

**AN EXPLORATION OF INTER-ETHNIC
RELATIONS AMONG STUDENTS AT A SOUTH
AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION**

**By
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I declare that: “An exploration of inter-ethnic relations among students at a South African higher education institution” is my own work and that all the sources that are quoted have been acknowledged by references.

MA Mulondo

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**“WHILE I KNOW MYSELF AS A CREATION OF GOD, I AM ALSO OBLIGATED TO
REALIZE AND REMEMBER THAT EVERYONE ELSE AND EVERYTHING ELSE
ARE ALSO GOD’S CREATION.”**

(MAYA ANGELOU)

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ABSTRACT

AN EXPLORATION OF INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS AMONG STUDENTS AT A SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Previous studies have mostly focused on racial relations between black and white racial groups. This study focused on relations between members of one racial group, the black race. In South Africa, the black race comprises of nine ethnic groups. The tertiary/ higher education institution was selected as the appropriate site of study due to diversity in terms of the various ethnicities of the student population. Not all ethnic groups could participate in the study as purposive sampling was used. Three students from differing black ethnic groups, who had had negative and/or positive experiences with individuals from other black ethnic groups, were chosen to participate. This was a qualitative study and therefore interviews were used to collect data. The phenomenological approach was chosen with the interpretative phenomenological analysis selected as the data analysis approach. The results showed similarities and differences in experiences each participant had with members of other ethnic groups. The themes extracted were ethnic identity: identity confusion vs. certainty, personal experiences of inter-ethnic relations, and majority and minority ethnic groups' experiences. The limitations of the study were noted and as a result, recommendations were made to inform future research.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Although the South African population is made up of different races and ethnicities, the study described in this dissertation focused on the different black ethnicities. According to Thomas (2010), race is based on the assumption of physical characteristics such as skin color, while ethnicity is based on attributes such as language. This study focused on the latter, ethnicity.

Chapter 1 begins with an African and international historical overview of inter-ethnic relations, followed by history of the ethnicities in South Africa and challenges experienced by black ethnic groups over the years in the country to allow the reader to follow the background story of black South Africans. Black South Africans as a collective may have similar historical challenges. However, looking deeper allows the reader to see that black ethnicities have different, unique stories (South African History Online, 2016). The research problem, with an explanation of how the researcher identified it is provided, and the research question is stated.

Certain important terms were conceptualized to suit this study. The justification, aims and objectives of the study are also presented to bring structure and direction to the study. These are followed by the chapter outline, which is provided as an overview of what will be covered in the remaining chapters. Finally, the conclusion to this introductory chapter is given.

1.1.1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS: AN AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

To some extent, civil violence in certain nations has stemmed from either ethnic issues or political irregularities (Harris & Findley, 2014). Ethnic-related conflict is not unique to South Africa and has manifested on several different occasions in Africa and across the world. In the past, ethnic differences in Africa often led to civil wars (Cocodia, 2008), and ethnicity was usually an important factor that contributed to the development of civil violence (Harris & Findley, 2014). Civil wars in the African continent which were associated with ethnic differences, include the genocide in Rwanda when violence broke out between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups in 1994 (Cocodia, 2008; Harris & Findley, 2014; Paluck, 2009; Vandeginste, 2009; Yanagizawa-Drott, 2014). Genocide is defined as the systematic attempt to terminate a group of people due to their nationality, ethnic origin, race, or religion (Levy, 2009). Another example is the civil war between the two largest ethnic groups in South Sudan, the Nuer and the Dinkas (Levy, 2009; Milner & Khawaja, 2010; Natsios, 2012; O'Brien, 2009; Scherr & Larson, 2009).

In Kenya, violence between different ethnicities occurred as a result of land distribution that only favoured certain ethnic groups (Obala & Mattingly, 2014). According to Syagga (2006) the Kikuyu ethnic group received favourable deals and had a lot more resources compared to other ethnic groups. The Luo ethnic group which has been involved in prolonged conflicts with the Kikuyu ethnic group, felt disadvantaged by the land distribution system and this led to fighting and intimidation between the two groups (Obala & Mattingly, 2014).

In Europe, Jews and other minority ethnic groups who looked different from the rest of the country's population were physically exterminated by Hitler's Nazi regime during World War II, in what has become known as one of the most notorious acts of crime against humanity (Herf, 2006; Levy 2009). The Balkan war of 1991 in the former Yugoslavia involved different ethnic groups, namely the Serbians, Croats and Bosnians (Kaldor, 2013). The Serbians, as the majority ethnic group, aimed to establish an ethnically pure Serbian area by systematically eliminating all other ethnic groups and especially the Muslim Bosnians, through genocide and ethnic cleansing during the Balkan War (Garfinkel & Skaperdas, 2012; Goulding & Domic, 2009; Kondylis, 2010). Ethnic cleansing is defined as the threat to remove persons of another ethnic or religious group from a given area (Mestrovic, 2013). The above extreme examples provided an interesting African and international historical overview of some inter-ethnic relations.

1.2. ETHNIC HISTORY IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to Statistics South Africa (2011), the South African population is made up of four racial groups, consisting of black, white, Indian and colored (mixed race). There are nine ethnic groups within the black racial group. It is important to immediately note that in some African countries, the terms *language* and *ethnicity* are conflated among some ethnic groups, and therefore mean the same thing (Adamu, 2013). Additionally, South African ethnic groups are not to be referred to in terms such as "natives" or "Bantu", as such terms have an apartheid connotation and citizens still find them offensive (Beck, 2014). Thus, the term "ethnic group" has been used in this study. The current study focused on black ethnic groups and their inter-ethnic experiences in South Africa.

The nine black ethnic groups in South Africa are Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Tswana, Ndebele, Swati, Venda, Tsonga and Pedi. The Zulu group is the largest (Williams, 2012) with slightly more than 11 million (22.4%) of South African inhabitants (Statistics South Africa, 2011). The Zulu group mainly inhabits two provinces, namely Gauteng, which is the most industrialized and populated area in South Africa (Beck, 2014), and KwaZulu-Natal- one of the nine provinces in South Africa. The Zulu people became known as the main dominant group in South Africa in the 18th century after they had established a number of chiefdoms in the country (McBride, 2013).

