the same race and gender on the campus lawns. "[W]ith the diversity... here... at our university you get to meet new people, and you get to make new friends" [Solomon_Ex] 41. Solomon sees diversity in the range of possible friendships available on campus. The emphasis on 'new' speaks to students being open to encounters with people they do not know and the possibility of these encounters leading to lasting friendships. Solomon's view of diversity is not narrowly restricted to race or discipline clusters, but includes ethnic, cultural and international diversity. He claims that,

[W]e have international students as they bring along their different cultures. We have our very own cultures. So it is that diverse, and if you get too exposed to such, you learn to become tolerant and to appreciate the diversity of these universities. Yes, the university is definitely 'Inspiring Greatness!' [Solomon_Ex] 41

Solomon expressed how cultural diversity both regionally and internationally is unmasked within the university space and how his interaction with students of different cultures has taught him to be broad-minded and accepting of others. He concludes by internalising the university's slogan of 'Inspiring Greatness!' thereby acknowledging its contribution to his becoming.

Becoming is realisation through self as well through interaction with others, where the potential for engagement with others unlike oneself, over longer periods, could occur in spaces such as in student residences and leisure spaces on campus. However, the potential for inter-racial contact or even across socio-economic groups proved to be limited [as was discussed in how food is distributed on campus in Theme two in Chapter seven] on this campus.

If the opportunity to explore difference and diversity locally is not enabled in the campus environment, one wonders what kind of citizenry we are preparing our students for.

8.3.4 BECOMING IS ABOUT GROWTH OR MOBILITY MOVING THROUGH OR OUT OF HE

Becoming is also a process through which students navigate the construction of their identity or identities as they move into, through and out of HE. Solomon clearly articulates the process of becoming a student of HE:

*For me, it was a milestone to be actually invited to become part of such an international society [referring to the Golden Key Society]. And after that, I took part in the Golden Key executive committee for *** college, and that is where it all began. And from there I became a house committee member and joined clubs and societies and all... And actually have that confidence and that initiative to go after my dreams and goals. [Solomon_Ex] 42*

Becoming a member of the Golden Key Society⁸ was a turning point that was pivotal in Solomon's HE experience, setting forth a trajectory of becoming a leader, which he embraced wholeheartedly. The confidence gained through this momentous event will sustain him beyond his present leadership roles on campus, to realise his dreams and goals for the future outside of campus.

Solomon is an example of a student capable of moving through the system, capitalising on what it offers, while Langa illustrates how becoming could be viewed as a process of moving out of rather than within HE. Langa described himself as an entrepreneur. In identifying himself as such, he was not defining or confining himself to being a student or to aligning himself with his particular discipline. I was intrigued by how he identified himself as being an entrepreneur and questioned Langa about how HE might assist in preparing students for the future. He responded as follows,

[E]ven though the formal education like you said [referring to the researcher] the formal one... like the lecturers... is not doing a lot... ah.... to teach... eh... to teach us to... whatever we want to become. Could be... um... an entrepreneur. Especially I think a lot of people should be encouraged to start our own businesses and stuff. Especially here in South Africa. [Langa_Ex] 43

Langa's response highlights two things, the first being that in the process of becoming, students are looking beyond disciplinary or epistemic boundaries towards the world of work. Secondly, the university is seen as contributing to and defining those disciplinary boundaries within the institution and not connecting students to the world of work and earning a living. Langa's comments should be viewed within the context of South Africa's high unemployment rate, which stands at 31% amongst graduates under 24 years of age (Bangani, 2019).

Solomon and Langa illustrate becoming within the university and the formal curriculum's contribution to becoming beyond university. In both instances, the curriculum has been the facilitator for change but is not solely responsible for their 'becoming'. Solomon's academic achievements enabled access to certain privileges to allow his becoming. Excelling in academics had a catalytic effect on his attitude and perception of self, which had a corresponding knock-on effect on his academic and non-academic pathway through university. Langa's becoming is thwarted by formal education not contributing to his desire to be an entrepreneur. While the formal institutional pathway has, in a sense, failed him, he has created his non-academic pathway by looking elsewhere for assistance in his becoming to support his desire to become an entrepreneur when he leaves the university, through using the institution's resources, namely people and the internet.⁹

⁸ Golden Key is a society that seeks to promote academic excellence. Membership is by invitation only and potential members must achieve an accumulated average of 65%.

⁹ This is explained in full in Chapter seven under the subheading 'Planning for a change in career path'.

8.3.5 BECOMING AND CHOICE OF FRIENDS – CHOOSING FRIENDS WISELY

If having friends is important for belonging on campus, then choosing the right friends is important for one's becoming. Thadie suggests that there are two paths that students could choose from based on the friendship networks formed at university. She names the diverging paths as the church and partying. The latter steers you away from your studies; *"lose yourself in it"*, while the former keeps you *"grounded...so that you can focus"* on your becoming. [Thadie_Ex] 44

For Thadie, choosing the partying pathway means losing not only a sense of who you are but also a sense of direction and no longer being able to navigate clearly through HE to achieve your goals. In contrast, the church pathway keeps you firmly on the path with an end goal or destination in sight. The church path was clearly her preferred path, but even though she was a Christian before coming to university this did not materialise as the natural path for her to follow from the beginning of her HE experience. Thadie relates, that when she got to university, *"things got out of the way because of the life."* [Thadie_Ex] 45 This was a consequence of *"new friends that influence you, that are living a different lifestyle that you are used to back home. So you adapt yourself to that [new] life and you lose yourself in it."* [Thadie_Ex] 45

Thadie explains how new friendships formed at university are not always positive and how they can change you. She even changed her way of living to suit the new friendships, and in so doing, became immersed in this new life, thereby shunning both her old identity and the goals she had set herself. It took Thadie two years to return to her faith after realising that this kind of lifestyle was not conducive and that her academic work was suffering as a result, *"[a]fter my first year. No 2014 was a bit better. 2015 was a mess and 2016 I realised this is not for me in my academic life and then I went back."* [Thadie_Ex] 45

Similarly, Solomon [Ex] 46 refers to two kinds of people on campus, the good and the bad. The good should have the same drive and ambition as you and you need to be selective in finding 'good' people. Solomon identifies people he wants to associate with in his tutorial groups and actively engages in conversations with them to see how they interact with him.

These two students have consciously chosen friends that they can aspire to and with whom they can have *"share[d] life experiences on how to face those life experiences"* [Thadie_Ex] 44 and explore new potential. Solomon elaborates, *"Yah, I am looking for someone to challenge me... and... to the limits. So I can explore new potentials, that even I was not aware of it."* [Solomon_Ex] 46

Solomon and Thadie are choosing to have friends for clearly defined purposes. Thadie is looking for friendships that provide support, mentoring and guidance as to how best to navigate the path and to keep her focussed on it. Solomon is confident of his path; he knows where he is going and how to get through HE. His friendships are designed to contribute to excelling in that path. Hence, he is purposefully looking for friendships that will challenge and push him to exceed his known capabilities.

Positive social relations play a strategic role in supporting students' academic becoming and in their sense of belonging on campus. In this respect, becoming is about choosing the right friends, and belonging is about having friends.

How, then, do universities enable students to identify with particular lifestyles, people and organisations that could be beneficial to their academic and non-academic becoming both in practice and in place?

8.3.6 CONCLUDING COMMENTS: BELONGING TO BECOME/ BECOMING TO BELONG

Belonging refers to the systems and social relations that foster exclusion and inclusionary principles that unmask the student's identity and reveal them for who they truly are. *Becoming* refers to independent identities of self, multiple becomings as it were of the non-academic and academic kind, of knowing through disciplinary knowledge, learning processes and constructive relations.

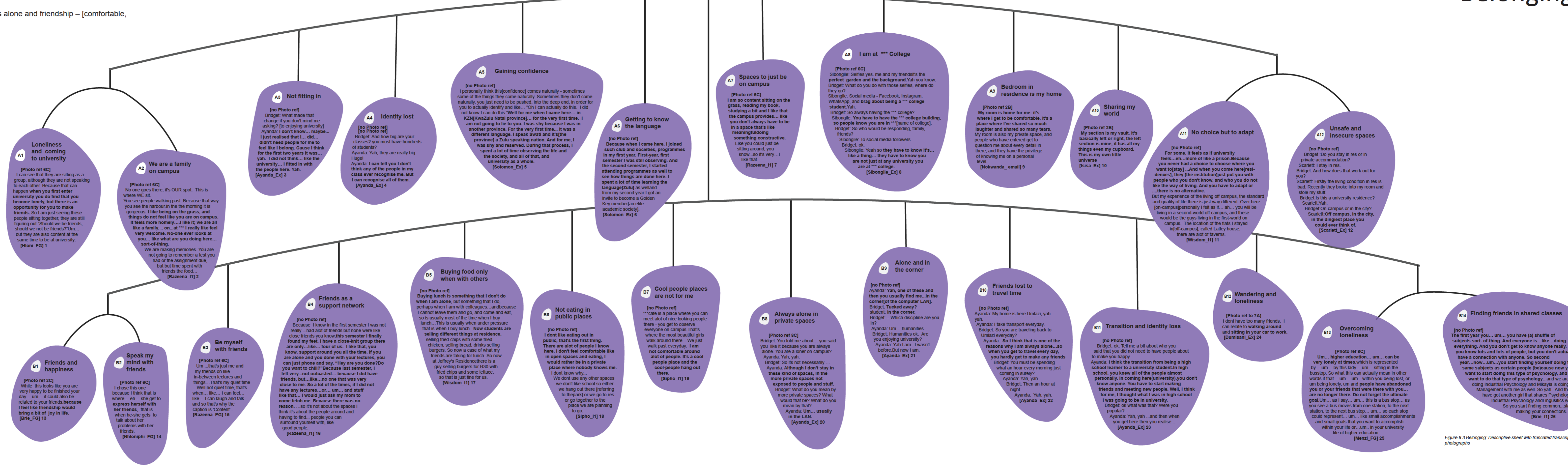
The key idea emerging from the theme of *Belonging and Becoming* is the brittleness (Appadurai, 2004) of the student's transition from high school to HE. Students not only have the potential to lose their sense of identity within the large and alienating classes at university but, when dependant on university housing, are also forced to adapt to residential environments that are neither of their choosing nor conducive to studying. The homogeneity of these environments means that students are in a sense socialising with others in the same circumstances as themselves, i.e., financially challenged and struggling to cope with the rigour of academic life.

In the HE environment, students begin to discover what they would like to become. This realisation comes about through the relations they have, or not, with fellow students, and through an awakening of self, as well as in emergent comprehension of the appropriateness of the academic choices they have made. Students within the HE environment have to simultaneously navigate fitting in and moving through the system. Friendships or religious associations serve as valuable resources for both their personal and academic development.

Becoming and belonging are entangled in the development of the students' academic and non-academic self in the space of HE. The feeling of belonging helps to support students' retention (Morieson, Murray, Wilson, Clarke, & Lukas, 2018) in HE to upskill or 'up know' them to ultimately be mobilised into the working world and become independent, knowing adults. In this process of mobilising through [becoming], HE students' aspirations to develop both their academic and non-academic self become discernible. HE's role in the development of the whole student [Academic and non-academic] becomes ever more apparent.

Belonging

- A Belonging as about connection to a people and place
- B Belonging - always alone and friendship – [comfortable, having friends]



Photograph 6C
Content



Photograph 8C
Journey to the Future



Photograph 2B
Vault/Somewhere upstairs



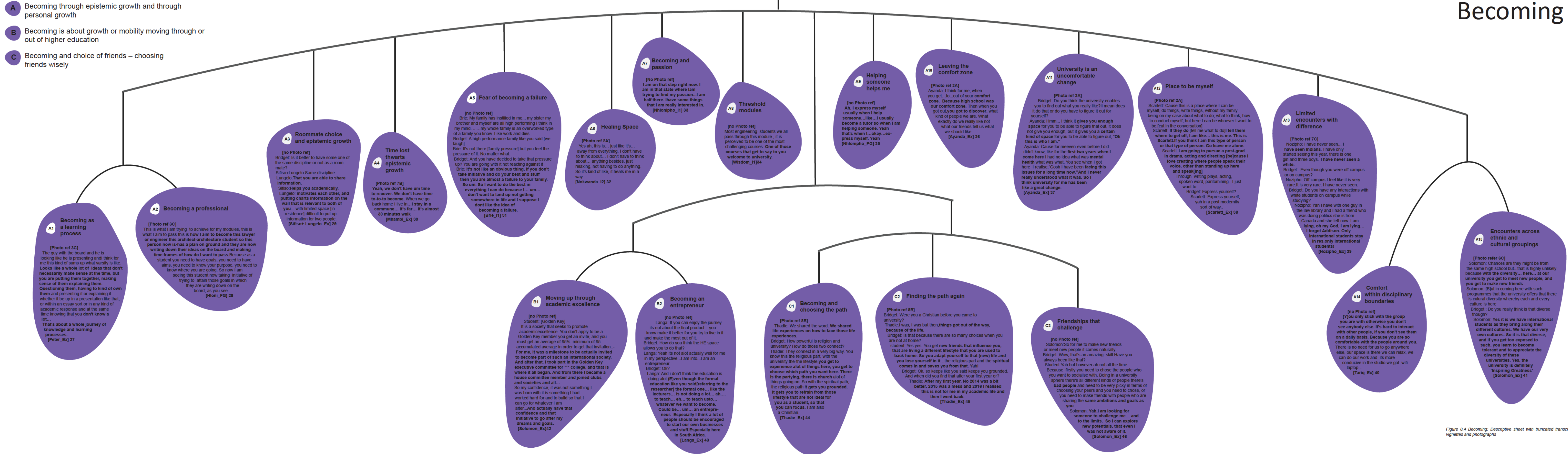
Photograph 2C
R, U, N



Photograph 7A
My route to recovery, class, calm, while trying to do everything at once

Figure 8.3 Belonging. Descriptive sheet with truncated transcripts and photographs

Becoming



Photograph 3C
The Future Background



Photograph 7B
Freedom to study (and at times sleep), be mobile, relax and be myself



Photograph 2A
Therapy



Photograph 7C
Messy, but I think there is method to the madness



Photograph 8B
Faith and Education

Belonging and Becoming

I just did not fit in when I came here, I thought it would be like high school and I would be seen in the same way. But, I have come to accept that always being alone is how it is going to be. It took me two years to realise that I don't need people to feel like I belong here on campus. But that's ok I have found a space in the corner in the LAN where I can just get on and do my thing. [Ayanda_Ex] 21

When I am tired of sitting there, I just wander around the campus. I don't eat until I get home. I don't like eating in public, I don't feel comfortable like in open spaces and eating. I would rather be in a private place where nobody knows me. I don't know why? So you won't find me in the cafe, that's the cool place where the cool kids hang out. [Sipho_11] 19

I like sitting here on the grass, reading my book, looking out at the view just like sitting around, you know. I really feel welcome here on campus. No one looks at you, and like what are you doing here kind of thing. I can just laugh and talk and be myself. Before I had close friends on campus, there was no reason for me to stay on longer. I would just call my mom to come to fetch me early. But now that I have some friends to do things with, I don't have lunch with, to talk about things, I don't call my mom to fetch me early anymore. We are making memories we won't remember the tests we wrote or the lectures we attended, but we will remember the time spent with friends. We make these little videos of the time spent together, and we share it with one another. [Razeena_11] 2

Figure 8.4 Becoming: Descriptive sheet with truncated transcripts vignettes and photographs

8.4 SYNTHESIS OF THE CHAPTER

The two themes [*Reflecting and Dreaming; Belonging and Becoming*] address students' aspirations within and beyond the spatiality of HE, based on their present realities.

Coming to university is a 'great change' and a chance for a 'new life' in which students need to navigate both the *adjustment* as well as the *opportunity* that HE affords them.

The concepts within the last two themes [*Reflecting and Dreaming, Belonging and Becoming*] begin to entwine two aspects of the HE experience. The Theme four couplet [*Reflecting*] and Theme five couplet [*Belonging*] reconfigure as '*Reflecting and Belonging*', as both contribute to an interpretation of the processes of students negotiating their academic and non-academic development, navigating their changes and experiences. The remaining couplets, reconfigured as *Becoming and Dreaming* both present a view on how students drive their aspirations for the future.

Reflecting is presented as different from the agenda of negotiating *Belonging*. The former calls for quiet spaces and time alone, while the latter requires building relationships in spaces that encourage interaction such as in smaller classes and access to informal leisure spaces on campus. *Reflection and Belonging* are time dependant, yet time as differently experienced; in the first instance, time to avoid engagement with others and in the latter to spend time being with others.

Becoming and Dreaming are inextricably connected as dreaming is the pathway to becoming (Nikora, 2013). This chapter has shown how students seek alignment between their aspirations for the future and their chosen field of study. *Dreaming and Becoming* is not simply a cognitive activity. It activates the process of foregrounding, mobilising and harnessing one's personal *capacities* (Appadurai, 2004) and *capabilities* (Sen, 1999). It activates possibilities to aspire to things other than what one's history or legacy predisposed one to. Within this view, aspirations entail a collective capacity to aspire, informed by "credible stories of the possibility to move forward, outward and upward" (Appadurai, 2011, p. 39). Aspirations are assembled through students' interaction with virtual and physical communities of peers within HE to share experiences and knowledge of pathways. They constitute possibilities to extend beyond limited personal, community or familial knowledges while recognising that these systemic heritages are ever-present in the choices one makes.

Students' individual capability to aspire is considered as informed by their freedom to convert the resources¹⁰ made available to them into valuable [a combination of] functionings [capability sets] (Clark,

¹⁰ Physical infrastructure such as the library, LANs, IT; social support – clinics, counselling, human – lecturers, tutors.

2005) such as belonging and becoming. This conversion was noted in how students functioned strategically to create friendships that matter. They actively and optimally used spaces that supported their becoming. However, the capability of freedom of choice is not equally experienced, or actively engaged by all students. Some choose to not engage with available personal, institutional and curricular resources within the campus. Transformation of realisation of the use of resources is influenced by varied factors: students' personal mental health, social and cultural norms, the quality of the physical environment itself on campus (Wells, n.d.) and students' economic status. Any combination of these factors could disable their functioning.

Ultimately what functionings matter for a university student is to have a good life that promotes their well-being. Students actively seek out those spaces which afford them the realisation of this well-being. Wellbeing is not restricted to epistemic growth and development, but also includes social and non-academic aspirations and dreams. What enables the relationship between resources and students' functioning is actively seeking out those imaginative possibilities to realise these capabilities and capacities. The latter are the focus of further discussion in Chapter nine, which explores how students themselves conceive of an ideal campus in pragmatic terms. The chapter addresses students' personal, aspirational, academic and non-academic needs, hopes, wants and desires within an imagined future.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The data for this final analysis chapter and the final theme of *Foregrounding* were drawn from a data production exercise which was distinct from the previous two analysis chapters. The method used to collect the data, the methodology and the theoretical basis that informed this chapter were explained in Chapters four and five.¹

Seven students were asked to imagine their ideal campus and to locate spaces on a map as well as describe their ideal campus in a notebook, utilising tools I had provided. They were free to choose the spatial context or time period in which to locate their ideal campus and in this process were responsible for the generation of the data.

Each student indicated what they thought to be central to their imagined campus, what they viewed as peripheral and what was to be located outside of their campus. In the analysis of their ideal campus, there were clear spatial commonalities as well as distinct spatial differences. The differences emerged as peripheralised desires for their ideal campus that were strikingly unique from one another; desires that were located within an otherwise humdrum view of what the core purpose of a university should be.

In their imagined campus space, students reproduced both their collective desire to interact with others and their individual desires related to their personal development. They were free to imagine their ideal campus with no restrictions. However, their ability to conceive of an ideal campus was both constrained and enabled relative to their *perceived and lived* (Lefebvre, 1991) current campus experience.

The purpose of collecting the data in this method shifted from addressing descriptive questions of what students know about informal spaces of HE, towards the theoretical in terms of what explains students knowings of informal spaces. Furthermore, it aimed to determine what this knowing enables or constrains relative to their capacity and capability to realise their hopes and dreams [ultimately their *foregrounds*].

The analysis of the data ends with a diagram [See *Figure 9.1*] for the reader to refer to while reading the chapter. However, unlike in the earlier chapters [seven and eight] that include text as represented in the form of a mobile, this chapter's diagram is a visual representations of the students' imagined

¹ Chapters four and five address the Imaginative mapping exercise in more detail.

campus. The illustrations as well as short vignettes enable the reader to make a direct visual comparison of the three proposed campus models.

The analysis component is structured according to the same themes generated from the students' lived experience of the campus [Chapter seven] and their dreams for the future [Chapter eight]. The reason is to better understand the relationship between students' *present* and *future* [hopes and dreams] and to explore how and why the *themes* might become more nuanced when set within an imagined context.

The focused analysis led to the generation of three models that reflect the possibilities students raised with regard to their ideal campus configurations. These models fall under the theme of *Dreaming and Reflecting* as their ideal campus replicated both their aspirations and their reflections on their recent experiences of campus. Thereafter, the students' imagined campuses were explored through the many *functionings* [being and doing] and *freedoms* [real opportunities] they enable. Data generated from this process were listed and then grouped according to their relevance to the themes of *Mobilising and Immobilising*, *Freeing and Controlling*, *Planning and Studying* and lastly *Becoming and Belonging*. A table at the end of the discussion on *Dreaming and Reflecting* records the contents of each theme.

In this chapter, the concepts are purposefully switched in each theme to represent the re-reading of the concepts in an imagined context. Furthermore, the concepts are explored in relation to students' academic and non-academic selves.

9.2 FOREGROUNDING EXPLAINED AND EXPLORED

A student's *foreground* reflects their own or the broader student community's expectations, hopes, fears and frustrations. A foreground is formed through experiences of possibilities and obstructions that could exist within a student's given socio-political as well as spatial context (Skovsmose, 2016). Foregrounds, or future possibilities, can be imposed both by their context as well as by others. Foregrounds can also change or shift in time and other contexts, and one student may have multiple foregrounds.

Students experience meaning [fullness] as related to their foregrounds and the future possibilities that could arise out of their present circumstances, less so within the present lived experience itself. As Skovsmose (2016, p. 9) states, "[s]tudents' experiences of meaning have [less] to do with the formation of the life-worlds in which they are situated; it has [more] to do with the horizons that these life-worlds

open in front of them.” Students’ aspirations for the future and their lived experience or meaning-making of campus are intimately connected through the space of HE.

This segment of the research poses the question, ‘If students were to imagine their own campus, by being active in generating alternate spatialities and consequent meanings to their place of HE, what aspirations about HE could arise?’

The students used the Location Task Tool² to create an environment conducive and unique to their hopes, dreams and desires. In using their imagination, they are proposing a new context in which they locate spaces, activities and corresponding social relations that are meaningful and significant to them. Through understanding the spatiality of the imagined campus, students’ foregrounds become apparent as do the mechanisms they have put in place to enable or suspend their foregrounds.

Students’ imaginings of an ideal campus nevertheless, draw on their present experiences and knowledge of campus spaces and relations. In this sense, their imagined campuses tend to be reactionary as opposed to idealistic.

9.3 DREAMING AND REFLECTING: *THREE MODELS OF CAMPUS CONFIGURATION*

Given an opportunity to dream and conceptualise an ideal campus, the students generated seven individual models. These were then abstracted and amalgamated, to form three key models of an imagined campus spatial configuration. The three models encompass characteristics of the original seven models but in a manner that accentuates their distinct characteristics, differentiating each model more clearly from the other. The first model is named the *Whole-being Model*, the second the *Organisational-being Model* and the last the *Well-being Model*.

These models include three key aspects which the participants intuitively embedded in their imagined campus. The first is a preconception of what the *core purpose of campus* should be, while the second is the placement of *activities*, often in reaction to their current campus experiences. Reflection on their current experiences that manifests in a reactive way to their imagined campus underpins these imaginative representations. The third aspect is the inclusion of certain facilities and spaces within their imagined campus to reflect their *individual needs* and desires about what HE could be. It is noted that

² The Location Task Tool comprises of a map, a notebook and an interview. More detail as what this comprises and how it is utilised is provided in Chapter five.

these synthesised reflections are as much about the future as they are about the present temporal space within which the students' reflective imaginative data production was constructed.

Each model has a key protagonist drawn from three of the seven students, while the other four play a supporting role in contributing to the general characteristics of the three models.³ The models indicate students' prioritisation of certain spaces above others within the campus by locating spaces that are significant to them at the centre of their model with those less so toward the periphery of the campus. In locating certain spaces inside their imagined campus, students are indicating where the responsibilities of HE lie and what HE is perceived to be about. In contrast, locating certain spaces outside the campus is representative of what HE is not for these students. Why students chose to prioritise certain spaces above others within the campus and how the campus interacts with the outside environment contributed to the generation of three very different spatial models.