Xhosa people represent the second largest ethnic group in South Africa, with slightly more than 8 million (15.8%) inhabitants (Statistics South Africa, 2011). According to Williams (2012), the Zulu and Xhosa ethnic groups account for 40 percent of the total population in South Africa. For the purpose of this study, and as a result of the population size, the Zulu and Xhosa groups are referred to as the majority ethnic groups. Due to their comparatively small sizes, the Tsonga (4.4%), Swati (2.5%), Venda (2.3%) and Ndebele (2.1%) groups constitute minority ethnic groups among black South African ethnic groups (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Certain ethnic groups are expected to be involved in victimization and ill treatment of other groups (Tolsma, Deurzen, Stark, & Veenstra, 2013). In a study conducted in Norway, ethnic minorities were more likely to be victimized than ethnic majorities (Fandrem, Strohmeier, & Jonsdottir, 2012) and more likely to be discriminated against compared to the rest of society (Thomas & Wagner, 2013). According to Thomas and Wagner (2013), these assumptions appear true as majority groups inflict dominance on minority groups. This can be seen in the Zulu people's history during King Shaka Zulu's reign. King Shaka Zulu's reign was dominated by a ploy for sole dominance, which resulted in the Zulu ethnic group rising into a powerful chiefdom

over other ethnicities in South Africa (Mahoney, 2012). Noyes (2010) noted how Shaka Zulu subdued all rulership in KwaZulu-Natal and evicted other groups until he had been the only ruling chief. Shaka Zulu's quick six-year progression created strain in inter-ethnic relations and immeasurable fear among other ethnic groups, most of whom were massacred and forced to flee their homelands (Gluckman, 2012).

Additionally in South African history, more inter-ethnic relations were strained during the apartheid period under colonial rulership in South Africa when most black ethnic groups were moved from their geographical locations (Cocodia, 2008). Apartheid was an oppressive and brutal system of racial discrimination inflicted by the white racial group on black people (Clark & Worger, 2016). Due to the evictions and unfair mobilization of some ethnic groups by the Apartheid government into disadvantaged geographic locations, ethnic tensions appeared to have increased as some groups appeared to benefit from the re-locations (Buhaug, Gleditsch, Holtermann, Ostby, & Tollefsen, 2011).

1.3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

As described in Section 1.2, ethnic and racial segregation created major differences within the black race in South Africa. According to Kliot and Waterman (2015), these differences could have possibly led to self-preservation tactics as a means to maintain a sense of self-determination. Such tactics – whether subtle or major, are assumed to have led to conflict among the different ethnic groups (Scherr & Larson, 2009). An example of such a tactic is the distinction between one's group as the in-group and other groups as out-groups. This was in an effort to preserve one's own group due to ethnic groups' preference for exclusivity (Kliot & Waterman, 2015; Scherr & Larson, 2009). Inter-ethnic interactions in some societies is minimal,

due to the struggle to interact, owing to differing customs and cultures (Bahar & Maemunaty, 2018). Ethnic security, in contrast is facilitated by a distinct ethnic identity, which is unique to each ethnic group (Ting-Toomey, 2015). Ethnic identity will be explored in this study to further understand its varied influence on inter-ethnic relations.

Inter-ethnic conflicts are also noted among youth in communities composed of different cultures and ethnicities with some of these youths being vulnerable to ethnic bullying and victimization (Wong, 2009). This form of ill treatment can be disturbing to the victims as membership to their specific group is beyond their control, such as ethnicity or gender (Mesch, Turjeman, & Fishman, 2008). With South Africa having different ethnicities, problems such as ethnic bullying and victimization can be expected to ensue. Additionally, according to Swart, Hewstone, Christ, and Voci's (2010) study in South Africa, apart from self-preservation tactics, inter-group relations have been marred with prejudice from on-lookers who do not support such relations and anxiety from those engaging in these inter-ethnic relations. Suransky and van der Merwe's (2014) study among students found that the more the students engaged with other ethnic and racial groups, the less prejudice there was. More intergroup contact is associated with a decrease in prejudice and increase in empathy for others (Swart et al., 2010). The current study sought to explore these inter-ethnic relations and experiences among students within a South African academic institution. The inter-ethnic differences among the different ethnic groups informed this study as such differences have led to different types of victimization.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTION

What are black students' experiences of inter-ethnic relations at a higher education institution?

1.5. JUSTIFICATION, AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.5.1. JUSTIFICATION

South Africa is unique in that it has nine official languages spoken by black people. One could expect in-group versus out-group dynamics, which might influence how the groups relate to each other. It is in this assumption that the researcher decided to look deeper into inter-ethnic relations among black students at an institution of higher education in South Africa. Individuals differ with regard to personality and the background they are raised in. Consequently, each person's experience and perception of a situation is subjective (Parzefall & Salin, 2010; Smedslund, 2013). It was therefore important to study this topic using the phenomenological approach, which focuses on individuals and their specific experiences of a situation or interaction.

Colonialism and apartheid initiated division (Ernstson, 2013) with the aim to conquer the black race which was in the majority. The black race was divided into homelands which not only achieved in creating a geographical division among the different ethnicities, but benefitted some ethnic groups with social advancement. The current study assumed that the relationships between the different ethnic groups may have been scarred as a result. Due to institutions of higher education accommodating various ethnic and racial groups, it was assumed that this population might be suitable for participating in an in-depth study of individuals' experiences of interactions with members of different ethnic groups. One could presuppose that having grown up in a particular geographical area with one's own ethnicity as pre-dominantly in majority (Adamu, 2013), the university might be the first time most students closely interact with different ethnic groups. Therefore, inter-ethnic experiences posed an interesting research topic.

According to an article in the University of Pretoria's newspaper *Perdeby*, Anonymous (2015) stated how Zulu and Xhosa people ranked themselves superior over other black ethnic groups in South Africa. Anonymous (2015) felt this ranking led them to disadvantage ethnic minority groups such as Venda and Tsonga groups because they expressed ethnicity as a determinant to a sense of belonging. This superiority is supported by Vitoroulis & Schneider (2009) who state that when there are different social groups in a given setting, members of a group (the in-group) assign negative attributes to members of other groups (the out-groups), and they tend to think of themselves as superior and the other group as inferior (Vitoroulis & Schneider, 2009). These experiences further motivated the researcher to explore inter-ethnic experiences in higher education.

In response to Mrs. Thoko Didiza's mayoral candidacy election in Tshwane (Gauteng Province) which led to chaos as residents vandalized property, a South African news bulletin interview (21 June 2016) on News24 with a taxi driver saw him relate how he would not allow the candidate to take up office as she was from the Zulu ethnic group. He related how because the presiding state president was also Zulu, the government could not elect another Zulu person to rule the minority ethnic groups of the Pedi, Venda and Tsonga groups (News24, 2016). The chaos that ensued due to opposing the mayoral candidate on basis of ethnicity further justified conducting this study to understand inter-ethnic experiences among black ethnic groups.