The spatiality of the three models is distinct. The first advocates for *social* as well as *physical proximity*, and the second for physically *segregating academic from non-academic* related spaces and social interaction. The last model is about visually *integrating the natural environment* into the campus where both academic and non-academic spaces and interaction can benefit from the proximity to nature. These models thus reflect students' spatial preferences, and the relationship between spaces and the social relations and activities that are enabled through the spatiality of the layout.

A descriptive analysis of the three models follows to explain the characteristics of each more specifically. Thereafter, the three models are compared and contrasted, elucidating their commonalities and differences. Finally, the three models' contribution to enabling students' freedom to function is explored within the context of the themes explored in chapters seven and eight.

9.3.1 WHOLE-BEING MODEL

The first model is inward focussed, including activities and facilities that are considered fun at the centre of the campus. The centre is the "*social space*" with a shopping centre, entertainment centre and food spaces, which are placed in the middle to be easier and closer to access than at the ends of the campus. The *social space* is described as "*away from all the stress of learning and submitting but also within campus. People tend to find fun outside of campus, but here there is everything within*" [Nokwanda_IMNotebook].⁴ The collective space is distinct and removed from formal academic spaces which are associated with the pressure to perform, yet still located within the confines of the campus.

³ The method of sourcing the data from participants as well as the data analysis are discussed in more detail in Chapter five and six.

⁴ Imaginative mapping notebook [as discussed in Chapter five] is abbreviated to IMNotebook. The participant interview after submission of the Imaginative mapping exercise abbreviated to IMInterview.

The emphasis is making the campus an enjoyable space that students can come to as opposed to leaving campus in order to find entertainment.

The placement of fun spaces at the centre with academic spaces just outside of this does not necessarily mean that students see social spaces as more important than academic spaces within HE. Academic spaces, such as classes and faculty buildings, are still considered the *“core of the university life”* [Brie_IMNotebook], as the principal purpose of the university is to provide education. However, these academic facilities are not located at the geographical core. The reason for locating social spaces at the centre is the opportunity this central location affords to, *“access it easily”* so that *“everyone can come together to study and cope with university life”* [Brie_IMNotebook]. Collective sympathy and encouragement from other students experiencing the same struggles in managing student life are facilitated in spaces which are central and accessible, thereby naturally bringing students together. The formal academic spaces of HE lie distanced from social spaces in order to physically and mentally separate non-academic activities from academic ones.

Surrounding the *‘social space’* are libraries and learning spaces which are recorded as *“lecture venues and tut venues”* [Nokwanda_IMNotebook]. The learning facilities are all located conveniently next to one another so there is no, *“running around after each lecture to find your next venue; they are all together”* [Nokwanda_IMNotebook]. The related academic activities are clustered together in order to maximise contact time with lecturers and content as opposed to time wasted in trying to locate venues that might be dispersed across the campus.

In terms of the transport options between residential accommodation and campus, the model proposes a *“campus shuttle drop[ing] people off in private accommodation”* and between accommodation or campus and the shops; *“each shuttle goes to a specific place at a particular time”* [Nokwanda_IMInterview]. A designated shuttle to each location, even to private residences which are not currently serviced by the university shuttle is recommended. Specific destinations, as well as the regularity and orderliness of a proposed scheduling of arrival and departure times, are required to serve shopping centres, and other spaces that students may need to regularly access off campus.

Residential accommodation spaces are located on the edges of campus within what is described as an *“RMS⁵ force...wall”* separating the inside from the outside. Students are evidently concerned about safety and creating an internal defensible space is seen as desirable. Safety and security related issues have furthermore generated a response to locate all spaces and facilities students currently use outside

⁵ RMS stands for Risk Management Services. The entrances and exits of campus perimeters are manned by security personnel. Access is gained through a student’s swipe card or with a parking disc. There is also currently access control into some buildings or parts thereof.

of the campus, within the campus. Accommodation and public transport are proposed as within the campus because of “*all the muggings*” in the transport spaces on the campus periphery [Nokwanda_IMInterview].

The proposed layout is a reaction to the perception that, “*this campus is so messy - everything is just everywhere*” [Nokwanda_IMNotebook]. Hence the clustering of similar or related activities and locating them close to one another as opposed to pepper-potting facilities across campus. This desire for order should not be confused with the modernist campus planning principles (Allen, 2007) of the 1950s and 1960s that segregated uses into clearly defined zones to ensure well-ordered developments located in high rise buildings in vast landscaped spaces [an institutional example of which would be Nelson Mandela University in South Africa]. Tidying up or organising the campus into similarly grouped activities was proposed to save students’ time and reduce the stress of trying to race across campus to reach venues on time while at the same time creating a socially stimulating and vibrant environment in which to be a student.

The Whole-being model also locates the entrance route to the core of the campus beyond the accommodation spaces as a response to the currently limited accommodation available. Making accommodation more visible is driven by the notion that for students, “*accommodation... [I think] is an important factor in university... They⁶ know they have been accepted, and seeing there is lots of accommodation*” [Nokwanda_IMInterview]. The visibility of accommodation is reassuring for incoming students in knowing both where they will live, and that there is enough space for all students who wish to be accommodated in residences while studying.

Furthermore, Nokwanda [IMInterview] explains that students “*need to get out of campus to have fun... Village, Larnies and Midway⁷ to have fun... We do have fun but [HE] is not a fun space.*” The campus can be enjoyable when socialising with friends but in itself is not an entertaining space. Students currently need to leave campus to access shopping centres and entertainment venues. In order to access these spaces, they need to take a taxi or bus and pay for transport. The university bus connects campuses and residences, but no other spaces that students might wish to access as part of their daily lives. In noting the desire for these kinds of spaces, spending power is highlighted. The protagonist for this model has access to ample pocket money, but there are no goods or services to buy on campus other than food [Nokwanda_IMInterview].

⁶ Referring to her fellow students.

⁷ Names of shopping centres changed.

The Whole-being model advocates for bringing fun onto campus and improving access within and to social spaces and within formal learning spaces. However, these non-academic [fun] and academic [stressful] spaces are viewed as distinct and distanced from one another [so students can de-stress] and the campus is separated from the outside [fear of crime] by a physical enclosure.

9.3.2 ORGANISATIONAL-BEING MODEL

The Organisational-being model has very clear conceptions of what is inside and what is on the outside of campus. Primary academic activities such as libraries, laboratories, and lecture venues, in other words, *“learning activities [are] at the centre,”* while what is considered peripheral and outside the campus includes a clinic, business centre and transport terminal. It is noted that, *“if you want to study, you know, you go to the centre of campus. The goal is to learn”* [Wisdom_IMInterview]. There is clear alignment between what is located centrally and what is considered the core purpose of the university, which is to gain knowledge within the formal spaces of academia. There are also socialising and networking hubs within this core, as well as food and vegetable kiosks, but their role is primarily supportive of the learning activities taking place at the centre.

Surrounding the academic space in a garden setting are the residences and sports grounds. The garden is seen as a *“personal and social space”* which also includes entertainment and sporting facilities [Wisdom_IMNotebook]. It is a space for both the individual and the collective, where *“students experience their after workday and on weekends”* [Wisdom_IMNotebook]; a place to relax at the end of a long day of lectures, studying or working on assignments. Separating the inside from the outside of the campus is more garden but with many more trees that encircle the campus along with a perimeter fence. The university gardens are a *“place where students and everyone can interact with both nature and other people”* [Wisdom_IMNotebook], contributing to a relaxing and interactive environment.

Defining the inside from the outside of the campus is a fence, the purpose of which is to *“prevent trespassing and to identify boundaries between inside and outside”* [Wisdom_IMNotebook]. Access control is proposed on all four cardinal points of the fence, thereby encouraging movement into and through the campus as opposed to restricting entry through one point. This model resonates with the smaller town campus models of old in America and the United Kingdom where universities were upheld as centres of information and knowledge production (Martin, Smith, & Phillips, 2005, p. 3). The town and the gown grew alongside each other in what would have once been rural surroundings, yet the purpose of the town and the gown remained very much distinct as did the architecture [local examples would be the University of Stellenbosch in Stellenbosch and Rhodes University in Makhanda].

The architecture of the campus space is described as the inside connecting freely to the outside and spaces flowing easily from one to the other, shaping spaces that are conducive to interaction, exchange and relaxation with others or with nature. The in-between spaces located outside buildings are seen as more conducive meeting spaces. These spaces are not limiting in terms of movement and students can interact more easily and fluidly in these spaces than they would if they were in a building [Wisdom_IMInterview].

Ancillary facilities such as banking, a business centre and a clinic are located outside of campus. Locating banking on the outside of the campus is a reaction to this activity being regarded as a waste of space on the current campus. The clinic is located within a public space on the current campus. Given the view that *“sick people need to be quarantined and isolated”* [Wisdom_IMNotebook], the model proposes moving it outside of campus where students needing medical attention can be addressed with more dignity and privacy.

In positioning the business centre outside the campus, the student is drawing attention to the tensions currently experienced between interests in business and academic obligations to learn. The business centre is clustered with other facilities [banks, stores, a bus terminus, and clinic] that are noted as *“auxiliary activities”* to those occurring inside the campus which are referred to as *“academic activities”* [Wisdom_IMNotebook]. Business is seen as a disturbance that needs to be managed:

[B]usiness is not learning; but I am looking at [the campus] is purely academics, business is an interest [auxiliary activity] ... looking at priorities people want to learn... more likely to disturb... all the attention that needs to be paid, when you are learning is at the centre.
[Wisdom_IMInterview]

Business is not regarded as the primary output that students want to gain from HE, which is to learn. In locating businesses outside the campus, access and use are restricted to when time allows, after other more important academic commitments on campus have been addressed. This reinforces the core purpose of the university and distances the world of work from that of learning.

An *“entrepreneurial hub”* [Hloni_IMNotebook] proposed by another student, would probably be conceived along similar lines to the business centre described above. This *‘entrepreneurial hub’* would be seen as igniting creativity and bringing different students together to develop ideas for businesses or inventions, working individually or in groups. However, the hub is not located outside the campus but close to the centre to introduce more creative spaces that engage the student mind within the campus. The student that proposed the *entrepreneurial hub* is a postgraduate student, while the student that punted the business centre is an undergraduate. The latter’s desire to meet his degree

expectations seems to dominate his interests and he is spatially and mentally separating these interests. However, the postgraduate student sees HE as a “*place not only for learning but to ignite creativity and thinking*” [Hloni_IMNotebook], which she feels could be addressed through this facility. Hloni is illustrating the potential of HE as a place where students play an active role in knowledge production and are not merely passive consumers of knowledge. The discrepancy between the two students with regard to self-generated knowledge reflects the expectation that postgraduates will contribute to new knowledge and knowledge generation, while undergraduates need to consume knowledge and stay focused on the curriculum to attain the first tier of qualifications.

The Organisational-being model advocates for learning over other interests or creative pursuits. Socialising and networking are all in support of learning. The architecture facilitates such interaction by being open, and the spaces between the inside and outside flow into one another. Nature serves as a relaxing space [entertaining and sporting] once the academic day is done. The boundary between what is inside and what is outside of campus is less clearly defined than in the previous model. However, it is nonetheless there to distinguish between what is considered the campus’ core purpose [to learn] from what is not.

9.3.3 WELL-BEING MODEL

The third model is driven by a *predefined context* in which the campus sits and orientates itself to take advantage of views and student access to the surrounding natural context. Two students located their campuses in close proximity to physical features such as the sea, mountains or countryside. However, only one indicated it on the Location Task Tool map in a front and central location,⁸ in the notebook and the interview. Another student described the location in the notebook and did not locate the natural context on the map.

The campus’ relationship with nature is described as “*embrace[ing] the natural environment as a space to enjoy and study in*” [Brie_IMNotebook] and as “*a relaxed space filled with views of the beach and a cool sea breeze*” [Sipho_IMNotebook]. Both quotations illustrate the students’ desire to not only be in beautiful settings but to experience that which these settings make them feel, which is stress-free, calm and happy. These students located their campuses near the sea to primarily enjoy the views: “*from there should be a view of the sea and perhaps a natural area*” [Brie_IMNotebook]. Distant natural views have a comforting effect and the inclusion of hiking and mountain bike trails in the natural setting could also provide an opportunity for students to be more active and physically connect the campus to the sea.

⁸ The Location Task Tool map is explained in more detail in Chapter four and five, as is the significance of where students locate spaces on the map. Locating a desired space in the front of the map and in the centre is a reflection of the importance of this space to the student, over and above spaces located peripherally on the map.

The grouping of sports fields and facilities as well as nature trails and health food cafeterias could be defined as an *“active campus”* to encourage students to *“live healthy instead of just learning to train their minds”* [Brie_IMNotebook]. Furthermore, sporting *“activities help with coping with stress”* [Brie_IMNotebook] and promote a healthy physical body and a healthy mind over and above the stimulation of their intellect that HE is expected to provide.

Mental health is an issue that many students would like to be better addressed on campus, through, *“free support both mentally [health] and studying and course advice,”* and research facilities where medical and mental health is treated as well as *“free workshops offered in the centre of the campus to teach students to deal with stress and anxiety”* [Brie_IMNotebook]. Advice on how to move forward as well as coping mechanisms to address the issues confronting students in the present are suggested. The lack of attentiveness to mental health is raised as the need for *“more awareness on mental health and depression and psychological clinics that offer free consultations”* [Menzi_IMNotebook]. Many students may not be aware that they or others have mental health issues and the removal of financial barriers to treatment could contribute towards mental health-related problems being diagnosed sooner. The psychological clinic is described as space where *“one gets to relax and forget about the troubles they are facing”* in a *“calm and collected atmosphere”* [Menzi_IMNotebook]. The importance of being able to de-stress in an environment that is conducive to healing along with access to skilled personnel reiterates the significance of creating restorative spaces on campus.

The Well-being campus model reminds one of the sanatoriums of old (Del Curto, 2017) which were located on the periphery of the city in natural surroundings. The natural location, rather than the potential of the architecture [or the treatment] itself to create restorative environments (*ibid*), was presumed to contribute to promoting good health and happiness.

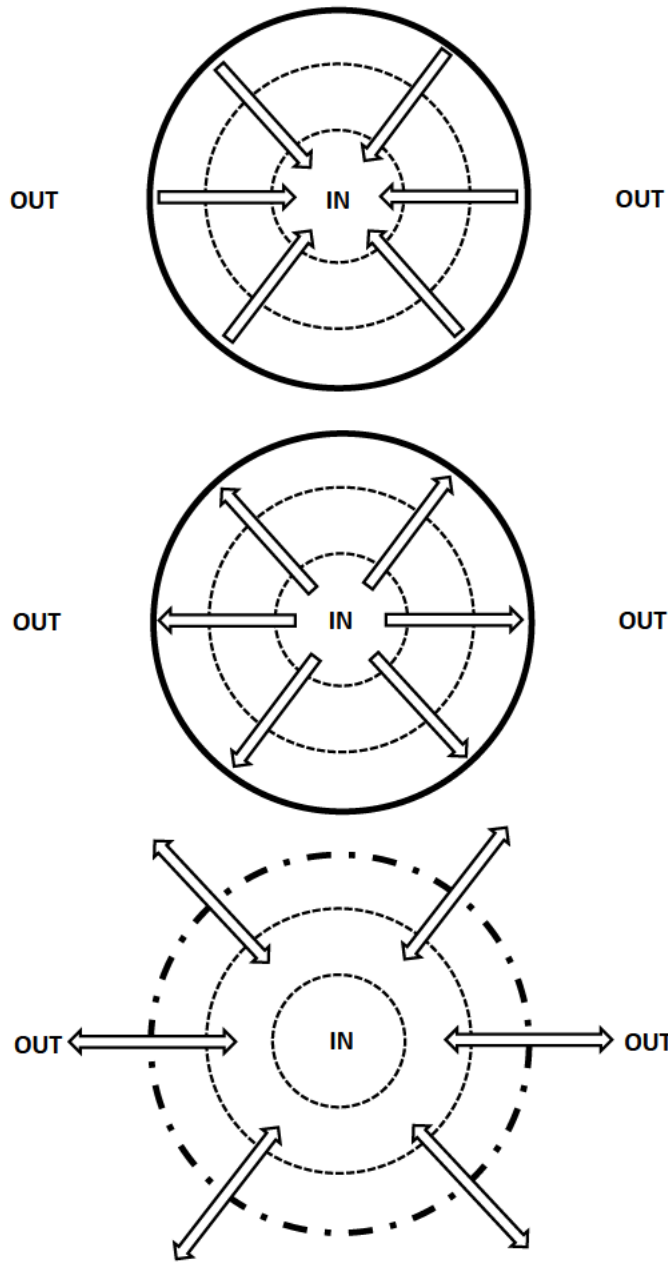
The students whose proposals this model was drawn from locate their library at the centre of the campus within a garden and a park, thus prioritising the formal academic spaces of HE. Residential accommodation is located inside the campus but on the periphery. In contrast, private residential accommodation is visible and easily accessible from the university yet placed outside the perimeter of the campus. This spatially distinguishes the insider as having direct access and use of the HE space from the outsider that lives at home or off-campus without the privileges that are associated with being on campus.

What varies for the students that adopted this model of connecting to the external context, is what they located in the spaces in-between the core and the periphery. One student located bars [one opposite each of the four areas for residences] and an entertainment area in this space. The bars are

outdoors with views of the sea or the city and the entertainment area is imagined as an enclosed space for smoking with arcade games and bowling. The grouping of these spaces, including residential accommodation and food stalls, was called “*Relaxing*” and was noted as “*all about relaxing for students*”, yet these spaces are far “*away from campus making it hard to reach during school hours*” [Sipho_IMNotebook]. These ‘*relaxing*’ spaces are seen as necessary distractions to which access is assumed to be controlled by spatial distance from the core of academic spaces and by time only after lectures.

The other student located the “*latest*” research and medical facilities, adjacent sports fields and sports facilities in her spaces in-between [Brie_IMNotebook]. The sports facilities were described as “*creating the best athletes of South Africa*” [Brie_IMNotebook]. This alludes to the student’s own aspiration of becoming a top-performing athlete who has access to the “*best sports facilities and the best coaches*” [Brie_IMNotebook]. The desire to excel in non-academic activities is expressed through the quality of the facilities and people on campus. Focusing performance predominantly on the classroom and academics limits many students’ ambitions to shine in non-academic fields such as sports. In order to access the coaches and facilities required, talented students have access to private funding as the university does not currently assist them.

The key aspects of the Well-being model are creating environments that are conducive to mental and physical well-being in whatever form, through physical exercise or other relaxation or leisure pursuits while managing and negotiating students’ relationship with learning as the core purpose of HE [See *Figure 9.1*].



WHOLE-BEING

All the residences would be on campus, where one can rest, sleep well and learn in an environment that feels like home. We would be able to walk between accommodation, campus and all the amenities we need. Risk management services are on the edge of the campus creating a 'force wall' to keep us safe.
 [Nokwanda_IMNNotebook]

ORGANISATIONAL-BEING

Outside of campus, could be an entrepreneurial hub, which you can go to after school or when you have free periods. The hub would be a fun place where students from different schools on campus could get together to exchange ideas. Maybe even meet people from local businesses. If you want to study, however you go to the centre of the campus this is where you learn! Between the academic spaces [centre of campus] and the auxiliary spaces [outside of campus] is a relaxing space – a garden, where students can interact with each other or with nature.
 [Wisdom_IMNNotebook] [Hloni_IMNNotebook]

WELL-BEING

I would love to go to a campus near the sea. It would be a relaxed space with views of the sea and a cool sea breeze. The campus would have state of the art research and medical facilities and sport facilities. Offering free advice and activities to help students cope with anxiety and stress.
 [Brie_IMNNotebook] [Sipho_IMNNotebook]

Figure 9.1 Whole-being, Organisational-being and Well-being campus models
 [IN-side of the campus, OUT-side of the campus grounds]

9.3.4 CONCLUDING COMMENTS ON THE THREE MODELS

The commonalities and differences across the three models are explored in terms of how their spatialities can become more defined or more fluid to address students' academic or non-academic needs, and how students' freedom to function is enabled or limited in these models.

9.3.4.1 SPACES OF ENCLOSURE AND SPACES OF FLUIDITY

As abstracted representations of the campus, the three models indicate the students' preference to distinguish between places for learning, places for relaxing and places for creativity and other interests. Each activity and the consequent social relations therein become compartmentalised in space and in their own space and time.

Academic related activities in which students are intensely involved, but cannot control, were seen as inducing stress. To de-stress, they would 'escape' to other spaces further out or outside of the campus. Students are locating stress as central and de-stressing as peripheral, thereby polarising academic expectations as controlling and non-academic activities as escapism/freedom.

There are, however, several tensions within these models. The safety of the body and desire for convenience necessitated by time and financial limitations generate a drawing in and away from an external context, thereby creating physical barriers between inside and outside of the campus. The reverse desire for mental and physical well-being is for an opening up and integration of the campus into a natural context. Natural spaces are seen as both relaxing spaces and as those that facilitate fluid interaction between students and others in support of academic and self-development.

Cognitive care and well-being are broadened to become both an individual and a collective issue that concerns both academic and non-academic activities and spaces. The individual desire for help with the choice of study, studying and mental health is balanced with the collective desire to have fun and be creative on campus with other students.

9.3.4.2 RESOURCES, FUNCTIONINGS AND FREEDOMS

The spatial resources that students proposed on campus suggest that they have value and could enable certain functionings (Wells, n.d.). These functionings [being and doing] contribute to students' academic and non-academic selves. They include learning, socialising, relaxing, de-stressing, and exercising creative expression and creative thought, as well as feeling safe and secure. In their ideal models, it is assumed that students then have the freedom to choose the functionings that they desire.

These functionings could be grouped broadly as academic, non-academic and both academic and non-academic. However, such broad categories are not nuanced enough to reflect the underlying capacities that are being brought to the fore. Table 9.2 below lists the functionings that are grouped as capability sets utilising the categories established by Nussbaum and Alkire (Wells, n.d.). The table shows that several functionings relate to the basic rights of human dignity such as being safe and secure. However, some are more expansive capabilities that are relevant to being a student such as learning and studying. This list does not attempt to be an exhaustive one of functionings which students might desire but does indicate what they could consider as important functionings for their academic and non-academic well-being on campus.

Sen's (Alkire, 2005) functionings are viewed with regard to the freedom they enable in terms of possibilities or opportunities that students value. Freedom (Alkire, 2005) is less about choice or control but rather what these freedoms enable in terms of justice and equality. The capabilities are further grouped into the themes that are relevant to them and are discussed in the following section.

Functionings [being and doing] ⁹	Capability sets [sets of functionings] (Wells, n.d.)	Freedom enabled [real opportunities] that students value	Theme under which discussed
Self			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convenient access between spaces on campus and to campus Walking Public transport No running 	Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe Busy lives; proximity makes it convenient, simple easy Professionalism – being on time Fear of missing out 	9.4.1 Mobilising and immobilising
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe and Secure 	Body integrity [Nussbaum – Human dignity]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fears to be heard Not to fear for their possessions or their lives 	9.4.2 Freeing and controlling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choice of foods Food served all day Access goods and services Convenient access 	Material access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student employment Financial control/security Volunteerism Internships Food security 	Freeing and controlling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relaxing De-stressing Fun [collective and individual] 	Play [Nussbaum] Human dignity [Nussbaum] [Alkire - Capability expansion]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Escape academics Reflect + meditate Interaction with nature Interaction with others [staff/visitors/students] Behaviour free no limits Access controlled by distance and timetabling [not by the student] 	Freeing and controlling Mobilising and immobilising
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Submitting Studying Planning [for the future] 	Knowledge/ Education [Alkire- Capability expansion]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professionalism Support for study choice Informal interaction staff + students No/limited distractions Quiet Define career path early 	9.4.3 Planning and studying
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative thought Creative expression 	Senses, imagination and thought – [Nussbaum - Human dignity]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore personal interests Interdisciplinary contact Innovation Exchange ideas Entrepreneurialism 	Planning and studying
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy body Healthy mind Play/watch sport 	Body health [Nussbaum – Human dignity]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise individual/collective Forget about troubles To access [free] counselling Diversity of professional graduates / academic and sporting Pamper yourself Freedom to access all necessary sporting and related in one space 	9.4.4 Becoming and belonging 9.4.4.2 [individual]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialising Networking Religion Sport practise [collective] 	Sociability [Alkire - Capability expansion]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casual interaction staff/students/ visitors – for learning purposes [credible stories collective capacity] Meeting people across different fields - connections for later life Unity /sense of community Develop relationships through common interests 	Becoming and belonging 9.4.4.1 [collective]
9.4.4.3 Environment			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to best facilities and best minds Contemporary designed spaces State of the art technology and facilities 	Quality of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excitement Pride Achievement Inspiring 	Becoming and belonging 9.4.4.4 [choosing up]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe, clean, well-organised, easy to access and to get around Landscaped and lush gardens 	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality, efficient spaces Security personnel, technology and physical barriers inside and out. 'Home' 	

Table 9.2 Functionings and their thematic placement

⁹ Data Source: Imaginative mapping task

9.4 THEMATIC COMPARISON [CAPABILITY]

The students' campus configurations are reviewed through the four other themes addressed in Chapters seven and eight, namely:

Mobilising and Immobilising,
Freeing and Controlling,
Planning and Studying, and
Becoming and Belonging.