Additionally, due to the effects that negative ethnic relations have on students' academic and psychological functioning, such as stress (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010), it was important to explore this topic further within an academic institution. Through gaining an understanding of

students' experiences of ethnic relations, university management structures may be assisted to enhance students' positive experience on campus.

1.5.2. AIM

The primary aim of this study was to explore inter-ethnic relations and experiences among students at a higher education institution.

1.5.3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives have been stated as follows:

1. To explore ethnic identity among members of black ethnic groups
2. To explore individuals' positive and negative personal experiences of inter-ethnic relations
3. To explore experiences of the majority and minority inter-ethnic groups

1.6. DEFINITION OF TERMS

The important terminology used in this study has been both defined and conceptualized. This is to ensure an understanding of what the researcher sought to explain and therefore prevent the possibility of confusion or misunderstanding. Some of the conceptualized terms may differ from the known definitions, as some definitions were operationalized to fit the purpose of this study.

1.6.1. ETHNICITY

Ethnicity is difficult to define and measure, which has led some researchers to caution against conceptualizing it (Chandra & Wilkinson 2008). Ethnicity should not be confused with race, as race only differentiates people according to physical characteristics such as skin color (Schaffner, 2009).

“Ethnicity is taken to be the identification of an individual with a group recognized for having a common language and set of cultural beliefs” (Obala & Mattingly, 2014, p. 2737). Ethnicity includes a person’s language, geographical location and ethnic symbols (Harris & Findley, 2014). Although overtime most ethnic groups have geographically intertwined, each ethnic group can still be predominantly found in a particular geographical location. For example, the Ndebele ethnic group is mostly found in and originates from Mpumalanga province (South African History Online, 2016). Additionally, each ethnic group has symbols that distinguish them, such as cultural attire and pottery they make (South African History Online, 2016). As previously mentioned, language and culture are conflated in certain contexts (Adamu, 2013). In the current study, Ethnicity has been conceptualized to mean both language and culture. This supports Thomas’ (2010) assumption, which states that ethnicity is based on attributes such a language. While ethnicity defines the individual and their attributes, inter-ethnic relation defines interactions the individual has with members of other ethnicities. Inter-ethnic relations have been defined and conceptualized in the proceeding section.

1.6.2. INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS

Inter-ethnic relations and encounters are inevitable in contexts with a variety of ethnicities (Nagy, 2018). Inter-ethnic relations can be demonstrated by the nature of the

interactions between members of differing cultures, religions and languages (Bahar & Maemunaty, 2018). Inter-ethnic relations are conceptualized to mean “interactions, whether positive or negative, between members of different ethnic groups. The positive interaction can be in terms of a relationship as in the case of good friends or classmates from different black ethnic groups. Additionally, these positive interactions can be seen in social bonds such as marriage or co-habitation. These positive interactions contribute to positive intergroup relations Adamu (2013). On the contrary, interactions can be negative, as in the case of ethnic victimization, bullying and negative contact, which leads to the weakening of relations among members of different ethnic groups (Pettigrew, 2008).

1.6.3. ETHNIC VICTIMIZATION

According to Wong (2009), ethnic victimization includes derogatory references to a person’s culture, belittling of a person’s customs, food and items of clothing. Ethnic victimization seeks to oppress the victim by belittling characteristics that identify the individual with their identity. In this study, the definition of ethnic victimization has been conceptualized to mean any victimization of an individual as a result of ethnicity.

1.6.4. IDENTITY

According to Erikson’s definition of the psychosocial theory, identity is gained through the discovery of self (Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009) and the manner in which a person defines self (Faircloth, 2009). In her definition of identity, Goldschmidt (2003, p. 206) states that “[i]dentity is belonging to a group that provides people with a framework with which to articulate who they

are. In this study, the definition of identity has been conceptualized to mean the manner in which an individual defines self according to their ethnicity.

1.7. CHAPTER OUTLINES

Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter as it introduces the background, context and focus of study to the reader.

Chapter 2, which is the literature review, focuses on providing different sources and literature from studies conducted both nationally and internationally. The reader is given an opportunity to gain insight on all the knowledge the researcher has acquired from reading different academic and non-academic resources.

Chapter 3 provides more information on the methodology of the study. This chapter includes a discussion of the research approach, the sampling process, the participants selected, the data collection process explaining the research instrument and interview process. Chapter 3 also describes the data analysis method and process with regard to the transcription of the data collected, coding and analysis of the findings.

In Chapter 4, the findings of the study are presented. The findings have been illustrated by means of verbatim statements, which were done intentionally to allow secondary researchers the ability to easily follow and, if necessary, replicate the study.

Chapter 5 provides the results of the study. The researcher's views and interpretation have also been included to allow the researcher's voice to come through.

Chapter 6 includes the limitations of the study which have been communicated to reveal aspects in which the researcher or selected methodology lacked. Recommendations have been provided for future research.

1.8. CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the reader to the study by providing a historical overview of the dynamics which have led to the current South Africa. The researcher then provided the reasoning behind selecting members of the black ethnic group as the focus of the study. The research problem and question guiding this study were then presented. Furthermore, definitions of terms used in the study were provided and conceptualized to suit the study. Finally, an outline summary providing an overview of the rest of the dissertation was provided. The following chapter, Chapter 2, which is the literature review, sought to gather information from both local and international sources on the study topic.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

In the current chapter, examples of inter-ethnic relations, contradictions and relations between different research results were explored. The researcher has also discussed what other researchers have previously discussed on this topic.

2.2. IDENTITY: ETHNIC GROUP MEMBERS' FRAMEWORK FOR SELF IDENTIFICATION

“Identity is belonging to a group that provides people with a framework with which to articulate who they are” (Goldschmidt, 2003, p. 206). Consequently, without any form of identity to relate to, individuals are unable to navigate their place within society. One can therefore expect that participants, in the current study, who have not cultivated a strong identity, might have more negative experiences of inter-ethnic relations.

According to Erikson’s psychosocial theory (Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009), identity formation includes trying to identify and discover self, while role confusion depicts the uncertainty experienced when that identity is not discovered. These confusion and uncertainty were expressed by some students during a study in an Ethiopian university where nationally, political parties are organized along ethnic group lines (Adamu, 2013). Students from ethnically mixed groups found it difficult to decide which identity to assume and ultimately which political party to affiliate with as they belonged to more than one ethnic group. Eventually, most chose to align with the ethnic group and subsequently the political party which was more popular, had more

social advancements or had most of their friends as members. One of the students noted how members of the ethnic group the student did not choose had started treating her differently and relationships weakened as a result. This may also have interesting implications for this study as participants from ethnically mixed backgrounds might also struggle to engage with other ethnicities, leading to negative inter-ethnic relations, as displayed in the abovementioned study.

Villar (2011) argued that people usually define themselves according to their ethnicity, culture and race. Victimization and ethnic discrimination can impact negatively on how people define self (Faircloth, 2009). Furthermore, victimization and ethnic discrimination can obstruct the process of identity formation and psychosocial adjustment in individuals (McKenney, Pepler, Craig, & Connolly, 2006), because one is discriminated against based on characteristics they cannot change. It can be expected, in this study, that similar negative ethnic encounters may yield negative inter-ethnic interactions.

The effects of ethnic discrimination on the individual are evidenced in a different scenario in the Ethiopian university study mentioned previously. In contrast to South African universities where English is the medium of instruction, in Ethiopian universities, the dominant ethnic group's language, Amharic, is usually the medium of instruction (Adamu, 2013). Students from other ethnic groups felt ethnically discriminated against as they were not conversant in Amharic or English and could therefore only communicate with students from their own ethnic groups. These led to obstruction in psychosocial adjustment due to experiencing feelings of lack of belonging (Adamu, 2013). Additionally, the cultivation of inter-ethnic relations was also affected.

As a result of being ethnically discriminated against, students who could not speak Amharic drifted towards their own ethnic group (Adamu, 2013). This is supported by Hamm, Brown, and Heck (2005) who found that ethnic-minority adolescents usually look for friends who share their ethnicity. Scherr and Larson (2009) stated that some immigrant students drift towards their own ethnic groups because it creates a sense of comfort. Although the drifting towards their own ethnic group may assist in strengthening identity with their own ethnic groups, the implications on this study are that in them solely drifting towards their own group, they may miss the opportunity to engage with other ethnic groups. Unfortunately, if that happens, the cultivation of positive interethnic relations may be negatively affected. Positively, those who choose to drift towards their own ethnic groups experience a decline in negative effects of ethnic discrimination, such as low self-esteem and low academic performance (Li, 2009).

Conversely, a study in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, showed that individuals who had strong ethnic ties to their own ethnic group found it easier to identify with other ethnic groups (Harris & Findley, 2014). In contrast, individuals with significant ethnic pride are intentional about not mixing with a non-member/out-group member. Therefore, interestingly, literature shows that possessing strong ethnic ties and/or pride may warrant unpredictable findings depending on the group of participants in this study.

Stereotypes attached to a person's ethnic group appear to threaten the cultivation of self-identification as they cause such individuals to distance themselves from their own ethnic groups (Armenta, 2010). As such stereotypes can be translated to other parts of the victim's social life (Thomas & Wagner, 2013), they may prove more damaging. Unfortunately, ethnic identity, which is a type of social identity, is dependent on an individual's experiences with peers and

their perceptions about the individual's ethnic group of origin (Gonzalez, 2009). Most affected individuals suffer from low self-esteem (Vessey, Demarco, Gaffney, & Budin, 2009). This may have negative implications for this study as participants who stereotype other ethnic groups may only have negativity to share about such inter-ethnic relations. However, a high sense of ethnic identification has the ability to protect individuals who have been ethnically stereotyped from the negative effects of stereotyping (Armenta & Hunt, 2009). Therefore, identity proves quite significant when discussing inter-ethnic relations. Although that may be the case, Thomas and Wagner (2013) state that members of ethnic majority groups do not necessarily put much value to ethnic identity as compared to minority groups. This view appears unlikely as majority ethnic groups would require a strong ethnic identity to preserve their ethnic dominance. The contrasting views in this section may produce interesting findings when interacting with majority participants in this study.

2.3. OVERVIEW OF ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

Academic institutions are host to diverse ethnic groups, which may lead to different forms of interaction between students resulting from either parental or societal influences (Newman & Newman, 2014). This explains the researcher's decision to choose an academic institution as a population for this study.

Vitoroulis, Brittain, and Vaillancourt (2016, p. 2) stated that "ethnic diversity inevitably leads to frequent inter-ethnic contact, which may result in positive or negative interactions between students." For example, negative interactions can be propelled by moderate levels of ethnic diversity in an academic institution, which appear to increase the likelihood of

victimization and bullying (Moody, 2001; Vitoroulis et al., 2016). Vitoroulis and Schneider (2009) found that the ethnic composition of an academic institution could contribute to ethnic victimization. In ethnically diverse institutions, any power imbalance between ethnic majorities and minorities may result in negative behavior and interaction (Vitoroulis & Schneider, 2009), consequently affecting the youths' psychosocial adjustment. The researcher expects participants in this study to have experienced a range of interactions, including negative ones, as the study is set in an academic institution with rich, diverse ethnic groups from South Africa.

In contrast, positive interactions can be experienced as diversity in a classroom's ethnic composition could also possibly be associated with feelings of safety for some students (Juvonen, Nishina, & Graham, 2006). The academic institution selected for this study, as do most South African academic institutions, does not offer class allocations based on ethnicities therefore, ethnic diversity is probable. In their study comprising an ethnically diverse sample, Juvonen, Nishan and Graham's (2006) found that positive interactions among the different ethnic groups could be expected.

Apart from looking at diversity in terms of the different ethnic groups, diversity in this study also included diversity in terms of majority and minority ethnic groups. An example of such diversity is displayed in a study conducted in Canada. Canada ranks high with regard to the acceptance of multiculturalism (Berry, 2013). A study conducted in one of its academic institutions found that a higher prevalence of ethnic minorities is usually associated with a lower number of incidents that involve victimization (Vitoroulis et al., 2016). In other words, when ethnic minorities numerically exceed ethnic majorities, ethnic victimization is reduced. Given this study's large sample size, diverse ethnic groups and a variety of majority and minority

groups, with its fewer participants, the current study may yield different findings. Conversely, in the context of this study, one can assume that students from other South African locations who do not speak the common language where the tertiary institution is located may be at a disadvantage and may fall prey to victimization from ethnic groups with a larger representation. As previously mentioned, students from the study at the Ethiopian university felt ethnically discriminated against, as a result of being an ethnic minority, relative to the ethnic group whose language was predominantly spoken in their academic institution (Adamu, 2013). This is supported by Agirdag, Demanet, Van Houtte, and Van Avermaet (2011) who state that an ethnic group that has less representation is more likely to be victimized than the ethnic groups with a larger representation. In a contrasting study by Vitoroulis et al. (2016), being a member of a national majority group (e.g., Zulu/Xhosa in South Africa) may implicitly be associated with a higher status and power in the larger society. Therefore, individuals belonging to these groups may not be affected by the institution's ethnic composition (Vitoroulis et al., 2016). Therefore, even if outnumbered by members of a national minority group, members of a majority ethnic group may not fear nor experience ethnic victimization. Due to the diversity of conclusions this study may yield, interesting findings can be expected. The next section will continue to speak more on majority and minority ethnic groups and their interactions.