The aim is to explore how these concepts could be extended within an imagined campus, where students have the potential to explore their foregrounds and their hopes and dreams for the future can be supported by functionings and freedoms that they value.

9.4.1 MOBILISING AND IMMOBILISING

Mobilising and Immobilising were understood in the analysis of the Location Task Tool as the *relationship between the activities located outside the university to those within the campus as well as the relationship between the activities within the campus itself*. Particular attention was paid to how movement between activities is facilitated through space, time, and mode and what *functionings and freedoms* these relationships enabled. These aspects [space, time, and mode] were noted in students' references to both time and spatial distance as seen on their maps or indicated in their notebooks.

Students tended to cluster all their daily necessities on or near the campus, thereby nullifying the need for some means of public or private transport out of the campus. A small supermarket and even an entire shopping centre were proposed on campus to reduce the cost of transport and alleviate walking long distances. There is limited reference to transport to other facilities located outside campus other than a desire to locate transport infrastructure on campus for *safety* reasons. One student that was interviewed suggested a campus bus to connect to facilities outside campus as per her understanding of the University of Cape Town Jammie bus¹⁰ which she understood as linking key destinations to the campus, on a regular schedule [Nokwanda_IMInterview].

One student's ideal campus had a driving school on the campus. This was predominately for convenience and safety, "*student learning how to drive while completing their studies than waiting too late to do so on outside premises*" [Menzi_IMNotebook]. This reflects a desire for self-mobility concurrent with academic mobility. The reference to 'too late' could be read in two ways, firstly, as in

¹⁰ The Jammie Bus service at the University of Cape Town is for all students and staff in possession of a valid student or staff card. The service operates between residences, connects all UCT campuses and links some public bus, train and parking facilities located in close proximity to the university. It runs at scheduled times on weekdays and weekends over term time and vacation times. A late night service is also available.

the pragmatic scheduling of time for this activity after the academic day is done, and the consequent safety issue of getting to a driving school after hours, or the more likely reading of the need to gain this life skill early on in the life of a student when it could be useful. This particular student has found his ability to drive useful in gaining access to employment opportunities while still studying.

Mobility from residential accommodation to campus is spatially contracted in all the students' imagined campuses, bar one who did not include accommodation at all. This student stays at home with a close-knit family and could not imagine another way of living. Her home life thus conditioned her imagined campus. Students either cluster all accommodation on the campus or just outside it. In so doing, they hope to facilitate safe and convenient access to campus within walking distance. Clustering activities close to campus or within the campus is also a reflection of students' busy lives and their desire to make their lives simpler and easier to manage [Brie_IMNotebook].

Within campus itself, some students clustered certain spaces such as lecture rooms or libraries to enable convenient access and to address the need to be on time. Concern for time could indicate that students are either aware of the lack of professionalism associated with being late or fear that they will miss out on important information in their absence [Nokwanda_IMNotebook].

9.4.2 FREEING AND CONTROLLING

Freeing and controlling addresses how students define *boundaries or borders* between inside campus and outside the campus and between buildings, spaces and activities within the campus itself. It also addresses students' desire for *choice* and how these choices are controlled through management of time and/or spatial distance.

9.4.2.1 BOUNDARIES AND BORDERS

Students could have placed their imagined campus anywhere in the world in any socioeconomic context or climate. Nevertheless, many chose to remain within the same or similar socio-political context, thereby drawing on their current safety concerns on campus, such as, “[t]here is a big need for tighter security on campus with the epidemic of students getting killed and mugged and their general safety being jeopardised and not taken seriously” [Menzi_IMNotebook]. The lack of safety on campus is associated with a rampant disease to which they will very likely fall prey if their fears are not addressed. This expresses students' deep fears of being both voiceless and of becoming a victim.

In response to such fears, the students define the boundary between inside campus and outside campus through highly secured perimeters, “RMS force wall” [Nokwanda_IMNotebook]; “efficient security, more regular campus patrols” [Menzi_IMNotebook] or keeping trespassers out by clearly

defining the boundary between inside and out [Wisdom_IMNotebook], keeping what students fear outside of the campus. Others see the campus as enclosed by a fence to provide a “*safe place*” [Razeena_IMInterview] within. Two diametrically opposing views of the purpose of containment are proposed by the students, yet this separation between inside and outside contributes to the view of campus as an enclosed or contained safe space, in which students would not fear for their possessions or their lives. Their lives are perceived as undervalued and their voices are silenced in their present reality.

9.4.2.2 REAL CHOICE

Freedom is perceived as having a choice of facilities related to material goods within or near campus. Shops on campus that cater to students’ needs are perceived as enabling better control of their limited budgets [Menzi_IMNotebook].

Facilities that students would “[/]*like to go to daily,*” [Razeena_IMNotebook] include a cafeteria with various takeaway places at the centre and various relaxation spaces located at the periphery of the campus. Students’ preferred food options on campus include “*healthy or unhealthy [but generally more towards the healthy side]*” [Brie_IMNotebook], “*fruit and veg kiosks*” [Wisdom_IMNotebook], “*junk food and healthy options*” [Razeena_IMNotebook] and “*cafeterias that offers breakfast, lunch and supper options to students that live on school res*” [Menzi_IMNotebook]. These responses reflect the different understanding of food, as a choice between different offerings, healthy and unhealthy, or as necessary nourishment to address issues of food security. In ensuring the availability of three meals a day for students living away from home, the campus would address their need for a consistent food supply while living in residence. Provision of prepared meals on campus removes the barriers of financing food independently, and accessing and preparing it. Supplying food does not negate other issues related to the choice of food, but does ensure that students have access to prepared food while living on campus.

Facilities offering material goods as well as companies on or near campus are seen as possible *employment opportunities*, yet there are different understandings as to what is enabled through working. “*The supermarket will have prices for the student and will also offer jobs (cashiers, packers, cleaners, etc.)*” [Menzi_IMNotebook], in contrast to “[c]ompanies that give students the opportunities to **volunteer and intern** that are close to campus” [Brie_IMNotebook]. Menzi sees working as a necessary short-term measure to support his existence as a student, while Brie refers to working as a contribution to learning and future alignment towards a career path. The latter middle-class student can choose not to earn an income while working, knowing it will contribute to her future development. The former student with less financial means has to earn an income while studying to address pressing fiscal issues in the present. Thus, opportunities in the present for financially challenged students are

gauged relative to the short-term gains these prospects offer. The lack of equality of opportunities for the future becomes apparent not because students do not see the potential but because the potential needs to address their present reality rather than their future becoming.

Relaxation spaces are located far from academic spaces, for students to utilise when they have a “*large gap in your timetable*” and where they can be as “*free or as loud as you want and play cards and chill*” “*when they have time*” [Razeena_IMNotebook]. In these relaxation spaces freedom of choice is controlled by time and spatial distance so that students can supposedly fulfil their academic obligation to attend lectures. Control is relinquished to the institution [time table and/or distance], exonerating the student from the responsibility to manage their own lives. Similarly, in these spaces, students are free to behave without judgement. However, access to these spaces has equality implications as it assumes that students have free time and the finances to utilise the proposed facilities. They may have access to student lounges, theatres, and fitness spaces but enjoying such spaces requires spending money and having free time.

Relaxing can be a quiet individual experience that is shared with nature rather than other people. In describing a garden space on campus, the student illustrates the need to reconnect with nature and the fact that it provides an opportunity to reflect. This is seen as something every student should do, but does not necessarily make the time to do: “*this is a place where everyone, perhaps having some free time, may opt to go for some reflection, connection with nature and setting the presence*” [Wisdom_IMNotebook]. Having access to a beautiful garden space that enables reflection and contemplation, and taking time to do so is important, as it enables students to reconnect with themselves and to just be — briefly liberating them from academic demands to focus on their non-academic self.

Freedom is only associated with relaxation spaces, in which students have a desire to “*escape academics and just enjoy everyone’s company*” [Razeena_IMNotebook]. Leisure spaces provide the desired social interaction that students are drawn to as liberation from the captured individualistic space of academics. Students are only free, however, to abscond from academic spaces if and when their lecture schedule and financial means permit. Freedom is further associated with the freedom to make particular choices which can contribute to longer-term well-being. These choices, such as the choice of healthy food, and being able to choose not to earn while working to satisfy longer-term goals, are not equally shared across the student body.

9.4.3 PLANNING AND STUDYING

Planning and Studying are viewed in terms of students' desires to fulfil their academic requirements in balance with their non-academic needs. Non-academic needs are the individual need for creativity on campus as well as longer-term goals and ambitions after they graduate.

Students saw the core purpose of the university as scholarship as *“learning and education is what people come for”* [Menzi_IMNotebook] and *“this is what students are paying for [referring to academic buildings]”* [Brie_IMNotebook]. Gaining knowledge is thus seen as the key driver for students to come to university and the buildings supporting academic pursuits are seen as a physical representation of the university primarily being about such pursuits.

By learning spaces, students are referring to lecture theatres, LANs, libraries, studios, study halls, internet cafés and research facilities. These spaces are seen as professional *“business and project-based environments”* to undertake *“assignments, research and project”* [Wisdom_IMNotebook] in which students receive support to align their study choices with their chosen career path. As noted, *“[i]t is easy to understand what you are studying and helps students plan their academic careers”* [Brie_IMNotebook]. Students seek enabling environments that are responsive to their development as young professionals as well as academic support that assists them early on in their academic development to establish a clear vocational path for the world of work once they leave university.

Libraries were often noted as distinct from other learning spaces. A student explains that libraries are spaces you go to after class [Nokwanda_IMNotebook], while another refers to them as places to *“study hard”* [Brie_IMNotebook]. Libraries are environments in which students can work collectively and individually. This calls for quiet spaces to work individually or to not disturb others when working collectively. As studying is perceived as tough and gruelling, creating environments that accommodate studying in all its spatialities is necessary to enable students to perform at their best.

Libraries are not the only spaces in which students study; their residential accommodation is also referred to as *“environments conducive to learning”* [Hloni_IMNotebook] and to *“study quietly”* [Brie_IMNotebook] with no distractions. Enabling silence and limiting interruptions is difficult in environments where many students with differing academic expectations live together, let alone the possible disturbances that may arise from the context in which the residence itself is located.

Equipping residential accommodation for studying requires a desk, a calendar and comfortable furniture. However, as a space, the bedroom serves multiple functions as a place to relax, sleep, cook,

clean, wash and entertain friends. These functions are not acknowledged in the furniture list proposed by students or in the design thereof [Brie_ IMNotebook].

Students acknowledge that the core purpose of HE is to be a place for learning, yet they also desire it to be a place to “ignite creativity and thinking” with more creative centres and facilities to engage their minds [Hloni_ IMNotebook] and to “express themselves” through singing or poetry in a student lounge [Razeena_ IMNotebook]. Students’ desires reflect the need to explore personal interests through innovation, exchanging ideas with others [students and others] and opportunities for entrepreneurialism, all of which are non-academic pursuits within the campus space.

Planning and Studying were analysed with regard to future and immediate aims or goals. This was reflected in how students located certain facilities centrally or peripherally on the map, as well as how they spoke about studying now and planning for the future. Future interests or desires are generally located outside or just within the campus boundary and include business hubs, sporting facilities, and an entrepreneurial hub. Immediate goals to meet academic obligations are located close to or at the centre of their campus map within learning spaces. A student puts this into perspective in saying, “education is vital and is one of the few things in life that can assure you a stable future” [Menzi_ IMNotebook]. A degree is perceived as guaranteeing a more sustainable future than a future without tertiary education. The irony in this statement lies in a context in South Africa in which about 31% (Unknown, 2019) of graduates [in the age group 15-24] are unable to find employment post-university. A lower unemployment rate of 12,9% however, exists amongst graduates in the 25-34 age group (*ibid.*). Waiting to study later in life or already having connections in industry before studying may be working favourably for more mature students to integrate into the working world post studying at university. Should they find employment in their field of study, a better future than their parents had under the apartheid regime is more likely.

The spatial location of future interests or desires indicates their value to students relative to what they understand as being the core purpose of a university which is learning. This does not mean that the spaces related to their interests or desires are less significant; they are just less significant academically. The facilities that students placed further from the centre are viewed as less significant academically but more significant non-academically.

9.4.4 BECOMING AND BELONGING

In the analysis of the imagined campus, *Becoming* and *Belonging* is viewed with regard to *Collectivism and Individualism* (Zur & Eisikovits, 2015) to explore the social aspects of the concepts. *Collectivism and*

Individualism are understood as concerning how students have taken cognisance of other students in the design of their ideal campus.

Becoming and *Belonging* are reflected spatially, with the concept of *Belonging* regarded as an attachment to place, associated with students referring to “*home*” and *artefacts* of the past. Both are regarded as ‘critical threads’ (Palmer, O’Kane, & Owens, 2009) linking students to place. *Becoming* is noted through the *unique facilities* imagined on the campus and how these might contribute to their becoming both *academically and professionally*.

9.4.4.1 COLLECTIVISM

Collectivism is realised in the students’ desire to create spaces to interact with other students socially and for learning purposes. The extremes of this are contained in the *Whole-being model* which illustrates the spatial proximity of social relations by locating all the social spaces in the centre. In contrast, the *Organisational-being model* speaks of networks of social relations occurring across the campus, not just in the centre. In the former model, learning is distinct from socialising, while in the latter, socialising contributes to learning and spaces are therefore more fluid to allow socialising between and within spaces of learning. The latter model is explained through a student’s description of the social space of the “*University gardens*” in which chance encounters between multiple actors are encouraged: “[i]n this space you may find lecturers, visitors and students involved in different social interaction activities” [Wisdom_IMNotebook].

Socialising and networking with others was also seen as a means to gain first-hand experiential and academic knowledge in support, to a greater or lesser extent, of their academic becoming. Students’ academic becoming through others in non-academic spaces is noted in a student’s comments about an imagined “*Lounge*” space, described as “*a place to meet peers and perhaps to find people doing a similar degree and to ask questions*” [Razeeana_IMNotebook]. In this instance, students would utilise social opportunities to collect stories from those who have travelled the same path they intend to tread. Similarly, in a more academic environment, learning spaces may have adjacent “*supporting activities such as socialising and networking hubs*” [Wisdom_IMNotebook] to aid students in their academic pathway.

Interactions with other students were anticipated as occurring naturally through providing facilities in central locations for convenient access, which students described as follows: “*the inner and centre zone promotes unity amongst students and puts attempts at trying to make them bond as they bump into each other quite often*” [Menzi_IMNotebook], and “[i]n the centre of the campus, I would like there to be an area where all students converge to eat, relax, and study together” [Brie_IMNotebook].

Familiarity through repeated interaction with other students contributes to generating a student community that congregates to participate in shared academic and leisure activities. These comments allude to the loneliness that students feel on coming to campus and how creating opportunities to build friendships as part of their daily life, as would happen in the world outside campus, could be replicated in the university environment.

As the above extracts illustrate, the purpose of bringing students together is to generate a sense of community. Interaction is also facilitated through common interests such as sporting activities or cultural facilities, where relationships might develop. A student noted that, *“this area encourages students to meet other students by having art centres (such as galleries and an amphitheatre, as well as a theatre and a music centre)”* [Brie_IMNotebook]. Students with similar interests are attracted to places that pique their curiosity, with the arts offering an opportunity to explore their creative side as well as be inspired by other students or people from outside the campus environment. The desire is thus that the campus should address both the social and creative aspects of their being. The multiple opportunities to learn informally from others on campus are beneficial in offering the prospect of collecting credible stories for students’ becoming (Appadurai, 2004).

9.4.4.2 INDIVIDUALISM

Individualism is noted in students’ preference to create spaces for themselves and their immediate friendship circle *“I created,” “I would go to,” “you and your friends can go to relax,”* and *“groups of friends can go to relax”* [Razeena_IMNotebook]. The self-referential nature of these comments was to some extent, anticipated as students were asked to generate their ideal campus, not a campus to address all students’ hopes, wants and desires. However, the use of the word ‘friend’ rather than ‘other students’ suggests a clear gradation of the relationship between self, friends and others. Within a broader community of students, this is required to nurture companionship.

Individualism was further expressed in comments such as *“a campus where I will be excited to go to every day”* [Hloni_IMNotebook]. This does not mean that spaces for ‘other students’ were not proposed, but that collective spaces were noted more broadly as for ‘people’ or ‘anyone’. Examples of spaces for the collective would include the *“study hall as a space for anyone”* and the cafeteria *“where people can get food”* [Razeena_IMNotebook]. A distancing is noted in terms of spaces for the student and her immediate friends, relative to those for other students that do not constitute part of this friendship circle. The separation of spaces for self, the immediate circle of friends, and others was noticed in the remaining students’ imagined campuses, but to a lesser extent.

The desire to address their mental health and physical wellbeing is noted in the students' description of a psychological clinic in which, "*one gets to relax and forget about the troubles you are facing through various psychological treatment methods*" [Menzi_IMNotebook] or a pamper corner to do one's nails or hair on campus [Razeena_IMNotebook]. Time and attention by professionals to their individual needs, support students' happiness. However, this time is not always readily available and requires finding time in between learning: "*[s]ometimes it is difficult to fit yourself in when you are always 'busy.'*" "*Make time in between lectures, or if it is cancelled, to take care of yourself*" [Razeena_IMNotebook]. A student's busy life leaves little time to address crucial mental health issues, let alone self-indulgent beautification activities.

Razeena and Menzi's responses to their well-being explicate the depth of students' need for the spaces and means to treat themselves both at superficial surface level, as well as that which lies entrenched far below the surface. The reality is, however, that an aesthetic brushing over is unlikely to address the origins of some of the deep-rooted mental issues students face on an ongoing basis.

9.4.4.3 ENVIRONMENT

Students yearn for a safe, clean, well-organised environment that is easy to access and navigate. They want a place where they feel at home. As Nokwanda says, "*[m]y ideal campus is an organised campus that is safe and accessible to all students. My campus is a healthy place filled with energy and enthusiasm, filled with beautiful people and love; that's what makes it a home*" [Nokwanda_IMNotebook]. Nokwanda is not referring to surface aesthetic beauty amongst her peers, but about beauty related to the soul, kindness and generosity of spirit that she attributes to family and home space in which one is nurtured and where one feels secure. This is a space that makes one feel good, that is inviting to others and spurs people to be the best they can be. Thus, campus should be a nurturing, supportive space like home.

'Home' is also used in relation to residential accommodation as being able to "*study quietly in a homely environment*" [Brie_IMNotebook]. Institutional environments are inherently sterile places devoid of the soft touches or personal items one would find in a home. Students can personalise their residence rooms, but those with limited financial means cannot change the aesthetic of their environments. Generating home-like qualities at the level of the residence room is, however, a shallow way of creating a 'homely environment.' Learning deeply from the qualities of what makes the home environment so appealing to students could inform adaptation of the spatial qualities of the residence building itself to better address how students interact individually and collectively in small and large groupings for social and learning activities.

The architecture and artefacts within HE also contribute to the environment in which students wish to belong. A student referring to a library as a *“respectable old building”* displaying *“trophies that the college has won from playing other colleges”* [Sipho_IMNotebook] alludes to an aspiration to belong to a reputable institution that has a heritage and a tangible track record of success.

Through their proposed facilities, students are also suggesting alternate paths to success within the university. As Menzi explains, *“[t]he stadium building in front shows that the University is diverse and aims to build and produce various professionals, including sportsmen and women”* [Menzi_IMNotebook]. Students’ tangential aspirations of academic and professional becoming can run concurrently during their time at university. Balancing the expectations of both becomings requires hard work, dedication and many sacrifices along the way.

9.4.4.4 CHOOSING UP

Students are not content with having access and use of facilities; they are effectively ‘choosing up’ in desiring quality environments in learning spaces that are, *“contemporary in architectural design and well advanced in technology”* [Menzi_IMNotebook] and sporting facilities; that are *“[h]igh class [state of the art] buildings... it also has the best sports facilities with the best coaches”* [Brie_IMNotebook]. Superior academic and non-academic facilities give students the confidence to believe that they can excel. The students are further indicating a desire for quality people, infrastructure and equipment, that can help them to achieve their goals academically, *“high-quality equipment... and anything to push the level of the university to be the best in the world... Here you can find top professors... building up the next generation of brilliant minds”* [Brie_IMNotebook]. High expectations of staff have implications for the student. Excellence is destined to trickle down to the student in support of their academic becoming.

Students’ sporting professional becoming is also supported in this environment where there *“are the best coaches and bio-kineticist in the country, all the facilities to help sportspeople are found here”* [Brie_IMNotebook]. Clustering key people and amenities in one place simplifies students’ lives and contributes to their individualistic desires to achieve their academic and non-academic becoming with as less fuss as possible and with the greatest potential for success.

Becoming for some students is both achieving an academic qualification and becoming something else. Students pursuing more than one foreground are strategically choosing to follow both simultaneously. Ultimately, some students are proposing that the institution should contribute to their success by enabling them to concurrently develop both academic and non-academic becomings.

Becoming and Belonging are progressively entangling themselves within academic and non-academic spaces and in social interactions with students, immediate friendship networks and others. These relations support students' navigation through academia and assist in maintaining their mental and physical health through opportunities to socialise and relax.

9.5 SYNTHESIS OF THE CHAPTER

The last theme [*Foregrounding*] addresses students' imagined *future* possibilities for the spatiality of campus. .

The Imaginative Mapping exercise set out to explore students' knowing [prior experience] of formal and informal campus spaces. It also explored what knowing thereof might enable or constrain in their ability to conceptualise a space for the production of their foregrounds. Finally, the aim was to explore how and in what form students' foregrounds would manifest within their imagined campus.

The emergent ideas that arise from this discussion suggest that students' foregrounds¹¹ share a common desire to meet their academic obligations. They maintain these obligations in an environment in which they create boundaries of physical walls to address their desire to be safe on campus. Their insecurities of managing campus life and its relationship to their life outside of campus manifest in boundaries of distance and time, differentiating or deferring their non-academic self from their academic self.

Students' foregrounds can be incredibly varied and multiple, in which their aspirations for the future do not necessarily align with their academic ambitions. Multiple foregrounds, especially those that are perceived as unrelated to one another, have the potential to generate tensions, in which students either navigate these foregrounds simultaneously or separately.

Spaces that enable their non-academic selves [leisure related] were expressed as both open and closed spaces that one can both go to and move through. Networking between spaces [garden, parks] could be just as beneficial as socialising in spaces. Students took it for granted that their academic selves would be located in closed buildings, not open spaces. Academic spaces were conceived purely for teaching and learning, and not as social or fun spaces. However, non-academic spaces were conceived as learning spaces although not necessarily in the formal sense of supporting their curriculum-based learning but in aiding their personal development. Creating space for possibilities of *new becomings*

¹¹ *Foregrounds* refer to institutional systems, social relations and spatial contexts that enable or constrain students' hopes, fears and frustrations

lies in the non-academic spaces as well as in the space between non-academic and academic, not in the academic spaces themselves.

Socialising with others was seen as an important *functioning* of their academic and non-academic self. This works across multiple capability sets and involves broader networks than immediate friendship circles and happens in several spaces. Socialising could be frivolous and fun, to de-stress, express oneself and enhance creativity. It could also be for more serious purposes to aid in studying, generate business opportunities, promote academic development or for information purposes to access prior knowledge of the path through HE (de Certeau, 2002). Socialising was seen as an important means of navigating the space of HE for self-fulfilment and progress in academics.

Students recognise that the core purpose of the university is learning, but their expectations of the institution go beyond providing an education. They expect HE to address their academic and non-academic self, to consider their holistic well-being as whole beings in *enabling environments* that support their freedom to function to realise their foregrounds.

Chapter ten unpacks the connections to the theory and the literature that informed this data analysis and that form Chapters seven and eight, so as to theorise why students experience their navigation of the paths to becoming students in HE in the way that they do, and why it needs to be experienced differently.