2.4. A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF INTERACTIONS BETWEEN MAJORITY AND MINORITY INTER-ETHNIC GROUPS

A study by Cunniff and Mostert (2012) reported that minority groups in South Africa have a higher probability of experiencing discrimination and victimization compared to majority groups. In most postcolonial or multicultural nations, the minority ethnic groups tend to be more

disadvantaged in most spheres of that society (Sibley, Houkamau, & Hoverd, 2011) as was the case in the Ethiopian university where the majority ethnic group had their language as the university's medium of instruction (Adamu, 2013). Therefore, there is often a high likelihood that a minority ethnic group will experience victimization in contrast to a majority group (Pryor & Fitzgerald, 2003; Vitoroulis & Schneider, 2009). Contrasting studies found that ethnic minority students were more likely to bully others (Carlyle & Steinman, 2007; Shapka & Law, 2013; Wang, Ianotti, & Nansel, 2009). There is, however, insufficient literature to support this view as being the emerging norm in society. Although language barrier may have been a factor and ethnically disadvantaged students at the Ethiopian university, the academic institution selected for this study does not have medium of instructions in black ethnic languages and thus participants in this study are not expected to be affected by this. Therefore, the results from this study may yield different findings from those from the Ethiopian university.

A majority of ethnic minority group members view their ethnicity as the reason for most victimization inflicted on them (Monks, Ortega-Ruiz, & Rodríguez-Hidalgo, 2008). This is because they only see themselves as victims and not perpetrators (Griffiths & Nesdale, 2006). Studies support this assumption as findings suggest that ethnic minority groups have experienced discrimination based on factors such as language or ethnicity (Grossman & Liang, 2008; Liang, Grossman, & Deguchi, 2007; Qin, Way, & Mukherjee, 2008). Ethnic minority members are also more likely to experience indirect forms of victimization in contrast to direct forms of bullying (Vitoroulis et al., 2016) and have experienced more mental health problems as a result (Abada, Hou, & Ram, 2008). Although that is the case, ethnic minority students maintain more inter- and intra-ethnic friendships while majority ethnic groups maintain more relations with their own ethnic group members (Vermeij, Van Duijn, & Baerveldt, 2009). This might present implications

for this study, suggesting that minority ethnic groups might have more positive inter-ethnic relations while majority ethnic groups might have negative or no inter-ethnic relations. The result of negative interactions is bound to affect individuals in contrasting ways and will therefore be discussed in the section below.

2.5. THE EFFECTS OF DISCRIMINATION AND PREJUDICE ON INDIVIDUALS AND INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS

A previous study conducted in an academic institution showed that although victimization due to gender differences represented a higher percentage of ill treatment, another probable reason for victimization was ethnic/cultural issues (Wong, 2009). Such victimization, which includes ethnic discrimination, refers to excluding individuals from activities and groups due to characteristics such as difference in language, physical appearance and the person's accent (Villar, 2011) racial, cultural or ethnic backgrounds (Qin et al., 2008; Zeman & Bressan, 2006). This form of ill treatment includes exclusion from activities and the spreading of rumors (Carbone-Lope, Esbensen & Brick, 2010). Additionally, the false rumors spread about the victims serve to taint their image, and attack their self-identity as the victims are made to feel as outcasts.

A bad experience with one member of a different ethnic group can serve as a reason to discriminate against other members of that group due to associating them with that bad experience (Wong, 2009). Unfortunately, according to Pettigrew (2008), ethnic victimization is likely to negatively affect inter-ethnic relations in future. Negative experiences are likely to increase prejudiced attitudes towards members of groups with which one has had those negative experiences. It is therefore probable that some negative inter-ethnic experiences reported by

some of the participants may not represent reality but are examples of “inherited” prejudice. Therefore, more positive contact among different groups minimizes prejudiced attitudes (Tredoux & Finchilescu, 2010). The more the different groups interact with each other and get to learn more about other groups, the less likely they are to remain prejudiced against members of the said groups. This was evidenced in the study at the Ethiopian university when different ethnic group students were placed in the same residences and found to mostly get along after getting to know each other (Adamu, 2013). Similarly at the University of Free State, South Africa, through the residence policy in the University of Free State strategic plan 2012-2016, different races and ethnicities were required to integrate. Although challenging at first, bonds were soon formed and students of different races and ethnicities now freely stay together in residences (University of the Free State, 2012). It would therefore prove noteworthy whether similar contact among participants in this study yielded positive inter-ethnic relations. It is important to note that prejudices against minority groups are not discouraged in certain societies (Brunsma, Embrick, & Nanney, 2015) which could regrettably further perpetuate these prejudices even with increased intergroup contact.

Stereotypes are different from prejudices in that they are basic depictions of thoughts, ideas, words, images, and perceptions (Bauer & Gaskell, 2008; Harris & Findley, 2014) which may be partially true. To express the impact of stereotypes, an anonymous student posted on *Tuks Confession*, which is a Facebook page where students confess anonymously and freely whatever is on their minds. Posted on 31 January 2016 under the title *Tuks Confession 26 387*, Anonymous (2015) wrote about how anyone who could not be easily identified with regard to ethnicity, would simply be regarded as *umShangana*. Shangaan, a Tsonga ethnic group, is one of the minority groups in South Africa, while “*umShangana*” or “*amaShangane*” are used as a

derogatory terms for immigrants (City Press, 2015). Anonymous felt the derogatory term placed a strain on inter-ethnic relations among them as students. It would be interesting to find out whether stereotypes placed similar, if any strain on participants from the current study. Primrose Sonti, a South African parliamentarian, used a similar term when she mentioned that certain services in Marikana, South Africa, were being diverted from local residents to "*amaShangane*." Sonti explained that she was referring to immigrants and not to the Tsonga ethnic group specifically (City Press, 2015). In response to such a statement, spokesperson Mr. Moloto Mothapo, spokesperson for ANC chief whip Stone Sizani, echoed the sentiments of *Perdeby's* anonymous correspondent (2015): "The use of terms such as *Makwerekwere* and Shangaans perpetuated xenophobic and ethnic stereotypes in communities" (Mabona, 2015). Such derogatory terms impede the cultivation of positive inter-ethnic relations. It is evident that negative terminology used during stereotypical exchanges has a counter-productive impact on the building of positive inter-ethnic relations. It would therefore be worthwhile to this study to explore if prejudicial and stereotypical exchanges garner similar reactions from participants in this study.