SECTION C

Abstracting from the field

Prologue

Theorising the findings from the field

Themes as Entangled Concepts [meaning in the structure of the mobile]

Connecting the Themes [through backgrounds and foregrounds]

Prologue to SECTION C

The last section of the thesis, Section C, swings full circle, linking the background of the study [Chapter one], through the findings [Chapters seven, eight and nine], to establish the new insights this research brings to students knowings of HE spaces. This section is both an ending and a new beginning – closing with the study's contribution to knowledge building in the area of students knowings of the spatiality of HE yet at the same time opening up the potential for further research possibilities and the study's implications for policy, theory and practice.

The prologue demarcates the moving out of the fieldwork into a further abstraction of the data. It serves as a reminder to the reader of the critical insights from Sections A and B then provides a brief road map for Section C [Chapter ten]. A further purpose of the prologue is to explain how the mobile used in prior chapters [Chapters seven and eight] as an analytical and representational device also served as a theorising device. The mobile illustrates how students are entangled in their past, present realities and their future hopes and dreams.

Section A set up the study, framing students knowings of HE spaces as arising from legacies of the past that are now manifest in the present. It explored the extant literature on the relevance of the space of HE for students within the context of a massified and transformed welfarist university. More specifically, the orientation to this study made a case for examining informal spaces through students knowings of the spatialities within food, accommodation and transport spaces in the interests of spatial justice. I argued for a focus on the in-between spaces where students choose to engage with others [as opposed to being forced to engage] as harbouring contradictory spatialities of welfare and privilege [Chapter one]. These decisions were made in relation to a range of seminal and contemporary theorists who have explored related dimensions of the phenomenon under study. I drew on their insights to formulate a temporary lens for my study [Chapters two and three]. An innovative means of drawing out these conversations from students was proposed in the form of co-producing photographs and imaginative mapping to understand the meanings campus spaces hold both now and in their imagined future [Chapters four, five and six].

Section B, the data analysis section, was represented and analysed through the metaphor of the mobile [Chapters seven and eight]. The findings reflect students' institutional pathway, and academic [epistemic] and non-academic pathway as entangled in their experience of being a student in HE. Furthermore, students' lives on campus and future lives as imagined, are an entangled connection between past, present and future [Chapters seven, eight, and nine]. Students have the ability to imagine another view of the campus space that addresses the inadequacies of their present campus

experience and shapes an environment that is conducive to their future aspirations [Chapter nine]. Their ability to meet their aspirations, is linked to their capacity and capability to function and by the potential of informal spaces to meet their individual needs. These aspirations share a desire for a more collective and connected relationship with peers on campus [Chapter nine].

Section C, Chapter ten addresses the complex nature of the relationships between the new constructs that are emerging from this research. This closing section of the thesis reflects on the entangling of students knowings and space and individual and collective actions arising in space. The freedom to act [within the HE space] individually or collectively is dependent on students' relationship with others, other things and the HE system. The chapter closes with a discussion on the implications of this new thesis, and future potential research agendas that arise from this study.

The **appendix** that follows Chapter ten and the References includes official documents, examples of the instruments used, an example of the analytical frameworks used to analyse the data set, and an example illustrating how the data was abstracted to form a 'leaf' of a mobile.

THEORISING THE FINDINGS FROM THE FIELD

Whilst the metaphor of the mobile [in Chapters seven and eight] served as an analytical and representational device, its potential as a theorising device is explored in this prologue. Firstly, the mobile is presented as a device that embodies the theoretical ideas underpinning the phenomenon of students knowings. The mobile accentuates the multiple spatial practices [doings or actions] that contribute to the development of the academic and the non-academic student. Ultimately, many entangled selves of the student of HE are considered as depicting the fuller interpretation of the construct of student actions with and in the HE space.

Secondly, these methodological and representational explorations present how the conceptual framework shifted from knowing of spatial [in]justices to that of recognising students' intra-actions [with the HE space, others and other things] to change or adapt where possible their spatialities to meet their aspirations.

THEMES AS ENTANGLED CONCEPTS [MEANING IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE MOBILE]

Save for one, the themes were composed of two concepts. These paired concepts may at first seem to suggest that they are contradictory or complementary, but they are neither opposites nor in co-operation; they are *mutually entangled* [interrelated] practices related to the same phenomenon of students and space. The concepts denote practices [actions] enacted by or through students as an elaboration of Lefebvre's (1991) 'spatial practice' as everyday actions in spaces or places.

The mobile consisted of the following themes:

1. Immobilising and Mobilising
2. Controlling and Freeing
3. Planning and Studying
4. Reflecting and Dreaming
5. Belonging and Becoming
6. Foregrounding

The concepts are entangled (Barad, 2003), first within another meaningfully related concept as a pair and then within the phenomenon of students knowings itself. The pairing of the concepts is in relation to the sharing of a common idea linked to *mobility* such as spatial mobility [Immobilising and Mobilising] (Christie, 2007), mobilising independence [Controlling and Freeing] (Holdsworth, 2009), mobilising practices in education [Studying and Planning] (Amulya, 2011), identity construction in transitioning to and through HE [Belonging and Becoming] (Palmer et al., 2009) and, finally, the mobility of aspirations as desired or as realised [Reflecting and Dreaming, Foregrounding] (Appadurai, 2004; Skovsmose, Paulo Scandiuzzi, Valero, & Alrø, 2018).

The themes themselves are also not mutually exclusive, and the boundaries between concepts and themes are *permeable*, most specifically in the last three themes [Reflecting and Dreaming; Belonging and Becoming; Foregrounding] as the concepts begin to address practices related to aspirations and imagination.

The themes are grouped into three sets to reflect different *time-space relations*. The first three themes [Immobilising and Mobilising; Controlling and Freeing; Studying and Planning] address students' lived experience of campus spatialities in the *present* as a consequence of their backgrounds, and the second two themes [Reflecting and Dreaming; Belonging and Becoming] the aspirations for their journeys through the spatiality of HE based on their present realities. The last theme [Foregrounding] is imagined *future* possibilities for the spatiality of campus.

The use of paired concepts illustrates the entangled nature of the process of students negotiating their different routes, paths or trajectories through HE. They further represent the *academic self in dialogue with the non-academic self*. The academic self explores university life as lived, in the social reproduction of spaces (Lefebvre, 1991), and in the consumption of knowledge toward an academic qualification [as noted in the concepts of Immobilising, Controlling, Studying, Reflecting, and Belonging]. The non-academic self is the future imagined self purposefully seeking out spaces and alternative resources of knowledge for their own purposes, seeing the potentials unrealised or yet to be realised within the campus space [as noted in the concepts of Mobilising, Freeing, Planning, Dreaming, Becoming, and Foregrounding].

CONNECTING THE THEMES [THROUGH BACKGROUNDS AND FOREGROUNDS]

The mobile rotates both in space and in time between its background and foreground (Skovsmose, 2016). The background is represented by what students 'carry' into HE, their context as in their socio-economic and cultural affiliations, their family expectations and their school **identity**. The foreground is the external factors that **produce, reproduce or disrupt** students' HE. These factors are affected by the people students meet, the financial issues they face, the space of the home or residence in which they stay and the HE context itself, as well as the **institutional structures** of control, namely, progression and exclusion rules, timetabling of lectures and bus schedules, to which students are subjected.

The mobile's rotation between background and foreground relates to the 6th theme, which is Foregrounding. Foregrounds are considered as the imagined future possibilities based on students' lived spatialities both in relation to their past [background] and their present experience of the HE context (Skovsmose, 2016). The relationships between students' backgrounds and foregrounds are not directly causal (Skovsmose, 2012) in nature; in other words, students' backgrounds do not necessarily inform their foregrounds. Again, the relationships between backgrounds and foregrounds are not linear, but entangled within and across each other.

Students' mobility through HE in the context of this research is defined by three navigational pathways, namely, their systemic [non-academic] pathway, their [academic] epistemic pathway and the institutional pathway itself, the latter serving as the dominant pathway. These three pathways are entangled within students' mobility through HE and in meeting their aspirations thereafter.

Students' past and their future is entangled in their present [See Figure C.1].

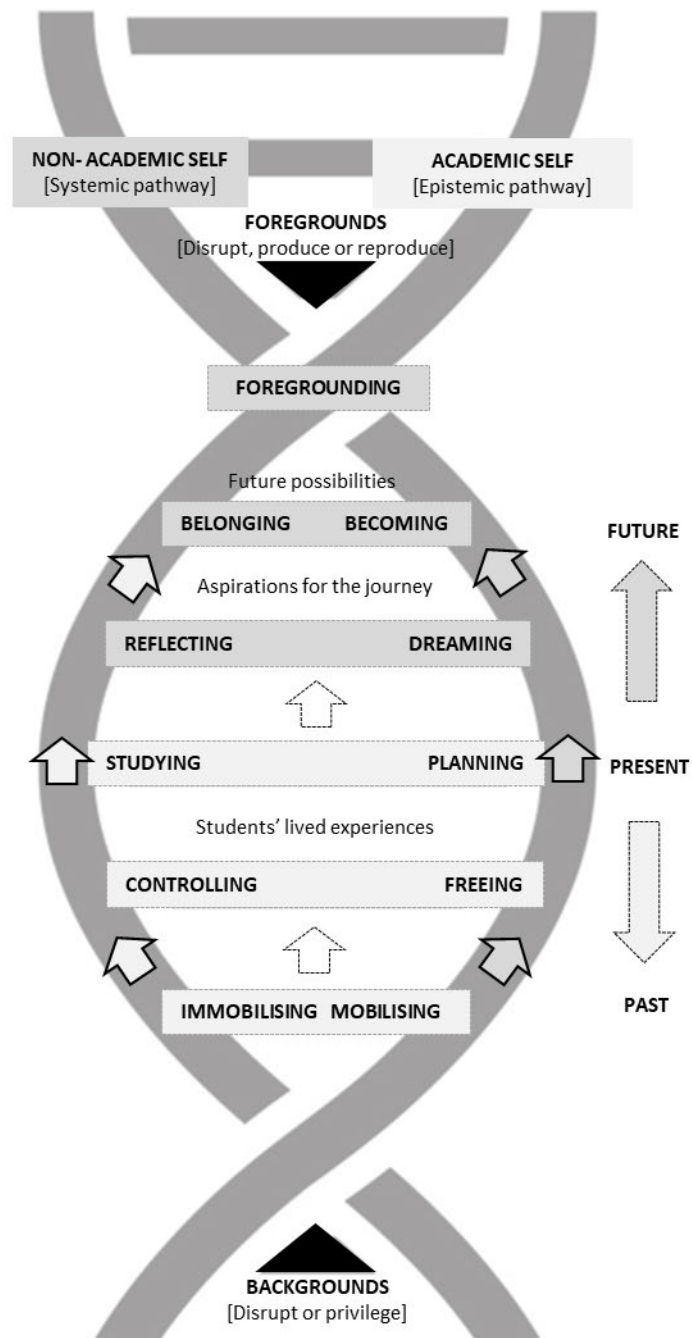


Figure C.1: Students' entangled journeys through the space of higher education

10.1 INTRODUCTION

This study set out to understand students knowings beyond their experiences and beliefs or the views that others might hold of students' relationship with campus spaces. The intention was to establish what meaning students are deriving from campus spaces, and what the knowing of these spatialities is inhibiting or enabling. In so doing, the study sought to deeply understand the nature of student knowing. It emphasises these knowings not in the pathological sense but in an agentic one that comprehends students' potential to transform their spatiality from their own perspective. Students knowings suggest that alternative futures of campus spaces are imaginable and that, given the right conditions, there is a possibility of dreaming.

The previous chapters generated the ingredients to understand students knowings of the spatiality of campus. The prologue to Section C explained how these spatialities are entangled **within students** and that their freedom to act arises from an interplay of relations. In this chapter, these ingredients are structured to form an argument to explain why students know what they do and what significance this knowing has for student agency and consequently spatial justice.

The chapter is composed of three parts. The first addresses the emerging synthetic constructs arising from the study, which constitute a framework for understanding the complexities of student knowings within and of campus spaces. More specifically, it acknowledges how the multiple interests of social, personal, academic and cultural space are being negotiated by students. However, underpinning this complexity is the connectedness to their own biographies and histories of the macro-economic social system from which they originate, enabling and creating different desires and expectations of what HE environments could potentially provide. The second part assembles these key constructs in a thesis building endeavour which layers the constructs into moving towards imagination and critical hope as reflective of individual and collective student agency within the systemic space of HE. The last part presents the counter-argument of the systemic aspect of HE space and outlines the study's methodological and theoretical contribution.

The chapter closes with the implications of the research for design, and prospective HE policy. It also identifies the future research possibilities arising from this study. This chapter argues that the spatialities of students should not be viewed as inert, but should be recognised as entangled within and outside of *the space* of HE. Similarly, the counter-argument is made to not view the spatialities of HE as inert but to recognise them as entangled within and outside of *students*. These spatialities constantly interact and are continually in flux, conspiring to enable, dismiss or suspend students' freedom to aspire.

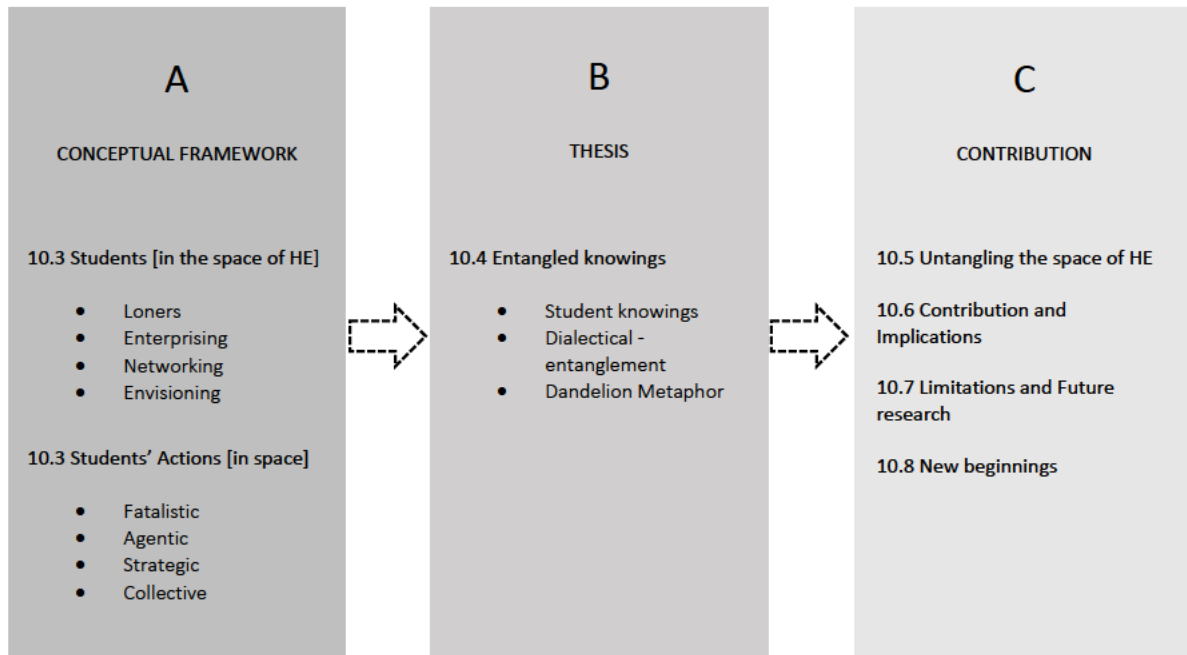


Figure 10.1: Structure of Chapter ten as three parts

10.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF STUDENTS KNOWINGS

The emerging constructs that informed the thesis were students knowings, spatiality and spatial justice within the informal spaces of food, accommodation and transport. This provided the lens with which to enter the field. These constructs arose from three intersecting scales of the individual, the collective and the systemic [micro, meso, macro], framed within the context of HE and post-apartheid South Africa. This section presents a broader perspective of the construct of students knowings that gives rise to two overarching synthetic constructs that are interconnected:

1. *Students knowings [dispositions]*: Students within the HE space produce particular types of dispositions in response to relationships they are able to form or unable to form with other students. Students' past, present and future hopes affect and are affected by the nature of the social relations formed. The typologies include the Loner, Enterprising, Networking, and Envisioning student.
2. *Students' practices or actions*: Students can be constrained by their material realities and the space of HE or they can take advantage of opportunities afforded by the context to change their context or adapt to it. Students' actions and non-actions with the HE space are defined along a continuum as Fatalistic, Agentic, Strategic and Collective.

The synthetic constructs present abstracted conceptions of student negotiations of spatialities. However, in the discussion that follows, it is acknowledged that students' relations and actions and the spaces in which these actions are enacted are intricately interwoven, embodied and embedded.¹ The overlapping and entangled nature of the relations between the different issues calls for reintegration in the discussion that follows.

10.3 STUDENTS KNOWINGS AND ACTIONS

Four typologies of students' social relations arose from the data, although these are by no means exhaustive of the possible typologies that could arise. Nor should these typologies be considered as simplistic, atomistic and autonomous. The fourth typology is not representative of any single student within the fieldwork data sets but emerged as a composite of the analytical interpretations of the students upon reflecting on common desires across all students in their imaginative mapping phase. This composite interpretation reinforces resistance to the caricaturing of students into essentialist and limited typologies. Again, this underpins the argument that there are no hard and fast boundaries between the typologies. Furthermore, it is possible that an individual student could embody a combination of the typologies that sits between these typologies or could move between them during the course of being a student in HE. The typologies are also not rigid labels which students adhere to but are epistemic *states* in which they may find themselves at any given time during their university experience. Therefore, by definition, these states are continually morphing and remorphing. The aim of presenting these abstracted typologies is to provide a heuristic device to show how varied responsiveness to the interpretation of spaces, persons and opportunities exists amongst the student body in relation to being on a HE campus. It is also likely that an individual student might shift his/her dominant alignment to a particular typology as he/she progresses in his/her experience of negotiating HE spaces. The typologies are thus fluid-permeable lenses that enable interpretation of the complexities of negotiating spatialities in the HE system. They are merely a means to capture and figuratively gain a hold on the different and changing social relations constituted by students.

The epistemic states oscillated along a continuum based on their relationship to others both on and off the campus and were named as follows:

- Loners
- Enterprising students

¹ Embodied and embedded understood as:

"Embodied" is linked to students' demographic *beings* [race, class, gender].

"Embedded" entails elements of the simultaneous temporal qualities of past, present and future as is about imaginative potentials and *becomings* [potential of].

- Networking students
- Envisioning students

The states that students occupy also inform the actions they might take to concede to or change the situation in which they find themselves in order to realise their aspirations. These social actions vary along a continuum from fatalistic to utopic. The last agency is a utopian collective agency where students aspire to equality and difference as a collective as opposed to individual aspiration. This agency is not utopic in the sense of being unrealisable; rather, it is noted as desired though not yet attainable within the current context. In the discussion below, students that share commonalities in terms of whether their states and actions serve to benefit the self or the collective are grouped together. A limitation of this grouping is the erroneous causal assumption that students' states define the actions they may take. This is not the case. Students' states do not define their actions; they merely offer the probability that they could align their actions to those of the states within which they are similarly constituted. Like an interactive conversation, the discourse is fluid and mediated by ambient and presenting elements where both interlocutors, in a not always linear process, shape and are being shaped discursively.

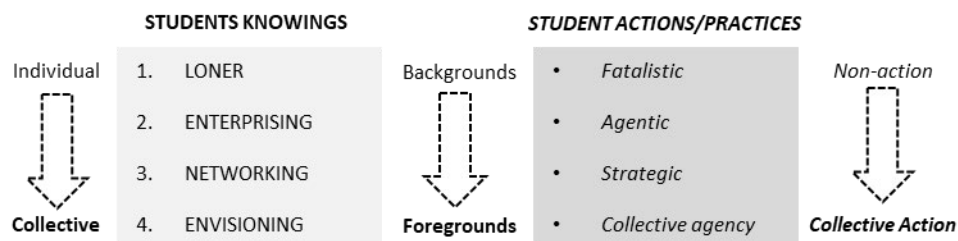


Figure 10.2: Structure of students knowings and students' actions

10.3.1 LONER STUDENT

All students experience the typology of Loner at some point in their HE journey. This time may pass for some who are able to meet like-minded individuals, while for others it may last the entire duration of their time in HE. Loners predominately engage with outside-in relations. They are students who are constrained by their past (Jansen, 2009) and their present context. The constraints could be *geographical*, such as their rural background or the need for lengthy commutes to university; *psychological* in terms of underlying mental health issues; *societal* in terms of cultural constraints or family commitments and expectations; or *temporal* as a response to being in transition from high school to university.

Loners are affected by their *past* context [backgrounds] (Skovsmose, 2016) which impacts on them personally, often negatively. This is reflective of a mechanistic unidirectional power where the context acts on the student, rendering them incapable of changing the external forces exerted upon them. Students who are unable to abandon their past struggle to develop meaningful relations with others on campus and this can also affect their academic performance. Their relationships with peers, family members and others tend to be highly unequal. Loners do not see themselves as able to control their context. However, they are able to negotiate within it to find space on campus that allows them to operate with some level of comfort.

These students tend to remain distant and recede into the background socially, emotionally and physically. The spaces Loners tend to occupy, and their behaviour therein is characterised by finding spaces within the broader student community that allow them to become anonymous by blending into existing spatialities.

Loner students operate under the naive belief (Bozalek, Carolissen, & Leibowitz, 2013) which is often inferred rather than being overtly declared, that they alone are the source of their future prospects. They believe that if they work hard, they will fulfil their dreams. However, these dreams are often unsettled in the space of HE. Where their expectations cannot be met, they tend to abandon themselves to the 'realities faced in coming to HE'. They lower their expectations to achieve what is possible, settling for a lesser version of what they intended to become.

Loner students recognise their difference as individuals – not as a racialised or genderised knowing, but as different through context. They are alone by circumstance rather than by choice.

10.3.1.1 FATALISTIC ACTIONS

Aligned with but not necessarily always connected to Loner students are fatalistic actions. Fatalistic actions are defined by *outside to inside* relations, where external contextual forces weigh heavily on students, rendering them unable to act. Such actions are associated with students conceding to the spatiality of the university and feeling powerless to change the context within which they find themselves. Students accept the alienation they experience as part of the process of being a student in HE, and passively accept the institutional rules, norms and spaces that perpetuate their feelings of being unknown or unknowable. This form of fatalistic action is an acceptance of fate whatever it may be. There is, however, another form of fatalistic action that is not entered into blindly or unknowingly. It is based on the belief that the hands in which they place their fate have a genuine interest in them, and that wherever fate leads them can only be better than where they have come from.

10.3.2 ENTERPRISING STUDENTS

Enterprising students have strong *inside to outside relations* with their context and a good sense of themselves in terms of their *hopes, dreams and desires* [map knowledge]² (de Certeau, 2002; Gale & Parker, 2015). These students adapt what they can of their environment to improve their freedom of choice and control of how they can live their lives as students. They are driven by individualistic pursuits of identity, passion and self-development. Enterprising students are entangled within their own self and often have divergent or multiple foci/interests or passions. At times, they might have to suspend an interest or passion in order to pursue their studies, or they may attempt to juggle all their interests with varying degrees of success or failure.

Enterprising students tend to be very calculating in their use of and in gaining access to certain spaces on campus. They understand how being on campus, as opposed to off-campus, can be of benefit and strategically manoeuvre themselves to achieve this. Furthermore, they recognise the temporal nature of spaces and users on campus and opportunistically take advantage of the space and time when others have left for work or find some quiet time in environments best suited to their individual needs.

Enterprising students recognise the benefits of *reflective practice*. They regard self-reflection as a means to look back on what they have achieved. Reviewing their progress also enables them to consciously plan what they still need to achieve in order to meet their goals.

Enterprising students' aspirations are very linked to their own capability (Alkire, 2005) to do everything in their power to improve their freedom to function (Sen, 1999) so as to enhance the possibility of meeting their [individual] aspirational goals [map knowledge] (de Certeau, 2002). In optimising their spatiality, such students are also improving the likelihood of achieving their goals.

10.3.2.1 AGENTIC ACTIONS

Students may adopt agentic actions at some point in their HE journey. However, this specific typology refers to students that have a *clearly mapped out itinerary* for their time in HE and work tirelessly to achieve their individual goals. They know their path and have mapped (de Certeau, 2002) out how they intend to get there. They thus take the initiative in all or some of the varying facets of their HE experience to change their given spatiality to better suit their aspirational goals. These students have a good knowledge of the systems or context that they intend to change and work tirelessly to achieve their end goal/s.

² De Certeau refers to two types of knowledge – map and tour knowledge. The former is self-evident, while the latter relies on information provided by an outside source as a guide to how to navigate a space. These terms were adopted by Gale and Parker (2015) and are used here to refer to students knowing of their own pathway or being guided through their university experience.