Literature such as that by Pettigrew (2008), states that ethnic victimization is likely to negatively affect the development of inter-ethnic relations and has a negative influence on the development of a positive self-esteem in the victims (Farrington, Loeber, Stallings, & Ttofi 2011) while also resulting in high stress levels (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; Vessey et al., 2009). Prolonged and severe victimization has negative implications for those at the receiving end (Athanasziades & Deliyanni-Kouimtzis, 2010). An example of this is individuals experiencing a sense of helplessness, (Craig, Pepler, & Blais, 2007) believing that they will never escape the

circumstance and therefore surrender to perpetual victimization. Some victims blame themselves for the victimization (Kyriakides & Creemers, 2013), which further perpetuates the victimization. These types of victims have low self-esteem and often exhibit depressive symptoms. They typically feel that the perpetrator's behavior is justified by something that they may or may not have done (Kyriakides & Creemers, 2013). A noteworthy observation is that both perpetrators and victims show low levels of self-esteem (Lodge & Feldman, 2007) and experience negative consequences (de Wet, 2013) such as poorer psychological adjustment (Nabuzoka, Ronning, & Handegard, 2009). For students victimized in higher education, it further leads to feelings of anxiety and results in low academic performance (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; McKenney et al., 2006; Mesch et al., 2008) and consequently affects their general well-being (Grossman & Liang, 2008; Konishi, Hymel, Zumbo, & Li, 2010). Implications of this on the current study may be that students who experience negative inter-ethnic relations or are victimized as a result of their ethnicity may be academically affected as Thomas and Wagner's (2013) study shows that prejudice due to ethnicity in higher education institutions can also have implications on students' academic success. According to these authors, a healthier academic setting is needed to allow for the cultivation of interactions between members of different ethnic groups without discrimination and prejudice on the basis of ethnicity.

2.6. CONCLUSION

The current chapter provided literature on inter-ethnic relations by focusing on interactions within the academic environment. Different studies were explored on previous research on this phenomenon. In the following chapter, the methodology applicable to this study is described and discussed in detail.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the methodology applicable to this study has been explored and describes the research process, methodology used, including sampling, data collection and analysis. Each part of the study methodology has been explored in sections to clarify the processes undertaken in this study. Finally, the ethical considerations taken into account in this study are explained in detail.

3.2. RESEARCH APPROACH

Methodology is the study of methods (Roth, 2015) with three general types, namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods (Ivankova, Creswell, & Clark, 2007). Qualitative research was selected as it is more personal and focuses on an individual's subjective view of an experience (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2011). According to these authors, qualitative research also embraces the view that in every experience, there are possible and unique differences in what each individual may have experienced personally. This allows the researcher to better understand participants' personal experiences and their diversity (Christensen et al., 2011) by also paying attention to the nuances which add more texture to the data collected. Qualitative research further acknowledges that a person has his/her own mind and own views about different phenomena (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013), and therefore the researcher endeavored to understand inter-ethnic relations from the participants' viewpoint with the added advantage to probe further about those experiences.

3.3. THEORETICAL POINT OF DEPARTURE: PHENOMENOLOGY

Williams (2011) referred to five areas in qualitative research, which are case studies, ethnography, grounded theory, content analysis and phenomenological study. For the purpose of this study, phenomenology has been selected to address the research question. The phenomenological approach was first conceptualized by Edmund Husserl and used in the field of philosophy before it spread to other fields, such as psychology (Charmaz & McMullen, 2011). This approach is regarded subjective (Flood, 2010) as it focuses on people's personal experiences, how they view the world, and the meaning they attach to particular situations, phenomena or life experiences (Banister, 2011; Flood, 2010) even if it was a one-time experience (Englander, 2012).

There are different types of phenomenological approaches, such as the descriptive and interpretative approaches (Banister, 2011). The researcher chose the interpretive approach as it focuses on the explanation and interpretation of phenomena (Basson & Mawson, 2011).

3.4. SAMPLING

Purposive sampling, a type of non-probability sampling (Bernard & Bernard, 2012), was applied in this study. This type of sampling method purposefully selects individuals suitable for the study (Denscombe, 2014), who are especially selected to answer the particular questions in the study (Basson & Mawson, 2011; Smith, 2011). In addition, the sample size of the population in qualitative research is usually small (Smith, 2011), because were the number of participants allowed to be too large, it would not be possible to reach the same depth and level of interpretation compared to that obtained from a smaller number of people. The phenomenological approach requires a minimum of three participants (Giorgi, 2009), which

consequently mean that the findings of the study cannot be generalized to the larger population, as the small sample is not representative of the whole population. Padgett (2016) argued that a smaller sample size allows for more depth to be extracted. It is widely accepted that one cannot generalize findings that have been acquired from less than 25 people, as that is not entirely representative. Qualitative research is commonly interested in the quality and richness of the information collected, in contrast to a quantitative approach that focuses more on quantity and can therefore easily be generalized to the larger population (Smith, 2011).

According to Englander (2012), in choosing a sample for a phenomenological study, it is essential for the selected participants to have had some experience of the phenomenon being studied. Experience of the phenomenon was a strict criterion for each participant to adhere before participation in the study. Sampling in qualitative research usually falls within the non-probability category (Kumar, 2014). The researcher put up posters on the different advertising boards of the selected faculty building. Contact details were provided on the posters to allow volunteers to freely contact the researcher. A summary of what was meant by inter-ethnic relations was provided on the poster, so that participants would not be confused about the requirements before deciding to participate. Once participants responded to the advert and made contact with the researcher telephonically, they were asked questions to ascertain that they met the inclusion criteria. Candidates who met the inclusion criteria were invited to a one-on-one interview. The interview process has been explained in Section 3.5 (data collection), including Sections 3.5.1 (research instrument) and 3.5.2 (interview period).

3.4.1. PARTICIPANTS

Individuals who adhered to the inclusion criteria were allowed to participate in the study. Three participants were selected to participate in the study, which suits the minimum required number of participants in a phenomenological study (Giorgi, 2009). Participants could be either male or female students as the study focused on ethnic group and not on gender. The three participants who met the inclusion criteria included one who was female from the Pedi ethnic group, another who was female and from an ethnically mixed group (Tswana and Swati) and one who was male from the Xhosa ethnic group. Due to sample size, the three selected participants from the four ethnic groups could participate in the study. The basis was that although the sample size was small, the researcher believed the three participants would be able to provide sufficient information about their personal experiences with inter-ethnic relations. Additionally, purposive sampling was used in the study, and the three participants who fit the inclusion criteria were selected irrespective of which of the nine South African ethnic groups they originated from.