Agentic actions aim to facilitate upward mobility; ease movement between desired spaces, and ensure that the student attains his/her goals and advances through the HE system. The agentic actions of students may not only be employed to gain a qualification; they are also used to access what lies beyond the university in the world of work. The university is merely a stepping stone to a better life outside of HE.

10.3.3 NETWORKING STUDENTS

Networking students recognise or come to realise the benefits of supportive networks beyond the familial context. Reaching out to make friends, joining societies or religious organisations or finding mentors is their *strategy to make meaning* of the HE campus space. These relations need not always be physical in terms of direct engagement as Networking students sometimes choose virtual communities and networks to strategise their relationships in the HE space. The virtual network option suggests that they, too, consider themselves relatively vulnerable in a new HE space.

Such support networks assist students in their academic as well as personal development. Some, particularly friendships on campus, assist students in developing their social networks. They consciously build affirming relationships to gain leisure time, and spend more time on campus to reinforce their well-being. Interactions and relations with people inside and outside of the university space can support students, but they also bear the potential risk of derailing them.

This typology of student is influenced by their context but is also able to influence the context, developing *both inside-outsider and outsider-insider relations*. Networked students can form strong social circles of 'cool' kids who dominate the more centralised, public and visible informal spaces of HE, and in so doing, alienate and exclude other students from using these spaces. It should be recognised that the kinds of communities or networks this typology of students engage in are usually linked into other hierarchical levels of power dynamics at play within the social environment of the HE space. The groups gain their authority through a range of means, including being associated with academic or sporting prowess, the popularity of particular personality types, political and ideological strengths or cosmetically in their outward appearance [pretty girls, expensive weaves and smart clothes] and through financial freedom.

Individual students establish a sense of themselves in relation to *belonging or not* to the varying groupings on campus. However, these power hierarchies are constantly shifting [across time] between groups at different times and are notably, radically overturned in times of student protest. Protests on campus realign students along political and social ideological lines which tend to result in a perpetual realignment of forces. Prevailing positionings render some formulations redundant and others

ascendant. Students both share these values and participate in the protests, or don't. Sometimes they simply refrain from coming to campus or remain on the periphery as spectators. The context itself may thus preclude Networking students from using certain spaces that do not support their personal ideals. Students sometimes resort to generating networks physically, temporally or virtually to cope with centring and marginalisation processes that are in perpetual motion whilst in HE.

The individual can belong to different networked communities that do not necessarily overlap but remain discreet. Furthermore, they can be coerced into or choose to abandon some networks to align with others. The networking typology is therefore continually engaged with *forming and reforming* different kinds of social communities, each serving different agendas.

Like the Loner typology described above, networked students have a naïve sense of hope, but this rests less on individual determination to work hard. Instead, networked students tend to be *more reliant on a collective sense* of establishing conceptions of their knowings of campus spaces. They consciously adopt a view that with the guidance of others and/or learning from others [our knowledge] (de Certeau, 2002), they will achieve their aspirations. However, this aspiration is still individually focussed rather than a collective accomplishment of achieving together. This notion may seem somewhat contradictory but is reflective of students' collective approach merely masking their individualistic agenda.

Collective consciousness arises within these students through the potential of change to their individual becoming when working together.

10.3.3.1 STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Networked students tend to adopt a strategic approach to their actions in HE, but other typologies of students may also adopt strategic actions to achieve their *immediate or long term goals*. Students operating at a strategic level know how to *leverage relationships with others to their individual benefit*. Strategic actions mediate both learning the system and adapting to the student culture. They enable students to *adapt to a changing context* rather than trying to change the context itself.

Students who are strategic about their HE experience learn to understand both the explicit and implicit rules and norms of the university. These norms could include culture, language, behaviour, people, and processes. Working within these many knowings, they slowly build confidence in themselves and their ability to navigate the HE system and use the knowledge gained to assist them in working towards or supporting their aspirational goals.

Students' strategic actions are affected by their collective capacity to aspire (Appadurai, 2004) through access to or knowing of the systems and means [tour knowledge] (de Certeau, 2002) to navigate topological pathways (Gale & Parker, 2015).

10.3.4 ENVISIONING STUDENTS

The final typology of students arose from the data on imaginative mapping. Envisioning students hold *multiple outside-inside and inside-outside relations*. These students recognise their individual desires within a collective spatiality as part of a larger system or community. They have a strong sense of their aspirations but recognise that they need the support of other students as well as the broader university infrastructure and systems to achieve them; the individual, the collective and the systemic meet within the envisioning student.

These students acknowledge a knowing of critical hope (Bozalek, Carolissen, & Leibowitz, 2013; Grain & Lund, 2016) which is the collective responsibility to aspire, and collective capacity to aspire (Appadurai, 2004) through recognition of difference and sharing of experiences. The functioning required for critical hope (*ibid.*) is reflexivity and dialogue, ultimately leading to transformative actions to collectively change students' circumstances.

Systemic change within the space of HE is also recognised as necessary to support students' aspirations. The change required on campus is not sought within academic spaces [though this does not exclude or preclude them]. The spaces students actively choose in which to see change are those that speak to both their *individual and collective selves* that allow their individuality to come through in the company of others. These spaces vary across a range of interests whether in sport, business, leisure or entertainment contexts. Such spaces and their relationship to academic spaces are considered by envisioning students as part of the essence of what being at university means for them; the spaces are not peripheral to campus life. The spaces themselves are implicated in the need for change in the purpose of HE, not as purely fulfilling their material or epistemic needs but for self-fulfilment.

Envisioning students suggests a more idealistic relation between students and space. This is in support of making space and the social relations therein *more equitable* through accommodating a diversity of student needs that will contribute to both their success and enjoyment of being a student in HE. The spatialities formed therein reflect students' individual needs within a collective environment.

Space herein not only has agency to change social relations, but to contribute to students improving their opportunities collectively to fulfil their future hopes and dreams.

10.3.4.1 COLLECTIVE ACTIONS

The last typology of student action is also drawn from the imaginative mapping data set where students indicated the *benefits of socialising* in particular spaces and learning from other students' experiences of navigating HE.

Collective action is recognised as utopic but is necessary to consider in a neoliberal context that values individualism, individual achievement and meritocracy over collaboration. This kind of agency is not advocating for mediocrity or conformity. Collective action is where the individual is in dialectical tension with the collective, both supporting and containing [not constraining] one another, where the collective's action is not to consume the individual or individual aspirations but to keep pushing individuals to achieve together.

Collective agency can change students' social relations and the way they engage with one another as well as their future goals. This is a transformative action that activates students to achieve their hopes and dreams collectively. It is very likely, however, that some individuals within the collective may achieve 'more' through collective action than others due to factors within and outside of students' control such as their background, home environment, academic capabilities, and the HE system itself and how it may privilege certain understandings of what it means to be a student in HE. However, in order for collective action to be realised rather than remain a utopic ideal there is a need for systemic change within the space of HE.

All relations, individual, collective and systemic are implicated in advocating for change through collective action.

10.4 ENTANGLED KNOWINGS

This section proposes the thesis of the study, which involves a complex recognition of the entanglement of factors which impinge on the understanding of students knowings of space. This thesis goes beyond a simplistic dyadic relationship between students and the ambient space. The metaphor of the dandelion is used to represent the shifts in working from dualistic dichotomies towards a conception of entanglements within and outside of students' being and becoming in HE.

10.4.1 STUDENTS KNOWINGS

Unpacking students knowings as an expression is meaningful as these words collectively embrace the multiple aspects of the thesis, which included knowing as a process, product and the agentic action of people, in this case students in the HE space.

Knowing was understood as dynamic, relational, and continually in the process of being and becoming; it was understood as neither static, insular, nor finite. Knowing as a 'doing' verb opened the possibility that the meanings within and across spaces were iterative and evolving as students may choose to alter the process of making sense of their worlds, their interpretations thereof and actions therein. Knowing was thus catalytic of further choices and interpretations. Moreover, knowings was understood as multiple and mutable.³

Utilising 'knowings' rather than 'experiences' was intentional as the research aimed to understand what students were learning from their interactions in space and what actions arose as opposed to simply how students felt as a consequence of their experiences. **This thesis suggests that mechanistic stitching of the mind-body dualities is too rigid, technicist and sedimented; instead, it proposes a form of knowings that places the student not as a recipient of external influences, but as an agent of mindful actions. This celebrates students knowings as dialogical, discursive and deliberative.**

Focussing on *students* knowings was to bring students' voices and what they knew of campus spaces to the fore. In a post-apartheid, HE context students are often perceived in a deficit view and dominant conceptions of students are that they are belligerent, undeserving, un-resourceful and disembodied. Students knowings is significant in that it is not just an empty signifier. Students knowings means

³ Knowings was framed as follows:

- Knowing what? [product - what were students learning beyond the formal curriculum]
- Knowing how? [process - what actions were arising as a consequence of students knowings]
- Knowing where? [spaces across time - what locations were contributing to students' informal learning]
- Knowing who? [people who students were engaging with and the nature of the relations formed in informal spaces].

different things to different students at different times in their HE journey, further corresponding to the different actions or non-actions that they may perform as responses to the varied kinds of hegemonies they may encounter in spaces.

This thesis enabled a questioning of the dominant discourses about students and their negotiation of the HE system that prevail within official and managerial interpretations of their actions. This is not to negate other knowings but to subdue them in order to let students speak. The many ways in which student knowings as a composite could have been written illustrate its varying foci and intent. My choices in the multiple representations and theoretical representations across the thesis point to the varied and rich contestations of interpretations of negotiating HE spaces. I could have spoken of *student's knowing* where the emphasis is on the individual aspects of knowing, or about *students' knowing* to emphasise the collective features of knowing, or *student's knowings* to address the multiplicity of knowing. I chose to use "**students knowings**", emphasising students' meaning-making as a collective and the multiplicity of their knowings.⁴

This study contributes to the notion of students and space as entangled in and with time – past, present and future hopes, as well as with others through their varying dispositions and actions that led to the conceptual framework of students knowings. The conceptual framework looks beyond preoccupation with the racialised, socio-economic and epistemic under-resourced knowing of students (Taylor, Fleisch, & Schindler, 2007; Morrow, 2009; Spaul, 2013; Hugo, 2016; Swartz et al., 2017). The study therefore **represents students as always on the move negotiating their spatialities through and within HE in pursuit of their dreams.**

10.4.2 DIALECTICAL - ENTANGLEMENT

The thesis began by adopting a dialectical (Lefebvre, 1991) understanding of the relationship between space and students [Chapter two]. A dialectical approach views the world as a series of interactions (Kuczynski, Pitman, & Mitchell, 2009) in which, as this thesis explored, students and their environments embodied **dynamically related** aspects of a system that perpetually interacted with one another. These interactions produce constant change, and each new outcome sets in motion the beginning of a new process of contradictions and further changes. Space in a dialectical view is thus examined from the perspective of the human agents and how they are both constrained by and enabled to change their contexts (*ibid*). This exemplifies that the relationship between students and space is not equal, or directed in simplistic linear trajectories. These negotiated relationships of knowings of space are also not equal at all times since they may shift in emphases or recession within varied contexts across both time and space.

⁴ No apostrophe was used as the knowings is not a possessed by any one student in particular.

The initial lens viewed students and space as interdependent yet discretely understood. A theoretical shift arose through the data from the recognition of spatiality as dialectical interactions (Lefebvre, 1991; Soja, 2009) to intra-actions as per Barad's (2007) ideas of agency and entanglement within the theory of Agential Realism. As Barad notes:

*Spatiality is **intra-actively** produced. It is an ongoing process of the material (re)configuring of boundaries - an iterative (re)structuring of spatial relations. Hence spatiality is defined not only in terms of **boundaries** but also in terms of **exclusions**... The **past matters** and so does the **future**, **but the past is never left behind**, never finished once and for all, and the future is not what will come to be in an unfolding of the present moment; rather the past and the future are enfolded participants in matter's iterative becoming" (Barad, 2007, p. 118) [Emphasis author's own].*

For Barad, spatiality is both exclusionary and inclusionary, as well as embedded and affected by the impacts of time. These ideas begin to shape the theorising of spatiality and students knowings thereof not as an independent entity [of students and space] but very much enabled and constrained by their interactions with each other, with others and other things.

These conceptions are reinforced within the fieldwork and analysis of this thesis, where the many knowings that students bring to fore and enact in the spatial practices are discursively and intra-agentially produced and reconstructed.

Barad's entanglement assisted in recognising how the concepts adopted in the mobile representation are entangled within students in their academic and non-academic selves, in their individual and collective spatialities over time. That which is outside of students is also entangled within them [internal and external]. The seemingly contradictory concepts [explored in Chapters seven, eight and nine] are essentially two sides of the same coin, and their entanglements are part of an ongoing process that enables, constrains and defines student actions.

As Barad elaborates:

*To be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence. **Existence is not an individual affair.** Individuals do not pre-exist their interactions; rather, **individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating** (Barad, 2007, p. IX) [Emphasis author's own].*

Students are **co-existing in entangled spatialities both inside and outside of themselves**. This accentuates the view that agency or the **freedom to act**, if at all, is bound up in multiple dualistic dichotomies that students have to negotiate within the space of HE. These include self and other, individual and

collective, internal and external, mobility and stability, past and future, mind and body, alienation and liberation – all the dichotomies entangled in self. A paradox lies in these dichotomies as they can co-exist within students at the same time. To explain this paradox, I turn again to using a metaphor.

10.4.3 THE DANDELION

Dandelions are regarded as weeds with their presence unwelcome on a manicured lawn, yet are considered useful for medicinal purposes (CABI, 2019). They are also used as a metaphor in child psychology to represent the less sensitive or fragile persona [the antonym is the more sensitive orchid child] (Boyce, 2019) and are further associated with ephemerality in their transformation after pollination from flower to ‘clock’ seed head (Evans, 2012). The latter is associated with the idea of liberation and renewal (Cooney, 2016; Struwe, 2018). These seeming ‘contradictions’ within the dandelion are of interest since they appear to embody opposite or discrete elements or dimensions. A further complicated interpretation of this simple ‘weed’ includes the view that it simultaneously embeds the biological make-up of the dandelion [internal] and a purposeful presence in its relationship with its context [external]. It contains concurrent elements of its present being as well as its future becomings.



Fig 10.3: The dandelion plant, flower, clock seed head and seed (Dandelion, 2020)

The dandelion’s flower head consists of multiple flowers or florets, with a buoyant projectile seed developing underneath each floret, which, after the dandelion flower head has dried out for a few days emerges to form a full sphere of seeds on the seed head (Wikipedia, 2020). The seeds are attached to white, fluffy ‘parachutes’ which detach easily from the seed head and are dispersed by the wind (*ibid*).

However, the ‘actions’ of dispersal of the seeds are not merely left to the mercy of the environment. The fluffy plume above the seeds can close up in a network of connectivities to minimise their potential

separation from the stem. The seeds await, in preparation for other forces and optimal conditions for maximum dispersion and germination (*ibid*).

The dandelion exists as part of a larger ecological system both above and below the surface or in and out of sight. The bright yellow flowers provide pollen and in turn, are pollinated by bees (CABI, 2019). Below the surface, ants build their nests around the dandelions, attracted to the aphids feeding off the dandelion roots (Ellis, 2013). The association between ant and dandelion is through the aphid as ants farm the aphids for their nectar (*ibid*). This seemingly small feature in the wider ecosphere activates and nurtures an ecologically harmonious and dialogical set of interrelations and actions.

The dandelion constitutes an organic system that interacts with the environment and is flexible and adaptable to changes from both within and outside of itself. It is an ideal metaphor to represent the fluid, dynamic and living entity of students knowings of the spatiality of HE.

10.4.3.1 SEEN AND UNSEEN

That which lies invisible below the surface yet is very much a part of students is their backgrounds, while that which lies above the surface is their foregrounds. Students' backgrounds remain attached to them, affecting and nurturing them at the same time. Students act out their negotiation of HE spaces as a form of responses to their families' expectations and hopes. Their backgrounds sometimes feature more prominently but also recede if there is a choice in times of negotiating future new directions.

Contextual forces that exist outside of students can release them too soon through exclusions from the parent hold or the institutional academic (regulatory) environment. The forces which manifest above the surface mainly aim to provide support to enhance development.

Nevertheless, students may knowingly resist those they deem not useful. Students manage their relations with their context as best they can so as to not be swept away by weak forces that will not take them much further from where they have come.

Students embed both their background and their foreground, their past and their future. Their backgrounds might define or not define them, haunt them, or consume them, whilst at the same time, their foregrounds may pass them by, drive them forward or render them complacent. Students negotiate each aspect of their dichotomies simultaneously.

10.4.3.2 DUALISTIC DICHOTOMIES

That which projects above the surface within the seeds arising from the seed head is the multiple dual dichotomies that co-exist in students. To expand on the analogy formed from the dandelion seed, the seed hosts the potential for new growth, and hence stability, rootedness and renewal, and the fluffy plume the potential for fluidity, movement and transgressing boundaries. There are thus two complementary and contradictory aspects in one entity. Similarly, students experience the dichotomies of fluidity, movement and uncertainty as part of being students within HE as they search for certainty and stability in their own lives. Other dichotomies of the mind and body or thinking and action are noted in the independent agentic actions that some students are able to engage in, whilst others wait for optimal conditions to take them.

The seed head is also known as the dandelion clock (Hurley, 2019), based on an old game children used to and possibly still play by blowing away the seeds. Each puff is equivalent to one hour (*ibid*). The seeds are slowly released with those closest to the puffing or less firmly attached leaving first. Once released from the head of the plant, each seed travels alone. The individual and collective dichotomy of HE lies in the temporality of students' collective existence and in the negotiations they conduct with themselves and with others - in letting go [internally motivated], leaving [motivated by others] or forced to go [external forces].

Students are constantly negotiating these collective and individual dichotomies.

10.4.3.3 SYSTEMIC DICHOTOMIES

Once dispersed, seeds hope to find fertile ground, and from there the cycle repeats itself in an ongoing process. While students might be seen as having the free will to direct their dichotomies to their own ends, this is misguided as there are constraints both in terms of what is 'allowed' at a cultural and systemic level, and in the hegemonies that exist within or outside of their dichotomies. The self or the independent self is an illusion of a perpetuating system in which small moves can be made to secure a better future.

A western tradition exists of blowing on a dandelion and while doing so, making a wish (Struwe, 2018). This is done in the whimsical naïve hope that by some feat of magic, the wish will be granted. Students are similarly optimistic about their futures however systemic incumberances may inhibit or propel their hopes and dreams for the future. **Enabling students to develop their own agency to achieve their hopes for a better future through HE requires a radical re-look at HE institutions as spaces to contribute to students' aspirations.**

10.5 UNTANGLING THE SPACE OF HE

The dandelion metaphor theorises students knowings and students' actions as organically and dialectically entangled within themselves and with their context. Each student's entanglement is different and differently experienced. The metaphor further asserts that students are in a state of permanent mobility, moving through the system of HE and negotiating internal and external spatialities guided by their aspirations and affected by their backgrounds. What if this conception is not true and some students are not intent on mobilising through the system, and are not guided by aspirations for a life outside of HE, but wish to remain within the HE space for their own anarchic or selfish purposes and adapt or disrupt the HE space in order to remain on the inside? Such a situation possibly arises from the welfare system as perpetuated through the spaces of HE.

The dandelion as an organic conception of students knowings and students' actions deliberately suppressed the agency of the space of HE so as to bring student agency to the fore. However, I remained cognisant that these fluid actions and knowings operate within a HE system in which further *hierarchies of power* may interact and entangle to explain students' relations and actions. What, then, is it within the HE space that could be contributing to social relations that encourage or enable students to mobilise as well as entrench themselves deeper in the space of HE?

Knowing that the HE system may operate to define students knowings and actions leads me to question whether students knowings and actions could be conceptualised and defined differently if knowing arose from the perspective of HE space. Are there likely to be other conceptions of students knowings and doings that are less fluid, dynamic and organic and more stable, hierarchical and mechanistic?

Addressing the counter-argument of the dialectical view that space is produced through the social and their spatial practices, then social relations are also produced through the spatial. This suggests that the HE space itself is implicated in defining students' relations and actions in space. While the dandelion metaphor further explains students' individual and collective interactions within space, it does not explain the contradictions and complexities that lie within HE spaces themselves, nor does it explain how students continue to feel discriminated against or liberated within the HE space.

Higher education space is where different student identities are constructed, in tension, and in entanglement with the political and performative agenda of the institution. The HE space is in perpetual interaction with external and internal forces and chooses to change, adapt to or ignore differing political, social and epistemic agendas. Forces acting on HE spaces include pressures to transform,

decolonise, be a competitive player in global rankings, address changing pedagogical practices and technological innovation, prepare work-ready graduates, and to address student welfare needs.

Higher education's reactions to these forces are sometimes perceived as slow or inadequate, while at other times, change can happen fast.⁵ . Higher education spaces can also be paradoxical; for example, submit to national and university policy expectations to include and accommodate more students from marginalised backgrounds yet still engage in practices in space that serve to privilege some students over others.

Untangling the spaces of HE and their respective forces and how these could be conspiring towards spatial as well as social [in]justice on campus provides a powerful counterpoint to students knowings of HE spaces and the limitations of their individual and collective agency to meet their aspirations.

This thesis posits a counter argument of students knowings, namely, of *students staying put within HE for as long as they can maintain a stronghold on access to services and material needs*. A challenge HE needs to address is to seek alternate ways of provisioning students beyond fatalistic abandonment to students' individual accountability. Instead, the study suggests agentic development of students to realise more fully self-directed, systemic capabilities activated through their action inside and alongside the HE space

10.6 CONTRIBUTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study's contribution to HE is both methodological and theoretical. Co-producing photographs and generating an exhibition for audiencing to a broader body of students was an innovative approach to creating, collecting and selecting data with participants. A further contribution is the recognition of spatiality as an active contributor and integral part of an informal curriculum that students come to know whilst in HE. This curriculum is not static; it is fluid, uncertain and changing yet integrated into students' everyday experience of HE, affecting how they navigate their daily campus experience in relation to their past, their present and their future.

The study's implications are discussed with respect to policy and practice as well as current debates surrounding decolonising the curriculum and the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁵ An example is the switch to emergency remote online learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in which HE as a physical space for contact-based learning has ceased to exist – temporarily, we hope

10.6.1 METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION

The innovation in this study lay in the co-production of data with students and in the use of an imaginative mapping technique to explore students' ideal campus. The use of photographs as a means to delve deeper into how students understand HE space and the collaborative process of working toward a creative output with the images served as a mechanism for repeated engagement with students. These dialogues varied from a few minutes to an hour and were an integral means of getting to know students in more depth than would have occurred in a single interview. The repeated conversations dug below the surface of the photographs, which in themselves were not critiqued, in which students knowingly portrayed themselves as they wanted to be seen. The individualistic and political nature of the photograph should thus not be discounted. This, did not, however, prevent the broader body of students from reading the photographs and deriving their own meanings from them. In this way, the photographs were an important catalyst for the multiplicity of students knowings.⁶

In the process of data analysis, thematic aggregation and reaggregation, abstraction and representation, I intentionally resisted the mechanistic lockstep approach. I chose a re-iterative process with which I was more familiar as an architectural educator. The design studio, as the core of architectural education, encourages reiteration in the development of ideas until they reach fruition as visual representations. Visuals and visual representation were centred in the data analysis and representation process as the most effective means of embedding the multiple storylines that needed to be told.

10.6.2 CONTRIBUTION TO UNDERSTANDING SPATIALITY IN HE

The study contributes to theoretical understanding of spatiality within HE – not as a passive backdrop, but as dynamic entangled relations between students and campus spaces. Spatiality is an active contributor to students knowings and becomings within HE. Students consciously navigate and adapt [or succumb to] their spatialities in pursuit of their ideals.

Spatiality is understood as existing both within and outside of students, encompassing the mental, physical and social aspects of their being. Furthermore, responding to spatiality compels both feeling and action, mind and body, all of which are differently experienced and enacted across spaces and across the student body.

⁶ Furthermore, the power of no image, as was the case for one student's set of photographs, signified that the text could be read and have meaning both in and of itself without the photographs being present.

10.6.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

10.6.3.1 [OTHER] CURRICULUM AS EXPERIENCED

The findings from the study provide insight into how students' everyday life on campus is entangled within the spatialities of campus. Institutions operationalise official policies to address the social objectives of redress and transformation (Tumubweinee & Luescher, 2019), which have a direct bearing on how space is qualitatively experienced by students through their everyday spatial practices within campus spaces.

The first significant implication of the research findings is that the alternate or other curriculum of informal learning is embedded in the spatiality of students' lived experience of the campus. Students' lived experience of the curriculum is not, however, equal, privileging some and marginalising others. Addressing HE transformation's social objectives should be considered in tandem with the spatial inequality students currently experience within HE. Policies might erroneously pigeonhole certain demographic profiles [e.g., race, gender, class] as the only factors to consider in the centring and marginalising of HE students when students face other obstacles or challenges.

Furthermore, in focussing on students' everyday experiences of HE spaces this study re-contextualises the meaning students attribute to campus spaces by concentrating on the informal rather than on the formal academic spaces. *This suggests that for students, HE entails more than just acquiring access to formal knowledges or the official curriculum.*

10.6.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

10.6.4.1 KNOWING: WHAT KNOWING IS USEFUL?

A second implication of this study is that knowing students could be useful if directed toward their aspirations. This is particularly true when these aspirations are aligned with tangible spatial and social expectations that students are able to articulate as valuable.

Knowing of students' backgrounds perpetuates deficit framing of students as apathetic and unable to help themselves. Systems are then established to prop up, fix or compensate for what is perceived to be broken in terms of material provisions, and academic programmes to address epistemic under-preparedness. This pathologising and patronising predisposition contributes to other forms of exclusion and inequality. Not knowing students' backgrounds thus might prove more useful.

Knowing of students' foregrounds in terms of their aspirations or goals for HE or beyond could be useful in terms of understanding what this could mean for the future of HE, for other students and for the

space of HE. Students knowing of other students knowings could contribute to inspirational stories of journeys through HE, showing that success through adversity is possible.

10.6.4.2 DESIGNING FOR CONVENIENCE?

Institutional practice to address social welfare redress has implications for how students experience adversity and opportunities for self growth within the spaces of HE.

This research questions whether the design of campuses should focus on making students' lives more convenient. Should all their needs be addressed by HE and within the space of HE? What will become of the epistemic project if campus infrastructure continues to focus on redress rather than student success?

Contemporary campus designs are moving towards integrating the campus into the urban context to connect sites of knowledge production with the exchange of knowledge (Hebbert, 2018) through informal encounters within city spaces. A moving away from the historical model that tended to segregate the campus from the surrounding context to form isolated sites of knowledge production and dissemination. This change acknowledges the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge exchange. Sol Plaatje University, a new university in South Africa, was designed along similar principles, removing the barriers between campus and city, between public and private, to encourage collaboration across disciplines and engagement with the general public (Combrinck & Nortjé, 2020). Could this be a model to address students' individual and collective desires for safety and freedom, academic and non-academic aspirations, to be with others but also be alone, to feel like one belongs but also to become, to study and to plan for the future, to reflect and to dream?

I am not referring to Eurocentric café style privatisation of campus space which as this research has shown, tends to privilege some over others, but about opening up buildings and spaces to accommodate multiple sites of networking. Campuses could be re-configured to be more like urban streets, encouraging interaction in the 'street' and in the informal spaces and in so doing figuratively 'breaking down' the disciplinary silos that exist within the buildings.

10.6.4.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR DECOLONISATION

Chapter one addressed the broader national context of HE in which calls for the decolonisation of the curriculum arose vehemently in South Africa in response to the #Rhodesmustfall protests.

The #Blacklivesmatter campaign in America, which reverberated across the globe, has raised issues of social justice and human dignity. In both movements, statues have been the object of protesters' anger – either being forcibly removed or defaced. To the protesters, these statues represent a glorification

of past systems of domination and symbols of oppression. These protests raise questions as to whose interests are being served in the spaces of our cities and in the space of HE.

The implications of this study for decolonisation rest in two spaces: the tangible artefacts of the past and the current students on the margins. Regarding the former, the artefacts of the past were seen as oppressive reminders that students want removed, while the architecture of the past is associated with attaining access to an elite space and is symbolic of individual success. This highlights the individualistic and collective antagonism within the campus space between which reminders of the past serve to bolster individual esteem and hence are meaningful, and which have no meaning or value to the individual or the collective body of students. The past is only meaningful if connected to students' present becoming or future ideals. Hence the [colonial] architecture of the past will remain meaningful to students as long as it remains a symbol of prestige [desirable to obtain] and exclusion [formal access is limited]. The classical architecture is symbolic of students' attainment of an aspiration or of future success in life. Artefacts [statues] of the colonial and apartheid past will continue to be challenged as they represent a particular moment in time, and their meaning cannot be reconciled with individuals' desire to move beyond the past.

The implication of this study for students is that the spatialities of inequity perpetuate the privilege of some students and marginalisation of others, which has implications for both transformation and for decolonisation. The transformation and the decolonisation agenda both deal with issues of redress, advocating for previously marginalised communities and marginalised knowledge to become centralised. However, if contributing to individualistic epistemic self-development, decoloniality is falling on fallow ground. Decolonisation needs to be understood as broader than purely an epistemic or cognitive knowing as an end in itself, rather as a process of coming to know as felt, experienced and enacted within the campus spaces through engagement with other students. This would enable its true social objective and liberatory agenda to be felt in the space of HE.

Decolonisation can only be achieved by creating spaces and spatialities that enable students on the margins to participate in the centre, accommodating students across the socio-economic and social capital divide to engage more fully in the space and spaces of HE.

10.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study was originally framed as focussing on the meso-scale of informal spaces of campus, with aspects of spatial injustice to be explored through the distribution and provision of resources in HE spaces. During the data collection process, I became more attuned to the micro-scale of the individual student and how they make sense of their environmental spatialities. This thesis has deliberately argued for a broadening of the interpretation of spatialities to include viewing the micro- [individual] and the meso-scale [spatial] as intimately connected and influencing each other. The micro and the meso are not diametric opposites, but co-influencers in students knowings of HE spatialities.

However, the potential of the micro-scale to disrupt dominant [provisioning discourses which suggest fatalistic abandonment to some external saviour] conceptions around spatiality is a deliberate choice to know spatiality in a different and more complex way. Nevertheless, the micro- can inform the meso-level and it is with this insight in mind that the study's limitations and suggestions for future research are discussed. These are intimately connected, as the limitations open the way for further research. This study further recognises that there are other forms of 'collective knowing' of HE [sources such as parents, extended family, religious groups, community and social media] and other informal spaces that exist beyond HE that could contribute to students knowings of HE. However, this studies construction of student knowings has chosen a specific delimitation of foregrounding students knowings of the informal spaces of HE, cognisant that future studies could address the varied sources and spaces which influence the nature of students knowings of higher education.

The limitation of the study with regard to the **micro-scale** or individual is whose 'knowing' is of value. This study purposefully chose to address informal spaces from the students' perspective, less so management, and excluded faculty, parents, and the knowings of other students to some extent. The *knowing* was thus deliberately framed as student knowing, which for the most part is unquestioned. Their knowing is considered as the truth. Exploring the knowings of others such as *faculty or management* and what they know [of students knowings] of campus spatialities could provide valuable further insight as a means to extend knowings of HE spatialities beyond the recipients or consumers of knowledge to those that actively produce and inform it.

The **meso-scale** knowing of the space of HE predominantly focussed on informal rather than formal spaces, as it addressed student mobility and its implications for life outside of HE to some degree, but not in full. However, some slippage did occur into the non-formal spaces such as libraries and LANs as students noted the significance of these spaces in supporting or contributing to their informal learning. This is not to say that *academic spaces* were not of significance to students and a better understanding

of the role of academic or formal spaces in contributing to students' aspirations would be of interest. The different spatialities that occur in these spaces over time and with different user interactions would assist in understanding how pedagogy is enacted and what is learnt in these spaces beyond content knowledge.

Finally, future research could explore both the **micro- and meso-scale** through a better understanding of the interrelations between *students' welfare needs, their aspirational needs, and agency*. This research began to question whether what is planned, designed or provided for students is contributing towards a welfarist, the "university must provide" syndrome. The limitation is perhaps that spaces are currently being designed to allow students to become dependent, passive and agentless, contributing to a smoother life once they arrive on campus. They then become recipients, rather than activators of change. The struggles students face before, and during their HE possibly develop particular kinds of appreciation and reliance. Future research calls for a consideration of the relationship between the spatial infrastructure and students' expectations and the kind of graduates that universities are sending into society.

10.8 NEW BEGINNINGS

This research has shown that HE, as the site of knowledge production, has the potential to generate spatialities that can be **both alienating and liberating**. Alienation lies in the entangled relations between people, space, systems and objects that do not support and are hence not meaningful to students in their journeys through HE. Alienating spatialities are associated with academic spaces which are subject to many competing and dominant forces, which students realise they have little chance of changing.

The alternate view could be that for students, production and consumption of knowledge is merely one component of HE, which is necessary to achieve in their present reality. The potential for HE to be liberating lies in the degree to which these complex [factors within] spatialities align with students' individual aspirations to succeed beyond HE. Spatialities associated with aspirations are peripheral in non-academic spaces. Peripheral spaces have the potential to align with student aspirational goals post HE and their ability to affect and be effective in change is also more likely. Independent and collective actions therein may be more effective and enduring. Or it could be that students realise that the centre of HE [epistemic/ academic spaces/ knowledge production] is merely a component of broader aspirations and accept this as a part rather than the whole potential of HE. **Knowledge production is part of the present and foundational aspect of HE, but the enduring aspect of HE is its potential to contribute to students' aspirational production through the spatialities it engenders.**

This thesis has illustrated that students knowings of HE extend beyond the taught curriculum, and that this informal curriculum is intimately experienced through campus spatialities. In order for the informal curriculum to be effective [to encourage student agency and mobility], it needs to be embedded in a context that is meaningful [to students] and mindful of students' aspirational goals.

This thesis closes in questioning, how we design the informal spaces of HE to counter dependency and foster agentic activation rather than promote welfarist capitulations.

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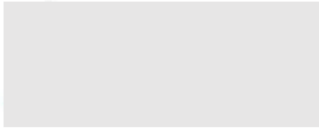
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APPENDIX 1.1

GATEKEEPERS LETTER



12 December 2017

Mrs Bridget Horner (SN 217078598)
School of Education
College of Humanities
Edgewood Campus
UKZN
Email: horner@ukzn.ac.za Samuelm@ukzn.ac.za

Dear Mrs Horner

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

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

"Students knowing of food, accommodation and transport spaces in the higher education environment".

It is noted that you will be constituting your sample by conducting interviews with students on the [redacted] campus.

Please ensure that the following appears on your notice/questionnaire:

- Ethical clearance number;
- Research title and details of the research, the researcher and the supervisor;
- Consent form is attached to the notice/questionnaire and to be signed by user before he/she fills in questionnaire;
- gatekeepers approval by the Registrar.

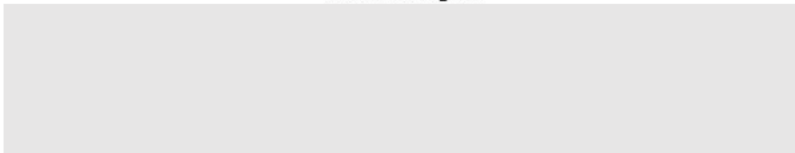
You are not authorized to contact staff and students using 'Microsoft Outlook' address book. Identity numbers and email addresses of individuals are not a matter of public record and are protected according to Section 14 of the South African Constitution, as well as the Protection of Public Information Act. For the release of such information over to yourself for research purposes, the [redacted] will need express consent from the relevant data subjects. Data collected must be treated with due confidentiality and anonymity.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature and name of Registrar]

REGISTRAR

Office of the Registrar



APPENDIX 1.2

ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



6 February 2018

Mrs Bridget Marian Horner 217078598
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Horner

Protocol reference number: HSS/0012/018D

Project Title: Students knowings of food, accommodation and transport spaces in the higher education environment

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 20 December 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Professor Michael Samuel
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr SB Khoza
cc School Administrator: Ms Tyzer Khumalo

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

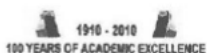
Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 290 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 290 4609 Email: zimbao@ukzn.ac.za / snymarm@ukzn.ac.za / mohuno@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



Faculty Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Hassard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

APPENDIX 2.1 COMPETITION FLYER

DATE: February to May 2018
 DISTRIBUTION: Flyer distributed by hand to students on campus
 PURPOSE: To find participants
 INSTRUMENT NO: CB_01



Conditions

Conditions:
 Photographs or selfies of spaces on campus related to food, accommodation that are thought provoking and meaningful to you.

1 photo per space (food/accommodation/transport) and max 3 images to be submitted for the competition.

By submitting a photograph you are agreeing to our terms and conditions and you are allowing the possible use of that photograph on websites, blogs, exhibitions or other media that might emanate in relation to this Competition. Any copyright will be credited to the photographer.

Only photographs or selfies to be considered for inclusion resolution of image must be 300 dpi. Each entrant is eligible to submit up to, and no more than, 3 images – maximum file size per image is 10meg.

For winning entries, please include the title of the photo and details of where the photograph was taken. Images should be recent no more than a month old.

Provide your full name, age, gender, email and telephone number/s, as well as whether you are studying toward at UKZN Howard College and whether you are an undergraduate or postgraduate – all to be noted in the email.

ENTRIES to clickpichowardcollege@gmail.com and also post your pics on [clickpichowardcollege](https://www.instagram.com/clickpichowardcollege)

Images related to UKZN Howard College campus spaces and its immediate surroundings will be included.

Photographs of university residences or accommodation spaces of Howard College will be accepted.

Images from Students at UKZN (Howard College) will be accepted.

Blurry, illegible, incomplete, defaced or corrupted file entries will not be accepted.

Material will not be included.

13. You need to gain the necessary consent and permission from any subjects in your photographs for their inclusion in your submissions.

14 You must own the copyright of any images you submit so please do not upload other people's work.

Prizes + Adjudication process:

15. Closing date for entries is **midnight the 25th of April 2018**.

16. Winners will be notified by email on or before the **12th of May 2018**.

17. All images will be adjudicated by a panel of judges.

18. Judges are looking for a picture that best captures an **original approach** and/or **illustrates the topic best**.

19. Prizes are as follows: **R1000 – best overall photo, R500 best undergrad, R500 best post graduate photo.**

Contact email:

20. Any queries please send email to clickpichowardcollege@gmail.com

APPENDIX 2.2 CHALKBOARDS ON CAMPUS

DATE: August to December 2018
 FORMAT: Chalkboard and chalk
 DISTRIBUTION: Placed in three locations on campus
 PURPOSE: To find participants
 INSTRUMENT NO: CB_02



Photograph 1: Chalkboard titled, 'Space to?' Located alongside a seating area on campus



Photograph 2: I sit here because... 'It's lonely out here'



Photograph 3: Chalkboard titled, 'Space to Think' Attached to a bus stop on campus



Photograph 4: While I wait I think about ... 'I think of the food I left in the fridge'



Photograph 5: Chalkboard titled, 'Space to Dream' Located outside a mothballed dining hall on campus

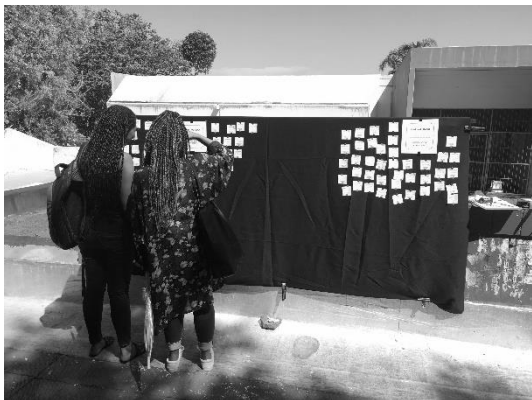


Photograph 6: I dream of becoming... 'Giving hope to the helpless' to reach this dream I need... 'Connect with the people'

APPENDIX 2.3

WORKSHOPS ON CAMPUS

DATE: August to September 2018
 FORMAT: Action research
 DISTRIBUTION: Once a week outside old dining hall on campus
 PURPOSE: To find participants
 INSTRUMENT NO: CB_03, CB_04, CB05



Photograph 1: What have I learnt outside of the classroom and what do I wish I had known before university



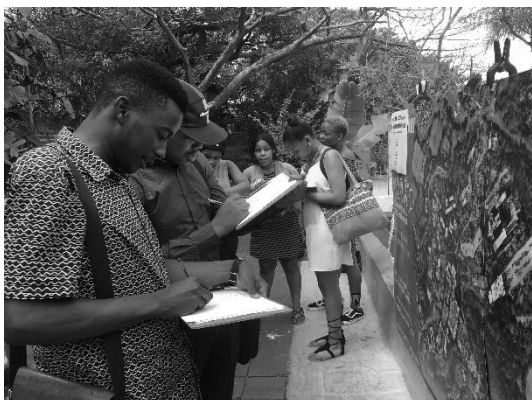
Photograph 2: What have I learnt outside of the classroom... 'University life sucks'



Photograph 3: I wish there was a... on campus right here



Photograph 4: I wish there was a 'Cool place to relax'



Photograph 5: Significant spaces on campus



Photograph 6: Intensity of significant spaces on campus

APPENDIX 2.4













PHOTOGRAPH PRODUCTION CRITERIA

DATE: November 2018
 FORMAT: Discussion
 DISTRIBUTION: Copy given to participants before co-production of photographs
 PURPOSE: To give context to photo production
 INSTRUMENT No: PPC01A

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

1. To explore what students know of FAT spaces on campus.
2. To understand what that knowing enables or constrains.

PHASE 1: PPC01A PHOTO PRODUCTION CRITERIA

CONTACT (engagement, detachment) Demand Offer			
DISTANCE (camera lens to student) Social distance	 Impersonal	 Social	 Intimate
POINT OF VIEW (angle of photo) Power of Power over Power sharing			
FRAMING (student + space) Connects – visual continuity, vectors Disconnects – visual discontinuity Centrality – holding of elements together	 Connects	 Disconnects	 centrality
NARRATIVE	Known unknown [Familiar] [new]	Ideal [imagined] <hr style="width: 100%; border: 1px solid black;"/> Real [down to earth]	

APPENDIX 2.5

EXHIBITION STATEMENT

DATE: 21-24 May 2019
FORMAT: Exhibition
DISTRIBUTION: Pinned up at the exhibition for viewers to read
PURPOSE: To extend the meaning-making of campus spaces to a broader audience
INSTRUMENT No: Exp_01

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

3. To explore what students know of FAT spaces on campus.
4. To understand what that knowing enables or constrains.

STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS

IN & OFF HIGHER EDUCATION SPACES : POST APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA



BRIDGET HORNER

NOKWANDA RADEBE

SIPHESIHLE DJUBE

RAZEENA CASSIM

MENZI GUMEDE

BRIE PARKER

Opening: 21st of May 1pm

A collaborative photographic exhibition
with [redacted] students

Exhibition Dates:

21st of May – 24th of May 2019

This exhibition is part of an ongoing research project about students and informal spaces on campus. Informal spaces related to food, accommodation and transport [hereafter known as FAT spaces] were seen as distinct from formal campus spaces where content is taught and mastered. The interest in FAT spaces arose from their significance as indicators of the basic needs of students, while at the same time reflecting social, economic and physical discrepancies between them. Embedded within this research is a desire to discover other kinds of learnings that could occur outside of the formal curriculum and formal teaching and learning spaces. The initial narrow focus on FAT spaces proved to be too restrictive, limiting other potentially significant spaces and learnings to emerge. This led to a slightly broader interpretation of informal spaces that you now see in the photographs of the exhibition.

Visual methodologies were used as a means to creatively explore the multitude of meanings students ascribe to informal campus spaces. I co-produced, with eight students of various disciplines from [redacted] campus, three photographs per student that spoke of the significance and meaning they attached to particular spaces within the Higher Education environment. The student's self-penned captions then reinforced their meaning. Seven of the images are enlarged to represent, what students collectively agreed to best speak of, being students in Higher Education in a post-apartheid South African university.

These images however need be viewed within a broader context, whereby the space of Higher Education, 25 years into democracy, lies contested at the centre of conflicted interests for students. Protests in 2018 and 2019 for equity in education and for quality amenities have contributed to the negative portrayal of students in campus spaces. This negativity is fuelled by images of students in social and print media, which polarises them as both victims, and as perpetrators of the damage done to university property.

This exhibition challenges the dominant visual and oral discourse of students and campus spaces by portraying students in spaces that are significant and meaningful to them.

As the audience of this exhibition I would like to you to consider, what these images taken of students in particular spaces on campus invoke about...

Being a student in Higher Education in a Post-Apartheid South African university?

UCDP funding contributed to this PhD research project #clickpichowardcollege

APPENDIX 2.6

EXHIBITION DATA SHEET

DATE: 21-24 May 2019
FORMAT: Schedule
DISTRIBUTION: Not distributed
PURPOSE: Assisted researcher for recording purposes
INSTRUMENT NO: ExP_02

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

1. To explore what students know of FAT spaces on campus.
2. To understand what that knowing enables or constrains.

CIRCLE the IMAGE/S which best speak to YOU about being a student in Higher Education in a Post Apartheid South African University.

And say/write why.....



1A

this is where I get my mind right



2A

Therapy



3A

Technical Platform of Communication and Networking



4A

through all circumstances there is always hope



5A

Time to think...



6A

Waiting...home time



7A

My route to recovery, class, calm, while trying to do everything at once



8A

Iron sharpens iron ...



1B

this is where I get the true answers



2B

Vault/ Somewhere upstairs



3B

The working ground



4B

keep walking, you'll reach your destination one day



5B

My relaxing space this is where I get my energy back...



6B

get out of my room...oh this is your room to



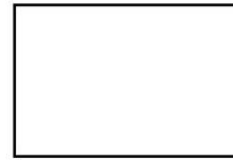
7B

Freedom to study (and at times sleep), be mobile, relax and be myself



8B

Faith and education



1C

this is where I express myself



2C

R.U.N,



3C

The Future Background



4C

I may have not reached my destination yet but I'm closer than I was yesterday



5C

Start of a good day...



6C

Content



7C

Messy, but I think there is method to the madness



8C

Journey to the future

Date: _____
 Time: _____
 M/F: _____
 AGE: _____
 SCHL: _____

APPENDIX 3.1

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

DATE: November 2018
 FORMAT: Letter
 DISTRIBUTION: Copy given to participants to sign
 PURPOSE: To gain informed consent
 INSTRUMENT NO: CF_01

CF_01: INFORMED CONSENT FORM
 TITLE: Students knowings of food, accommodation and transport spaces in the Higher Education environment
 ETHICS NUMBER: HSS/0012/018D

Greetings

My name is Bridget Horner, I am a lecturer from UKZN's programme of Architecture and am registered to undertake my PhD studies with the School of Education.

This study that involves researching, through the use of photographs and other visual data, how students experience spaces on campus, this research is about accommodation, transport and food related spaces. This is not however to the exclusion of other spaces on campus that may be important to you. The aim and purpose of this research is to understand what sense students are making of these spaces, on campus, in our current context. Your involvement will be through a series of interactions with myself over the duration of the second semester of 2018. The interactions will include: an interviews while we walk through the campus spaces you frequent, co constructed photographs of three important spaces to you, an imaginative mapping exercise, and a focus group discussion. The co-constructed photographs will be where we work together to generate a photograph that best depicts your relationship to a space that is important to you on campus. The imaginative mapping exercise is where you will be asked to imaginatively re-think the relationship between spaces on campus that are important to you.

During our interactions you might be filmed or photographed and audio recordings will be taken. The film and audio recordings data are collected for research and publication purposes only. The co constructed photographs will, with your consent, be used for research, publication and exhibition purposes. The purpose of the exhibition of the photographs is in order to convey the discussion about campus spaces to a broader student audience.

We can ensure your confidentiality, in how we chose to frame the photo and in terms of the interview data where you are welcome to use a pseudonym. All data is kept in my possession on my laptop and cell phone and is not given to any third party.

Participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw participation at any point. In the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation the participants will not incur any penalties. Should you wish to withdraw please could you notify me in writing in an email as a matter of courtesy. Should participation in this research prove stressful or uncomfortable you are encouraged to consult with UKZN Student Counselling Services, the contact person is Angeline Stephens and her email is Stephensa@ukzn.ac.za and/or you may terminate your participation.