The first criterion for participation was that the participants belonged to any one of the black ethnic groups in South Africa. White participants were excluded as the study specifically focused on inter-ethnic relations among black ethnic groups. The second inclusion criterion was that the participants should be able to comprehend English, as both the interview and consent form were in English. The third inclusion criterion was that participants were selected on the basis of having experienced either negative or positive inter-ethnic relations. It was important that the participants personally had these inter-ethnic relations as that would ensure that they were able to relate their experiences in detail which is a requirement in phenomenological studies (Basson & Mawson, 2011). Finally, participants were specifically selected from one of the biggest faculties in the chosen academic institution, because the faculty was large enough to enable selection of a sample of three, and was also easily accessible to the researcher.

3.4.2. STUDY SETTING

The specific university represented in this study was relevant towards the research topic as it is rich with different South African cultural and ethnic groups. At the time of the study, all participants were still registered students at the chosen tertiary institution.

3.5. DATA COLLECTION

The method of data collection selected for this study was the semi-structured interview. The aim of the interviews was to allow the participants to verbally describe their past experiences of inter-ethnic relations as accurately as possible. The participants were provided with an explanation of how the interview would be conducted in an information letter and then by also going through an informed consent form with them. The participants had been made aware beforehand that the interview might take a maximum of 60 minutes, to ensure that each participant set aside the necessary time to participate for the full duration of the interview. An audio recording device was used to allow for accurate data collection.

According to Basson and Mawson (2011), in order to obtain rich information, participants have to enter into an open-ended discourse where they are able to share all the details of their experience. This was achieved through an open-ended interview which allowed the participants to freely share information on the topic (Basson & Mawson, 2011). It was important that the environment was relaxed to prevent interviewees from not sharing all the information or sharing less due to perceived intimidation (Basson & Mawson, 2011). The study was therefore conducted in a quiet room on the premises of the institution where the study took place. This was in a boardroom within one of the faculties' departments which allowed the participants to be more comfortable as this was a familiar location for them.

3.5.1. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

An interview guide is a research instrument, which allows the researcher to collect data. It was constructed based on the research question that the researcher wanted to answer. The interview guide included questions, which probed the participants' experiences with members of other black ethnic groups (Appendix A).

Participants were also asked to elaborate on how these experiences influenced their view of the ethnic group they interacted with. The questions started off as introductory, then became more complex and required the participants to search deep into their memories of the inter-ethnic experiences. Probing allowed for deeper insight to be gained from the participants. Probing questions were asked for the researcher to understand the participant more clearly (in other words, to ensure that the interviewer correctly understood the information communicated by the participant), and to prompt them to offer more information. Probing was used because the researcher can also be referred to as the human instrument (Peredaryenko & Krauss, 2013), thus able to quickly interpret and analyze what the participant is saying, and ask follow-up questions. Additionally, the researcher took notes during the interview process which involves the observation of mannerisms and reactions, which are usually known as field notes.

3.5.2. TRANSCRIPTION

Smith (2011) encourages including extracts and exact words spoken by the participants in the study to establish a stronger foundation for the researcher's presentation and interpretation of information. The researcher has therefore provided direct quotes from participants in the Findings (Chapter 4) and Discussion of findings (Chapter 5) chapters of the dissertation.

Transcription involves writing down the exact information (verbatim) presented in the data collection process (Evers, 2011). There are numerous ways to transcribe data, such as making use of computer programs that automatically transcribe the sound recording however, the researcher transcribed by personally listening to the recordings and manually capturing the content verbatim. Transcription also allows the researcher to re-live the experiences of the interviews, which also brings about a remembrance of details the researcher may have missed during the actual interview (Mero-Jaffe, 2011). In this study, the researcher transcribed the recordings of the interviews personally so as to also include nuances the researcher observed. The interview recordings were transcribed immediately after interviews were completed to ensure that all relevant details were included. Additionally, non-verbal cues were captured in the transcription as the research question warranted the need to take field notes such as participants' body language and mannerisms (Law, 2011).

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS

3.6.1. INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), which draws from phenomenology (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014), has become a fast-growing approach in qualitative methodology in the field of psychology (Lee & McFerran, 2015; Smith, 2011). Smith (2011) published the first paper on interpretative phenomenological analysis in 1996. This approach could therefore be regarded as a relatively new data analysis approach. Smith (2011) noted that authors use slightly different terminology, namely *interpretative* or *interpretive phenomenological analysis* (IPA), with the majority of authors using the term *interpretative phenomenological analysis* more often. The former was selected for this study.

This form of analysis falls within the hermeneutic (interpretative) approach (Blank, Harries, & Reynolds, 2015; Finlay, 2011). According to Smith (2011, p. 9), “IPA is concerned with the detailed examination of personal lived experience, the meaning of experience to participants and how participants make sense of that experience.” Additionally, IPA strives to identify themes within the data collected (Quinn & Claire, 2008). Each interview is analyzed individually before the researcher focuses on the interviews as a group to find themes. Once the themes have been noted, they are expounded clearly and a sufficient amount of discourse is provided on or about those themes (Smith, 2011).

Two principles are important in IPA and hermeneutics, which are the double hermeneutic and hermeneutic circle (Lee & McFerran, 2015). According to these authors, the double hermeneutic is when the researcher attempts to understand the interviewee, who is also trying to understand his/her experience (Lee & McFarren, 2015). Therefore, the participant is also still trying to understand the experiences that are going on in his/her life (Smith, 2011). The hermeneutic circle, according to Finlay (2011), means that the researcher has to understand the whole picture before understanding part of it, but also needs to understand part of the picture before being able to understand the whole picture. Thus, the researcher should be open-minded in order to view the data collected in a holistic manner, but still be able to observe the intricate parts of the data.

Smith (2011) argued that IPA is experiential because it focuses on the participants’ experiences and then interprets the information that has been conveyed. Interpretative phenomenology requires that a researcher conducts a literature review and has research questions before the study commences (Law, 2011). Therefore, the researcher should be knowledgeable

about the topic before embarking on it. IPA also encourages the researcher to have a theoretical framework (Law, 2011). The researcher followed these recommendations by reading about the topic prior to commencement as displayed in the literature review chapter and by remaining open-minded.

It is important that the researcher pays special attention to what the participant shares to allow analysis to match the participant's narration (McGregor, Dickson, Flowers, Hayes, & O'Carroll, 2014). The researcher followed the following broad steps of interpretative phenomenological analysis, according to Quinn and Claire (2008):

1. Read the interview transcript in depth to make sure everything is clearly understood.
2. Make note of the different patterns, contradictions and themes.
3. Summarize the notes into an understandable list.
4. Group the different notes within the list into themes, which should also be given headings for easy access.