Please note that there are no incentives or reimbursements for participation in the study, it is entirely voluntary. In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact me, the UKZN Research Ethics Committee or my supervisor Professor Michael Samuel, contact details as follows:

RESEARCHER

Bridget Horner
 horner@ukzn.ac.za
 082 559 2316

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Mariette Snyman
 Research Office, Westville Campus
 Tel: 27 31 2608350- Fax: 27 31 2603093
Snymanm@ukzn.ac.za

SUPERVISOR:

Professor Michael Samuel
Samuelm@ukzn.ac.za

031 260 1859

DECLARATION:

I..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I hereby provide consent to (Circle the relevant word):

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion | YES | NO |
| Video-record my interview / focus group discussion | YES | NO |
| Photographs of myself to be used for research purposes | YES | NO |
| Photographs of myself to be used for exhibition purposes | YES | NO |
| Photographs of myself to be used for publication purposes | YES | NO |
| Use of my drawings for research and publication purposes | YES | NO |

DATE:	NAME OF PARTICIPANT:
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT:	DEGREE REGISTERED FOR:
AGE OF PARTICIPANT:	PSEUDONYM OF PARTICIPANT IF ANY:

APPENDIX 3.2

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

DATE: November 2018
 FORMAT: Letter
 DISTRIBUTION: Copy given to participants after signing consent form CF_01
 PURPOSE: To explore students use of informal spaces on campus
 INSTRUMENT NO: SSI_01

Student name:

Date:

Research objectives:

- To explore what students know of food accommodation and transport spaces in the HE environment.
- To understand what the knowing of the food, accommodation and transport spaces in the HE environment clarifies or constrains for students.

Sub questions to direct the interview questions:

- *What spaces do students occupy in their daily movement across campus?*
- *Which of these spaces outside of formal learning (contact time – lecture theatre/ studio/lab/tutorial space) are important to them? And why?*
- *What are student's experiences of non-formal (library/ LAN) and informal spaces (gym, taxi, bus stop, food, accommodation) on campus?*
- *How do students occupy these spaces and why do students occupy these spaces in the way that they do?*
- *How this is shaping their understanding of themselves, fellow students and the HE (Higher education) environment? Are issues of Diversity considered i.e. gender, maturity, race, sexuality, disability, and economics?*
- *What do students know about these informal spaces? And about fellow students that occupy the same/dissimilar spaces?*
- *What is the unintended learning that arises as students move through the campus as part of their daily activities? Learning about self and others?*
- *Does this learning enable, clarify or constrain students in any way? And if so how and why?*

Dear Participant [student name]

Thank you for agreeing to be part of this research project. I just wanted to remind you that I will be audio recording this information and that after we have spoken we will arrange a time and day to take photos at specific locations on campus based on our discussion today. Also just to remind you these photos will form part of an exhibition at [redacted] to serve as a prompt for your fellow students to be thinking about their own relationship with institutional spaces. I have a number of questions I would like to ask you about your experiences as a student at [redacted] College and then some specific questions related to spaces on campus.

GENERAL:

1. I understand that you are a postgrad/ undergrad student – can you tell me what you are studying and how many years you have been studying at UKZN?
2. Where is home? Is it Durban? And if so do you live at home. If not where it is and where do you live in residence or private accommodation?

ACCOMMODATION

3. Let's talk a little bit about your morning routine at residence, home or in private accommodation
4. Please tell me a little bit about your daily routine as a student?
 - Describe where and how you wake up and how you get ready for the morning and who you share this routine with?
5. Describe it from waking up in the morning. Tell me something about your room – what do you like or dislike about it?
 - Is your room similar to others students that you know or not – how is it different or the same, in how it is used (study and living?) and in what it looks like.
 - If you are in residence or digs how is this space different from what you have at home
6. Tell me about how you came to be staying where you are?
 - why did you chose this place to stay
 - what sort of options were available to you to choose from
 - if you had more choices where would you stay and why
7. Tell me about the spaces that support your room – like ablutions, lounge, eating and cooking spaces?
 - If you share a room in a residence/ at home/ digs how do the ablutions work in the morning...
 - If you have your own room in a residence / at home / digs how do the ablutions work in the morning...
 - How do leisure spaces work -who uses these spaces?
 - How does kitchen spaces work – who uses these spaces?
8. What sort of changes have you made to your room since you have been living here?
 - Have you made any changes to the support spaces (ablutions/ kitchen/lounge)? If so what and why?
9. Tell me something about your first meal of the day, what is it, where is it eaten and with whom?
 - how do you prepare it/ is it something you get en route or in the canteen
 - is it eaten – alone/with others /
 - And what is it?
10. Tell me something about the people that you share your room/flat/ house with?
 - how do you respect each other's space...or is this not happening then why do you think is not happening
 - what happens when visitors arrive, where are they entertained and how does it affect others in the same room/flat/house

TRANSPORT

11. How you get to campus and is this is alone or with a group? Are you on or off campus?
 - If you go by bus / taxi where do you wait to catch it -near your residence and on campus? Describe what it is like to wait at this space - what do you like or dislike about the route that you move through and the people you encounter en route
 - If you walk describe what it like to walk alone or in a group is - what do you like or dislike about the route that you move through and the people you encounter on route?
 - If you drive or are driven describe what is it like to drive/be driven alone or in a group - what do you like or dislike about the route that you move through and the people you encounter on route?
 - If you are driven where do you wait to be collected from your residence and why, where are you dropped off on campus and why?
12. If you could travel to campus in another way, other than what you currently do, what would it be and why?
13. Let's take a walk from where you arrive on campus and where you go from there on a daily basis? Arrive from residence, bus, taxi or private car?

CAMPUS SPACES – WALK AND TALK

14. Let's go to some of the spaces you occupy between lectures - Where do you 'hang out' / socialise with friend on campus between lectures and why?

FOOD SPACES

15. Tell me a little bit about what you do for food on campus and where you eat it?
 - Do you bring a packed lunch – where do you eat it and who do you eat with and why?

- Do you buy food – from where? And where do you eat it and who do you eat with? And why?
 - Do you not have any food, then where do you sit in your break time and with whom. And why?
16. If you could choose what would you like to have to eat, where would you like to have lunch and with whom? And why?
17. Are there other students utilising the space where you eat, what are they doing that is similar or different from you.

OTHER SPACES

18. What other spaces on campus (or off campus) are important to you that we have not yet discussed and why?

SPACES OF IMPORTANCE

19. From our discussion it seems like the following spaces might be meaningful to you and could be where we take the photos.

Accommodation... (Bedroom/ bathroom/kitchen/ entrance hall/study desk.....other)

1. _____
Transport (Bus top / car park / entrance gate /Other)

2. _____
Food... (Jubilee gardens/ student car park/white café / black café.....other)

3. _____
Other.... (Library, student union, sports fields?)

4. _____

20. Do you agree? Or do you think there are better or further examples that we have not spoken about?
21. Let’s discuss these spaces in a little more detail – [questions below repeated for each space]

	1	2	3
Why do you use these spaces?			
What about these spaces is important, or significant to you and why?			
How has using this space clarified or constrained your relationship to other students and to other spaces			

22. If you had to reflect back on the space described above, let me know if the following responses resonate –
- in the space do you feel...like you belong, connected, disconnected, comfortable, uncomfortable, alienated, content, in control Or other.
 - In thespace do you feel... like you belong, connected, disconnected, comfortable, uncomfortable, alienated, content, in control..... Or other.

- In the do you feel... like you belong, connected, disconnected, comfortable, uncomfortable, alienated, content, in controlOr other.

23. How would you picture yourself in these spaces and what could be the possible captions to your pictures.

Describe the space and you in it	caption
Space 1	
Space 2	
Space 3	

ANONYMITY AND VISIBILITY IN PHOTOS

24. Let’s speak a little about anonymity, would you mind being recognised in the photos, in all the spaces we have chosen.

- If you do ...which of the following options (could be more than one) of portraying ‘you’ in the picture would you agree to.....?
 Face diverted
 Face out of focus
 Body in silhouette
 You are in a crowd focus not on you
 Detail of a part or your body or an object you identify with
- If you don’t mind would you be comfortable with photos that are close up...especially in spaces that you feel comfortable or that you have a measure of control of what happens in those spaces

ANY OTHER THOUGHTS?

25. Are there any other thoughts or insights that you think might be useful for me to know about in terms of how to better understand the spaces you occupy on campus?

Thank you for answering these questions. Let’s diarise a date now to meet again please.

Date and time to meet again

APPENDIX 3.3

PLENARY + FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

DATE:	March 2019
FORMAT:	Focus group
DISTRIBUTION:	Copy given to participants before focus and plenary group start
PURPOSE:	To illicit further meaning-making of the co-produced photographs
INSTRUMENT NO:	FG_01, PG_01

A. PLENARY DISCUSSION

Seated opposite your own three photographs respond to the following:

1. Once seated please turn on **the Dictaphones and press the REC button.**
2. Please take turns to briefly **introduce yourself** to the person opposite you.
3. With your own **photos: place them in an order** that makes sense to you and number them 1-3 with the sticky notes.
4. Have a good look at your partner's series of images then: **Select an image and/ or text** that you think best speaks about being a **student in higher education (HE) in a post-apartheid South African university?** Attach another sticky note to this and label both selected images as **A.**
5. With your partners photo in mind respond to the following question: **What does this image, labelled in a particular way, tell you about being a student in higher education (HE) in a post-apartheid South African university?** Take turns to respond to this question verbally.
6. With regards to your partner's photo that you selected. **Would you give it a different label?** if so what would you call it **and why.** If not why do you think the current label is appropriate. Take turns to respond to this question.
7. With regards to your partners photos. **Does this image and or text say anything to you about food, accommodation and transport in higher education?** If so what could it say if not what else do you think it speaks about to you? Take turns to respond verbally.
8. The owner of the photo now to explain: **Why did you chose the title that you did and what did you mean by it...** Take turns to respond verbally.
9. **Bring the 2 selected images from your group to the main table....**

B. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION:

All students around one table with 8 images one from each student laid out randomly on the table

1. **Why did you select the image you did** – each person to explain why they chose their partner's photo. X8
2. Let's try and **arrange the selected images** in a way that we think best speaks about being a **HE student in post-apartheid South Africa until we are all satisfied with the arrangement**. Each student to take a turn.
3. Each student **after moving the images around needs to explain their reasoning for their order/** arrangement of **images/text**.
4. Each person take a turn to arrange the images until we agree on the order of images.

C. REFLECTIVE THOUGHTS

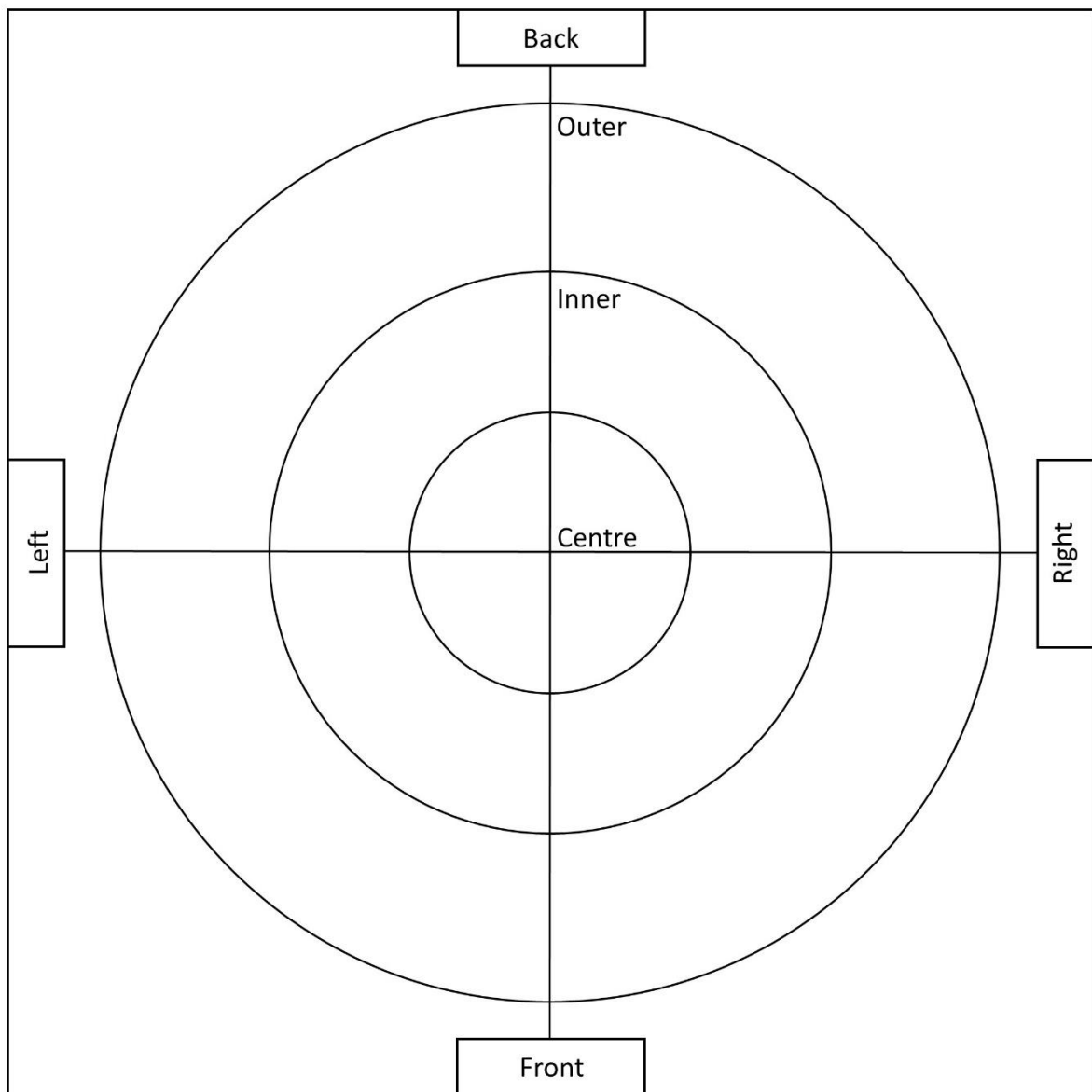
1. Reflective thoughts of the process to be sent via voice notes to myself or the group that evening.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

APPENDIX 3.4

LOCATION TASK TOOL MAP

DATE: November 2018 – January 2019
 FORMAT: Poster
 DISTRIBUTION: Map given to participants after co-production of photographs
 PURPOSE: Generate imaginative maps of spaces on campus
 INSTRUMENT NO: LTM_01

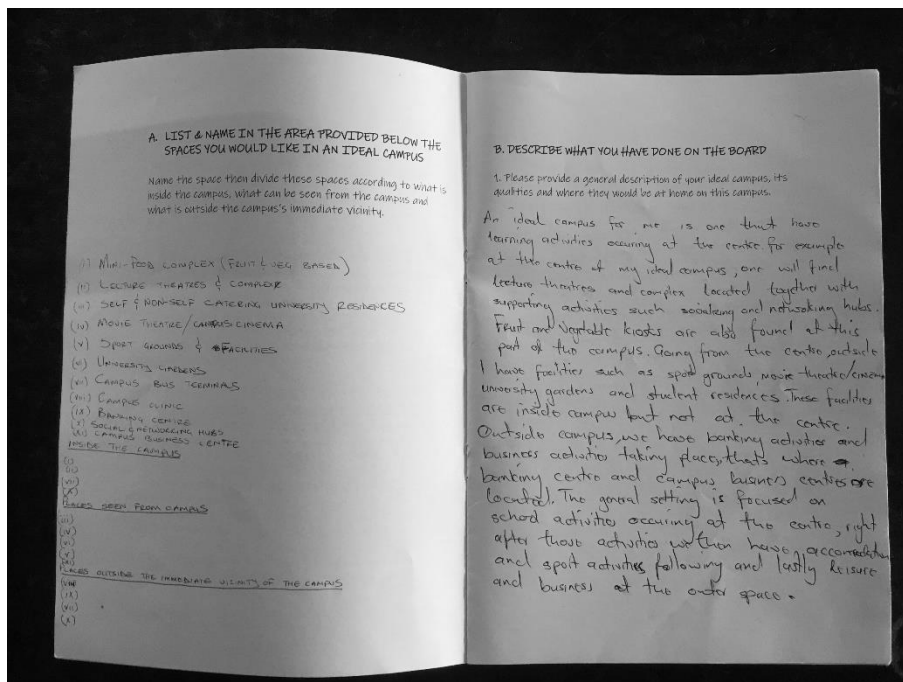
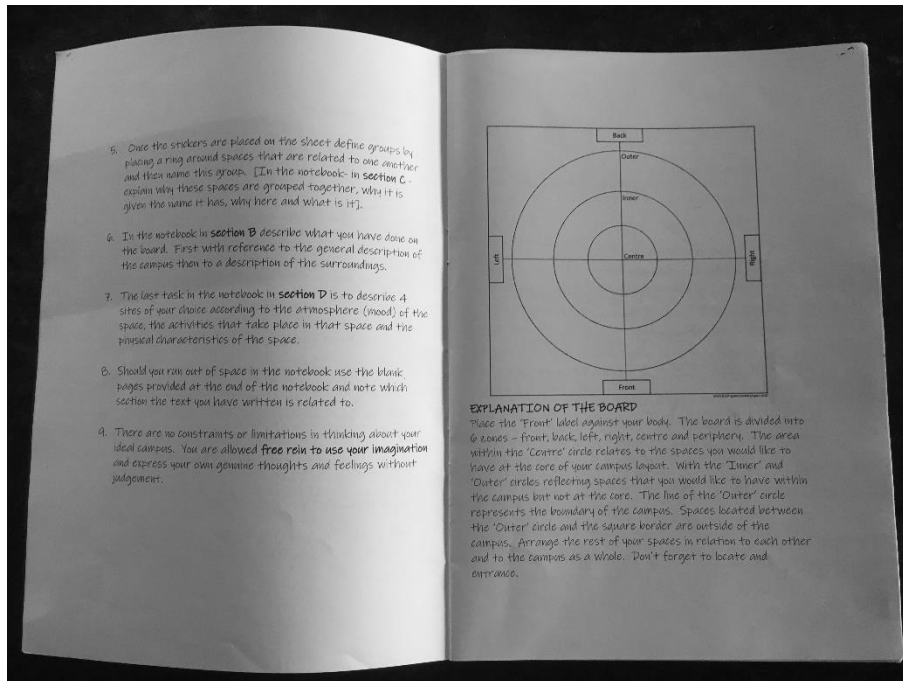


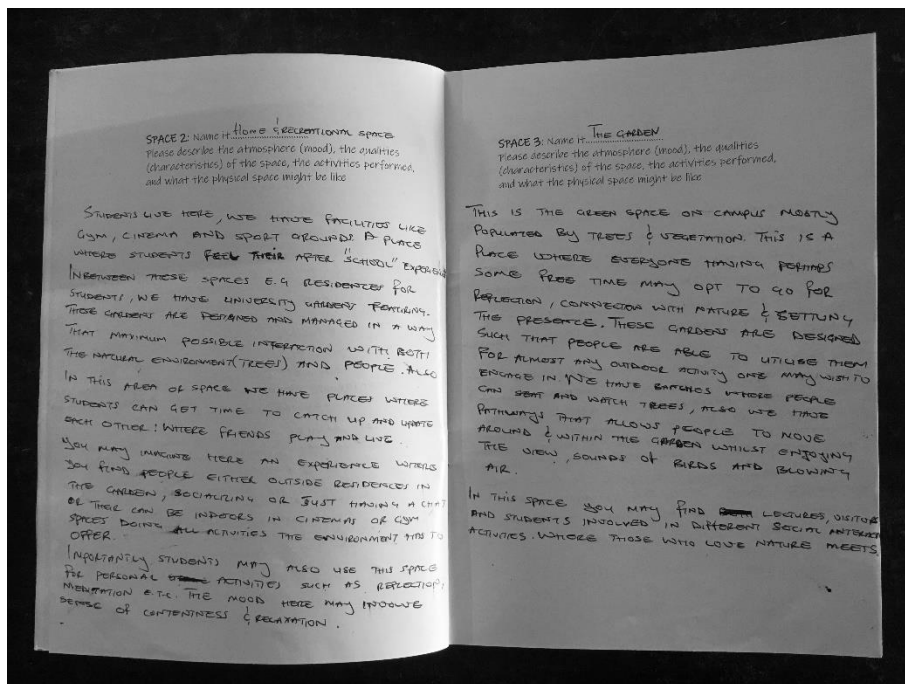
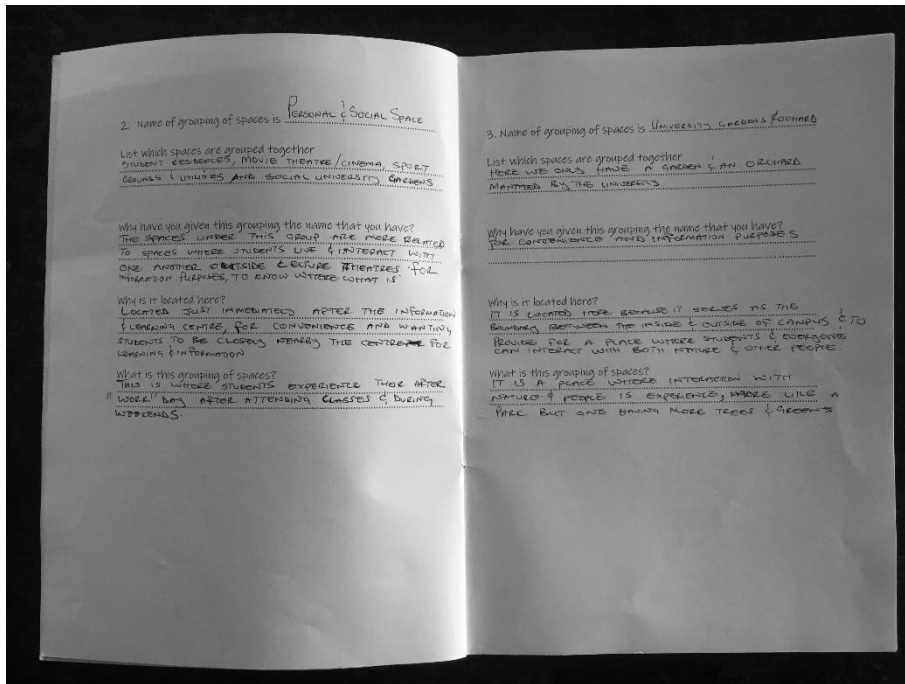
UKZN UCDP grant funded project 2018

APPENDIX 3.5

LOCATION TASK TOOL NOTEBOOK [sample pages]

DATE: November 2018 – January 2019
 FORMAT: Notebook
 DISTRIBUTION: Notebook given to participants after co-production of photographs
 PURPOSE: For explanation of imaginative maps
 INSTRUMENT NO: LTNB_02





APPENDIX 3.6

LOCATION TASK TOOL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

DATE:	November 2018 – January 2019
FORMAT:	Poster
DISTRIBUTION:	Interview after completion of Location task tool exercise [imaginative mapping]
PURPOSE:	Researcher enquiry of imaginative maps participants produced
INSTRUMENT NO:	LTI_03

- Describe the location task preparation process – what was important for you to achieve?
- When I come and visit the campus you designed, where do I enter? What do I see?
Where would you take me first?
- Take me on a tour of the campus. How is it organized? What do we see when we are walking around? Where would be spaces of food/accommodation / transport situated? Why did you choose these/this location/s?
- What do the spaces look like, who uses them?
- Describe the centre; describe the periphery where are the learning spaces in relation to spaces of food/accommodation / transport? I noticed you don't have any lecture venues – are these necessary in your campus?
- Which is your favourite place? What would you do most of the day in the campus you designed? Why do you like the campus you designed?
- Is the campus you designed similar to or different from your current campus?
How so?
- Can you think of places you would add/omit to your current campus.
- There are some question I have with regards to the notebook – can you clarify...?
 - Relaxation and entertainment and socialising seems to be given quite a lot of preference in this proposed campus – why is this important to you.
 - I am interested as to why you have located what is in the centre to what is on the outer layers so placed the cafeteria (food) and the pharmacy (health) at the centre...and then fitness (health and food) and entertainment on the periphery...what is the thinking behind this arrangement..
 - The fitness house, pharmacy and thrift shop seem to have no spaces near them. Tell me about that...
 - Please explain what the arrows mean on campus cafeteria, pamper club, relaxation and student central...

We have come to the end of the interview, are there any ideas you would like to emphasize? Any other things that you would like to draw my attention to with regards to the task?

APPENDIX 4.1

EXAMPLE: PRESENTATIONAL AND CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF A PHOTOGRAPH





<p>H: SIPHO: Presentational reading Plenary group speaking about HLONI' s image titled ...Journey to the future 8C</p> 	
<p>Text</p>	<p>Presentational reading [researcher interpretation]</p>
<p>um i say yah the reason why i say this is appropriate picture compared to other two ..i am not saying these are bad pictures but this one is ..is the best one to reflect your question that was asked as you can see...</p>	<p>Responding to researchers query</p>
<p>she is waiting to the busstop -our school bus stop first of all ...our school busstop eh ...she is thinking you can see there is alot on in my mind there's alot</p>	<p>Recognises the space and the bus stop in it and that the subject is thinking</p>
<p>...yah ..she is thinking about future ..her journey as it says journey to the future thinking about an important journey and how she is going to get there..</p>	<p>Emphasises the journey as important and with no clear means of getting there</p>
<p>HLONI: Focus group explanation of her own image</p>	
<p>Text</p>	<p>Presentational reading [researcher interpretation]</p>
<p>Hloni (her picture of the bustop)then i chose this one um because um even the caption says um ' Journey to the future' and we see someone sitting down at a busstop who has an opportunity even to be something in life um so.</p>	<p>She sees herself as having an opportunity to be someone to become someone</p>
<p>that is why i chose um um the busstop because even in higher education we are ...there are now opportunities for you to look forward to even in the future</p>	<p>Opportunities are both now and in the future</p>
<p>Hloni explains the labelling of the image 'Journey to the future' to Sipho</p>	
<p>Hloni: OK i ..i .. called it a journey to the future because um when you are at the busstop um you are waiting for a bus ..</p>	<p>Speaks of the literal objects bus and bus stop</p>
<p>a bus which will take you to somewhere um to your final destination so um it was that point of waiting there and waiting for the bus to take me to my final destination um which-which is because um i go to *** campus um so our going to campus at *** is where my future is um, .</p>	<p>Destination is *** campus – this is where her future now lies connected to</p>
<p>part of where my future is so waiting for the bus um to take me to my future because um i do go to *** campus so that is where my future has been moved so i am waiting for the bus to take me to my future. So its a journey to the future</p>	<p>Future is connected to the site of education</p>
<p></p>	<p>Opportunities both now and future and future shifts from one place to the next. Not space bound</p>
<p></p>	<p>SIPHO and HLONI have very different understanding of this image – he sees it as a passive act of thinking she sees it as an opportunity – an active moving forward.</p>



Image spoken as part of Narrative of 8 images in the FOCUS GROUP [FG] DISCUSSION	
1. WISDOM – comment on this picture in FG Comments on this with another photograph of the sun rising	Critical discourse reading – social practise variables [researchers interpretation]
and i paired these two again in part to some extent it shows to me that there is a form of reflection that these students are doing and it shows that it is freedom something that is needed in Higher education some time of reflection	Actor: students Pronoun: students– third person, me- first person Action: doing reflection /freedom Time: time of reflection Location: HE
2. RAZEENA – comments on this picture in FG	
and sitting at the bus stop you could sit and be thinking about how you helped that person to pass their test or something like that and	Actor: you Pronoun: you – second person, person - third Action: sitting / thinking Time: Location: bus stop
3. NHLONIPHO – comments on this picture in FG	
and then here this is when your day you are done with your day and then you are thinking about things that you were doing during the day from the day start your day eh ..maybe thinking about things that you you would have changed eh or something like that or things that you would like.. thinking about all the things that you were doing during the day and	Actor: you Pronoun: you – second person, Action: thinking – change/like Time: done with your day Location:
4. MENZI – comments on this picture in FG	
um higher education um can be very lonely at times which is represented by um by this lady um sitting in the busstop. so what this can actually mean in other words it that um um within you being lost or um being lonely um and people have abandoned you or your friends that were there with you are no longer there do not forget the ultimate goal um as i say um this is a bus stop um this is a bus stop so um as i see it..um as you see a bus a bus moves from one station to the next station to the next bus stop um so each stop could represent um like small accomplishments and small goals that you want to accomplish within your life or um in your university life of higher education and yah basically	Actor: lady Pronoun: you – second person , I – first person Action: sitting, lost, abandoned Time: past toward the future Location: higher education, bus stop
5. NOKWANDA – comments on this picture in FG – compares this photograph and her own photograph [talking to the bus driver]	
can um these two i like i like these two because um these are one of the biggest issues that we experience um at the university which is transport issues i mean you get sometimes that people will get left by the bus and now they they don't even have um money to go take public transportation that is the biggest problem the times the bus times are very not flexible so that why i went for that one because that is something that everyone has issues with um these two um ...	Actor: people, everyone (are all equally affected?) Pronoun: we – identifies with transport issues student face though she is not directly affected by them. you – second person, they – shifts to third person Action: get left, experience, Time: not flexible Location: bus stop – not mentioned
6. HLONI comments on this picture in FG	
OK so this person now is still thinking they are still sitting down trying to understand um 'where they want to do in life as it says here 'journey in the future' they are still thinking that i am here at university so what do i want to achieve in life what is my purpose what is it that i want to achieve and	Actor: person Pronoun: they – third person then becomes I – first person Action: thinking, sitting Time: now for future Location: university, achieve in life
7. SIPHO – comments on this picture in FG	


<p>when it is time to go home that's when you also think some more cause you know that you have to do some work cant just go to sleep without doing anything so you think about that too waiting for the bus or taxi and then your transport arrives and you have to go back.</p>	<p>Actor: student – not mentioned Pronoun: you – second person, Action: think, sleep, wait Time: to go home Location: waiting for bus</p>
<p>8. BRIE – comments on this picture in FG</p>	
<p>but i feel like these 3 are also in a similar theme because they are all to do with your vision and future sort of what you of want to do with your life. [i feel like is is more contemplating each day um sort of restarting your mind in the morning um for what you want to do with your life and with your day and stuff] where this is sort of more toward the end of your day where you are just sort of finished it and you are trying to decide OK well this sorted out this did not happen and what am i going to do in future whereas [this is when you plan throughout your life essentially and your semester as a student. i feel like ah this i heard has to do with tutoring um its an empty square]</p>	<p>Actor: you Pronoun: your – second person, Action: finished, sorted going to do, Time: end of your day, in future Location:</p>
<p>Comparison across its use in the 8 narratives</p>	<p>Researcher interpretation</p>
	<p>Action of sitting and thinking back or forward to the future or of the events of the day or what you still need to do. The lone figure speaks of being lost, lonely, reflection/freedom, a victim of transport issues...</p>




APPENDIX 4.3

EXAMPLES: THEMES ARISING FROM THE EXHIBITION INTERVIEWS

Common THEMES from EXHIBITION transcripts		
A	REFLECTION	
	<p>Images that invoked this :</p>  <p>5A</p>  <p>8C</p>  <p>7C</p>	<p>Reflection ; academics, long term goals, yourself</p> <p>By yourself for yourself [alone]</p>
	Transcript text	Interpretation
A1	<p>i think i can relate to this person in the picture in that i find peace and comfort every time I'm gonna to be sitting there specially because ..[BM25 referring to 5A]</p>	
	<p>.... um the earphones sit there insert my earphones sit there um insert my earphones and i have a whole perspective on what is currently going on in my academic performance and everything</p> <p>Bridget: so earphones in listening to music or just zoning out?</p> <p>student: just zoning out trying to put the pieces together ...academically</p> <p>Bridget: so is that an important space for you</p> <p>student: very much very much mam</p> <p>Bridget: time to think no friends with you</p> <p>student: nope no friends.. especially at night</p> <p>Bridget: at night?</p> <p>student: yes mam</p> <p>Bridget:OK i have never been there at night what is it like?</p> <p>student: its quiet, most of the time during the day it is usually occupied by people.</p> <p>Bridget: OK</p> <p>student: so it's usually noisy not suitable for the type of environment i want ...to-to think. but yah during at night at 6pm it's usually ...quiet ..[BM25 referring to 5A]</p>	<p>Earphones in</p> <p>Sitting down</p> <p>Quiet</p> <p>Night time</p> <p>Alone</p> <p>Academics</p>
A2	<p>this one the caption...to reflect yeah to get in touch with my soul. [BF28 referring to 8C]</p>	
A3	<p>sometime you need time to yourself maybe to push yourself.</p> <p>yes mental mental whereby you can sit and reflect and you can plan your future by yourself for yourself and like where do i see myself after this degree. where do i see myself after 5 years or even 10 years this is where you make long term goals not just short term goals. short terms goals like i aim to pass this exam or this test. a long term goals you get to make them by yourself for yourself. [BM31 referring to 7C]</p>	<p>Also relates to future</p>

<p>B</p>	<p>ALONE</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div>	<p>A + B could be grouped – so could time? Reflect alone – need time</p>
<p>B1</p>	<p>but also like in this type of situation of being like a student and living away from home and living with a lot of people you cherish those few moments you have to yourself. [BF26] yah so she is probably trying to plan her day, she thinking oh what's the next thing, this is probably one of the few times she has in a day to herself. to just breathe and be with herself. [BF26]</p>	
<p>B2</p>	<p>i think that's very convenient to to to to get away from all students in a place to be able to just be able to study [BF22 Referring to 7B]</p>	<p>Convenient to be alone to study</p>
<p>B3</p>	<p>my me time ear phones on...the moment you put on ear phones means dont talk to me...get the q. do not talk to me [BM45] just being by yourself and -just thinking about everything your deadlines. um at my res i am not sharing. i do get that time to play music check my work and just calm down [BF45]</p>	<p>Earphones in don't disturb Not sharing in res means have time alone</p>

C	LONELY	
	 <p>8C</p> <p>3A</p> <p>7A</p> <p>7B</p>	
C1	<p>Bridget: do you want to tell me a little bit about the image with the lady at the busstop. should we go a little bit closer you told me about. you said you like it because you are always alone. you are a loner on campus student: yah yah. Bridget: so its not necessarily ... student: although i don't stay in these kind of spaces in the more more private spaces not exposed to people and stuff Bridget: so you relate so why ...i understand its about being alone. and is there anything else? student; eh Bridget: what do you mean by more private spaces? what would that be ? what do you mean by that? student: um usually in the lan Bridget: OK so like one of these [i point to sipehsihles lan image] which ones student: yah one of these and then you usually find me ..in the corner [BF22 referring to 8C and 7B]</p>	<p>[i was going to repeat what she had said before recording that this bus stop was not a space she was interested in]</p> <p>Why is a LAN more of a private space</p> <p>With people is that not public? No private?</p>
	<p>i take transport everyday. [BF22] so i think that is one of the reasons why i am always alone so when you get to travel everyday you you hardly get to make any friends. [BF22]</p>	<p>Takes a taxi home -alone no friends</p>
C2	<p>i dont have too many friends. i can relate to walking around, sitting in your car to work [BM32 refers to 7A/B]</p>	<p>Aimless wondering</p>

F	FUTURE / DREAMS	
	 <p>8C</p>  <p>6C</p>  <p>4C</p>	
F1	<p>yah... students spend a lot of time waiting for the bus, but it's different from just waiting and being idle. they are waiting toward something. it's kind of like metaphorical in a sense that you are waiting for this car or this vehicle to take you to the next place where you can achieve your dreams. [BF26 Referring to 8C]</p>	<p>Bus journey metaphor – recurring metaphor of the journey</p>
	<p>Bridget...your journey is about a bigger journey than just here. Student: it's the future. it's looking at the bigger picture literally small steps to get to the bigger picture. but all these steps add up. [BF26]</p>	<p>Working toward something – step metaphor – climbing up</p>
F2	<p>so coming to university is like starting a new a new life. shaping your future into the direction you would like it to take. [BF22]</p>	<p>New life in HE. Where you shape the future. [How much control do you really have?]</p>
F3	<p>...and I think that is just because through varsity and the whole HE thing. a lot of conversations about the future. about what you are doing now and where it is taking you. there were a lot of conversations taking place outside of lectures on the lawns or outside – be it – both at ukzn or at wits talking about your future [both say this together] where you are going. it was also a lot of a lot..</p> <p>Bridget: ..your future connected to your profession or just your future generally about your life or...</p> <p>student: i would say both. but i think it is also a stage in your life. i don't know. we were also encouraged to think and dream more naturally at varsity i suppose. so this is where you have got these expectations and plans and i don't know a sense of naivety about it that is what i think that image talks to me a lot is sitting on the hill the hilltop looking out toward the city. and it's kind of looking at the world that you are about to ...about to enter [WM23 referring to 6C]</p>	<p>Present connected to the future. Where is it taking you...?</p> <p>HE encouraged to dream and think....generate plans and expectations</p> <p>Metaphor of connecting present to the future – looking out</p>
F4	<p>its i think because i stress a lot about the future.</p> <p>student: and yeah and as – advice i got... she looks like a friend of mine. and they were saying that um sometimes its not about the future its if you can enjoy the journey its not about the final product if you can enjoy the journey to that and try to... you know make it better for you try to live in it and make the most out of it because the final product will never make you happy in a way then the journey is because the journey is longer so you get attached to lots... to things. [BM30 referring to 8C]</p>	<p>Future distinct from the journey</p> <p>Journey is important – you need to embrace it and make the most of it</p>
F5	<p>because of being shy and afraid of being judged that is where dreams vanish. i cannot even do this i cannot do that. you need to identify or find a person that will encourage you or push you....to start going after your goals and dreams. [BM31]</p>	<p>Dreams in relation to others...fear of judgement</p>
F6	<p>bridget: the future something out there is better for me [explaining Menzi image]</p> <p>student: i know that feeling i am there actually right now...but what can you do</p> <p>bridget: why do you feel that way</p> <p>student: while i was young i had very high expectation of myself. actually i think i reached those expectations while i was young as i grew older i had to take more decisions that would later define my future and i folded. [BM32 Referring to 4C]</p>	<p>Helpless</p> <p>Expectations reached early. Regret decisions. Folded to what? Pressure or failed?</p>

APPENDIX 4.4

EXAMPLE: DEVELOPING THEMES AS COUPLETS [TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS FROM VARIOUS DATA SOURCES ORGANISED INTO CATEGORIES RELATED TO PAST PRESENT FUTURE]

DEVELOPING THEMES AS COUPLETS	
<p>A. PAST (BACKGROUND) – spaces as conceived</p> <p>CONTEXT – rural / non KZN Student: I come from the rural areas. I did my HS in the rural areas. Bridge: you still got 100% for math Student: Yeh, that is what I also recalled. Where you are does not restrict your does not determine how your life will be, you are the decider, even the money does not limit you, like I was saying maybe you want to learn how to be a good photographer maybe you don't have money to go to a photography class you can go to youtube, search about it and get tutorials and get the answers there. [phonetic-interview]</p> <p>Student: well for me personally when I came here in KZN for the very first time, I am not going to lie to you, I was shy because I was in another province for the very first time... it was a different language I speak swati and it's a Zulu speaking nation and for me I was shy and reserved, during that process I spent a lot of time observing the life and the society and all of that and university as a whole. Student_31BM</p> 	<p>3. REFLECTING (now recent past) – DREAMING (future) Reflecting is purposefully about being aware – either in finding quiet spaces or in looking out at a view – to think about academic progress (back) but in some instances also about the future... so how the present reality can inform or contribute to the future... it's about planning, it's about focussing on why you are in HE Metaphors of mobility – journey... steps... vehicles... new life/rebirth... Dreaming is about your own personal becoming in the future are not necessarily related to academics that as a student you can shape this future... even if the going gets tough</p> <p>B. PRESENT (NOW) – spaces as lived</p> <p>so it's usually noisy not suitable for the type of environment I want... to think, but yoh during at night at 6pm it's usually... quiet... it's in this space that the student describes that 'I find peace and comfort every time I'm gonna to be sitting there...' 'na its there with earphones on'... and I have a whole perspective on what is currently going on in my academic performance and everything... [BM25], 'put the pieces together academically' [Kweso, Ex]</p> <p>'just being by yourself and just thinking about everything your deadlines... I do get that time to play music check my work and just calm down [Bunie, Ex]</p> <p>dreaming / reflecting too ...sitting alone and thinking about you and your future your studies'... 'staring at the window watching things go by just for about 10 minutes then I go back... little moments to bring you back to your senses like saying hello to someone passing by... my housing masters that's my destination... doing what I do is part of my future. I am shaping my future... [Bhana, Ex]</p> <p>'so coming to university is like starting a new a new life. Shaping your future into the direction you would like it to take.' [Ayanda, Ex]</p> <p>'...so I am seeing someone maybe who has just come out of high school who is just thinking about their future even in what they want to do even in university they are still considering and pondering that what which steps should I take now... what do I want to be in life and what am purpose do I have in life [Hloni, Ex]</p> <p>sometimes you need time to yourself maybe to push yourself. Yes mental-mental whereby you can sit and reflect and you can plan your future by yourself, for yourself, and live where do I see myself after this degree... a long term goals you get to make them by yourself [for yourself] [Solomon, Ex].</p> <p>Dreaming '...a lot of conversations about the future. About what you are doing now and where it is taking you. There were a lot of conversation taking place outside of lectures on the lawns or outside be it both at [redacted] talking about your future... where you are going, [Pretoria, Ex]</p> <p>'...because of being shy and afraid of being judged that is where dreams vanish. I cannot even do this I cannot do that, you need to identify or find a person that will encourage you or push you... to start going after your goals and dreams.' [Solomon, Ex]</p> <p>'...waiting for the bus to take me to my future' [Hloni, Ex] while another student relates to 'waiting for this car or vehicle to take you to the next place where you can achieve your dreams.' [Ukwazi, Ex] T</p> <p>Dream metaphor 'So there is a particular journey that I am actually looking at... the bigger goal... but then there are those small goals during the way... so within the image um... you can see the sun there I usually use that as the ultimate goal its still out there... right there... but then one day... mm... so as I said I look at life with small particular goals and um steps and small</p>
<p>HE is seen as able to shape your future – it has the agency not your self The journey metaphor is again about being taken to not self mobilisation</p> <p>C. FOREGROUND (PRESENT – FUTURE) – perceived – spatial practice – maintaining mobility</p> <p>FINANCES – none Student that's the thing I-I don't think I know what I enjoy like or want... really... I don't know I think I just lost interest in school when like I could not study because of financial difficulties Bridge: human Student: so because I studied for like a semester and then the following year I did not study when I came back like I was no longer like really interested in everything. Student_32BM</p> <p>so for me moving from Camden to campus made it easier for me to operate my business and but... maybe someone would see this as a bad thing and I won't be able to get my junior degree in geography. Rationalises this in saying 'if you want a car you need money to buy a car... if you want a house you need money...' does not attend lectures - I am only here for the business [Nkadumiso, interview 1]</p> <p>the life that they are going through the things they are going through the real life because its not only academics because your background can also affect the way that you perform in your studying... so there is only a few programs that are focused on those kinds of things. We only talk about entertainment and academics but the real life issues finding a guy to speak to another guy about... life is difficult these days we only speak about things that are out there you know but when you speak to each individuals about there background you find that each one of us is going through a rough patch sometimes. Student 2: for an individual to just come up out of a crowd and just say I have not catered, or this issue and this issue is not easy Student 1: you could be beautiful in a 2000 rand weave and you got your makeup on not knowing that you know not even. That's how we hide, your physical image hides the reality. I think those are the things that the university should start looking at, focus on the individuals. Student_44_2BM</p> 	<p>so coming to university is like starting a new a new life. Shaping your future into the direction you would like it to take. [BF22]</p> <p>'...A lot of conversations about the future, about what you are doing now and where it is taking you, there were a lot of conversations taking place outside of lectures on the lawns or outside be it both at um or at um sitting talking about your future (both say this together), where you are going... is sitting on the hill the hilltop looking out toward the city, and it's kind of looking at the world that you are about to... about to enter [WMD23 referring to GCJ]</p> <p>little moments to bring you back to your senses like saying hello to someone passing by takes some of the burden that you bare.</p>

APPENDIX 4.5

EXAMPLE: EXTRACT FROM A PLENARY GROUP TRANSCRIPT

[HLONI AND SIPHO DISCUSSING THEIR PHOTOGRAPHS]

Bridget: So the next question is... Would you give your photograph a different label? So change or keep the label?

Hloni: OK... OK I would use um... 'Opportunities'since we are talking about higher education. I would just label just it 'Opportunities'. Um... since we...so that... because I see the university on the background. I see um... access even to Higher Education. Yes ...you it... you can say it's 'A good start to the day' but in terms of this research I would... I would... label it Opportunities [researcher notes: is she second guessing me?].

Bridget: [turning to the second participant] Would you change the label?

Sipho: I would say ...um... I would change it ...to maybe... 'Waiting for the future' maybe ...something like that... 'Waiting for future' as in waiting for the bus ... That's your future ...and also waiting for your future in life after school and after graduating everything.

Bridget: Looking at the images do they say anything about Food Accommodation and Transport [FAT]. What could it say if not about FAT? What does it say?

Hloni: OK ... this one is so obvious because you see a car... so maybe that could be transport um... it can speak to transport that maybe this student has access to a car. Yah so this... the only thing I am seeing is transport. That you can even use this as your own transport. So you are not limited to buses.

Sipho: Hmm yah similar to your picture as well it talks about transport eh... how student get from... from... res[idence] or home to the campus as you see waiting in the bus stop waiting for your transportation...

Hloni: Yah!

Hloni: [reads question 8] - The owner of the photo to explain the titles to their pictures.

Hloni: OK I ... I... called it a 'Journey to the future' because um... when you are at the bus stop um you are waiting for a bus... a bus which will take you to somewhere um... to your final destination so um... it was that point of waiting there and waiting for the bus to take me to my final destination. Um... which-which is because

um... I go to *** campus um... so our going to campus at *** is where my future is um..., part of where my future is. So waiting for the bus um... to take me to my future because um... I do go to *** campus so that is where my future has been moved. So I am waiting for the bus to take me to my future. So it's a journey to the future.

Sipho: Hmm OK and I chose that topic um... simply because. Every day is the start to a new journey, which you are not sure how it's going to end up ... So like every day, you see you, are coming to campus all in good hopes but not sure what's going to happen today.

Hloni: Hmm?

Sipho: So... this message it's actually... a message that actually every day you should have thinking of starting with a good day. Gonna have a good dayeven though you don't know what is going to happen. Yah that's it.

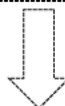
APPENDIX 4.6

EXAMPLE: TRUNCATION OF A TRANSCRIPT TO BECOME A 'LEAF' ON THE MOBILE DIAGRAMS

Hloni: OK I ... I... called it a 'Journey to the future' because um... when you are at the bus stop um you are waiting for a bus... a bus which will take you to somewhere um... to your final destination so um... it was that point of waiting there and waiting for the bus to take me to my final destination. Um... which-which is because um... I go to *** campus um... so our going to campus at *** is where my future is um..., part of where my future is. So waiting for the bus um... to take me to my future because um... I do go to *** campus so that is where my future has been moved. So I am waiting for the bus to take me to my future. So it's a journey to the future.

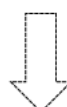
Sipho: Hmm OK and I chose that topic um... simply because. Every day is the start to a new journey, which you are not sure how it's going to end up ... So like every day, you see you, are coming to campus all in good hopes but not sure what's going to happen today.

Hloni: Hmm?



Sipho: So... this message it's actually... a message that actually every day you should have thinking of starting with a good day. Gonna have a good dayeven though you don't know what is going to happen. Yah that's it.

6. 'A1' refers to the order in which the leaves are to be read.
References back to the sub-sections in the descriptive text of the document.

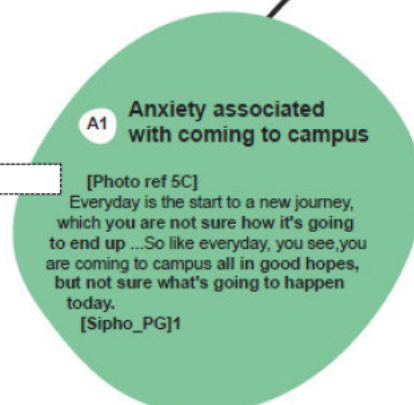


1. Truncated text from the plenary group transcript inserted into the 'leaf' of the mobile.



Photograph 5C
Start of a good day

5. '[Photo ref 5C]' refers to the numbering of photographs located on the left of the diagram page. Represents the photo that elicited the transcript extract.



2. The 'leaves' are differently coloured for each theme. The first diagram page is the lighter hue of the theme colour.

3. 'Bold text' refers to text repeated within the descriptive text of the document.

4. Reference '[Sipho_PG] 1' refers to the data source and is repeated in the descriptive text of the document.
'Sipho' refers to the participants name or pseudonym. 'PG' refers to plenary group. The number denotes the order of reading the 'leaves.'

APPENDIX 5.1
PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING

**62 Ferguson Road
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Income tax number: 0526066204**

26 October 2020

This serves to confirm that I have edited the thesis, “Mobilising Spatial Knowings: Students and Higher Education Spaces”, by Bridget Horner, student number 217078598.

DISCLAIMER: The editor cannot be held responsible for any errors introduced due to changes being made to the document after the editing is complete.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms) Deanne Collins (MA)

APPENDIX 5.2

PLAGIARISM 'TURN IT IN' REPORT

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feedback studio PhD thesis in Education 1 of 1

MOBILISING SPATIAL KNOWINGS: STUDENTS AND HIGHER EDUCATION SPACES

Bridget Horner
217078598

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School of Education
College of Humanities

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