3.6.2. CODING AND THEMES

A code is a word or short phrase that symbolically represents data such as an interview transcript (Saldana, 2009). Coding can be done in phases, with the first code in the first phase usually being as long as a sentence and then gradually becoming shorter. The primary aim of a code is to capture the main essence of a piece of writing to record something specific that the researcher read. According to Saldana (2009, p. 3), "Coding is just one way of analyzing data." The researcher grouped the codes into different umbrella themes. All themes identified in this study have been noted in the findings and then interpreted.

3.6.3. INTERPRETATION

It is important that similarity is presented between the participants' experiences. Therefore, even though the researcher gives justice to the individuality of each participant, it is essential that a link is also created between the participants' re-counts. It should be noted how the participants might have displayed similar or different themes in their narration (Smith, 2011). The researcher achieved this by noting similar themes between the participants.

According to Charmaz (2012), the steps of data collection, analysis and interpretation are inter-related. It is essential that while collecting the data, the researcher is already noting themes that may be necessary in answering the research questions. Charmaz (2012) advised that while coding the data, one can go back and re-code after obtaining additional information.

The researcher can analyze and interpret the data immediately after its collection, and still go back to collect more data even after having analyzed the data, should the researcher not be certain of the findings (Charmaz, 2012). It is therefore encouraged to interpret the data in segments and not wait for it to accumulate, which can easily be achieved by keeping a journal (Tweed & Charmaz, 2012). It is important in qualitative research to have some degree of subject knowledge before attempting to analyze information (Law, 2011). While interpreting and analyzing data, it is vital that one has an open mind to, if necessary, go back and continuously re-examine the analysis. The interpretation can be analyzed against newly found information as the study continues. In the interpretation and analysis process, the researcher continuously read literature and the data collected in the interviews.

3.7. CREDIBILITY, TRUSTWORTHINESS AND SUBJECTIVITY

These three elements ensure that the research study produces a piece of writing, of notable value. These qualities have been explained in further detail in the following sub-sections.

3.7.1. CREDIBILITY

Credibility involves the endorsement of research findings by interviewees or the researcher's peers (Riege, 2003). It further takes into account the trustworthiness of the source of information (Tracy, 2010). Additionally, credibility is ensured by checking the findings against the participants or a group of people familiar with the topic to ensure that they also agree with the researcher's findings (Law, 2011). The credibility of this study was ensured by comparing findings and conclusions after interpretation against literature and findings on similar studies.

3.7.2. TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness stresses that whatever conclusion the researcher makes of what the participant has said, should be aligned with what the participant actually meant (Guba, 1981; Rossman & Rallis, 2011). The researcher applied this element by repeating what the interviewee said during the interview process, to confirm whether what was said and the researcher's comprehension corresponded. Additionally, the researcher asked probing questions to ensure that the participants had been clearly and correctly understood.

3.7.3. SUBJECTIVITY

Every researcher has a view of the subject, which either supports or contradicts their study (Peredaryenko & Krauss, 2013). Peredaryenko and Krauss (2013) argued that these views bring into disrepute the researcher's subjectivity and personal bias before commencing with

research. The researcher safeguarded against this element by remaining neutral and separating preconceived ideas from those presented by participants.

It is important that the researcher keeps reflecting through every step of the data collection, as a lot can be uncovered before the actual data analysis and interpretation stages are reached. Self-reflection aids the researcher to alter his/her interview style to suit the research question (Evers, 2011). This constant reflection gives the researcher an indication that what has been done during the interview ensured the collection of meaningful information.

3.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The current study's proposal was approved by the selected faculty's Ethics Committee at the tertiary institution where the study was conducted. Permission to conduct the study was further obtained from the relevant authorities at the study setting.

3.8.1. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is necessary (Trombetta, Jiang, Bertino, & Bossi, 2011), as without its assurance, participants may feel limited from freely sharing information, as they may fear that their personal and often very private information might be divulged (Basson & Mawson, 2011). Therefore, the researcher applied this ethical consideration by ensuring that personal information shared during interviews could not be linked back to participants. Although the participants' signatures would be required on the consent form, the researcher guaranteed confidentiality by not printing participants' names in the findings instead, the researcher used pseudonyms in the transcripts and interpretation of the data. It was important that the researcher took all precautionary measures to protect the participants from any potential foreseen and unforeseen

harm. As an audio recording device was used during the interviews, the researcher further guaranteed confidentiality by ensuring that the device was accessible exclusively to the researcher and researcher's supervisor and would not be made available to third parties.

3.8.2. INFORMED CONSENT

Each participant was given an information sheet providing them with information regarding the study (Appendix B). Additionally, a brief overview of the data collection process was discussed with participants prior to the interview. This enabled participants to voluntarily choose participation after considering all the necessary information. The researcher encouraged participants to ask questions of clarity so that they could provide informed consent. It is important that the participants understand what they are getting involved in (Nishimura, Carey, Erwin, Tilburt, Murad, & McCormick, 2013). The signing of the informed consent indicated and confirmed the willingness of the participants to take part in the study and confirmed that they were not coerced in any manner.

3.8.3. INTEGRITY

The researcher remained honest about the process of the study and truthful throughout the research to allow participants to trust the researcher (Anney, 2014). In order to maintain authenticity, the researcher did not alter any of what was said in the interview for personal gain, to show that the researcher respected what the participants had voluntarily shared about their personal lives.

3.8.4. RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL FROM STUDY

Participants need to be given the option and right to withdraw from any study without consequence (Edwards, 2005), therefore the researcher informed each participant that they could withdraw from the research at any time without penalty. Although abrupt withdrawal by a participant from the study could result in loss of time and other resources, and might have an unfavorable effect on the findings and final outcome of the study, it should, however, not be used as a reason to prevent participants who might wish to terminate participation from doing so. The researcher was aware of this risk before embarking on the study. No financial or material incentives were offered to the participants, further confirming that they joined this study out of their own free will.

3.8.5. APPROPRIATE REFERRAL

The researcher asked all questions cautiously during the interview while also taking the participants' wellbeing into consideration. If any of the participants got upset or distressed as a result of the study, the researcher would provide them with the details of counseling services provided at the study site's Student Support Services.

3.9. CONCLUSION

This chapter of the dissertation explored the research design and included an outline of who the participants were, how they were selected and how they were screened before participation. The data collection method and process were also described. Finally, an explanation of how the research was conducted on strong ethical principles was provided by stating the ethical considerations.

The following chapter presents the findings of the study, including some direct quotes from the participants' interviews.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

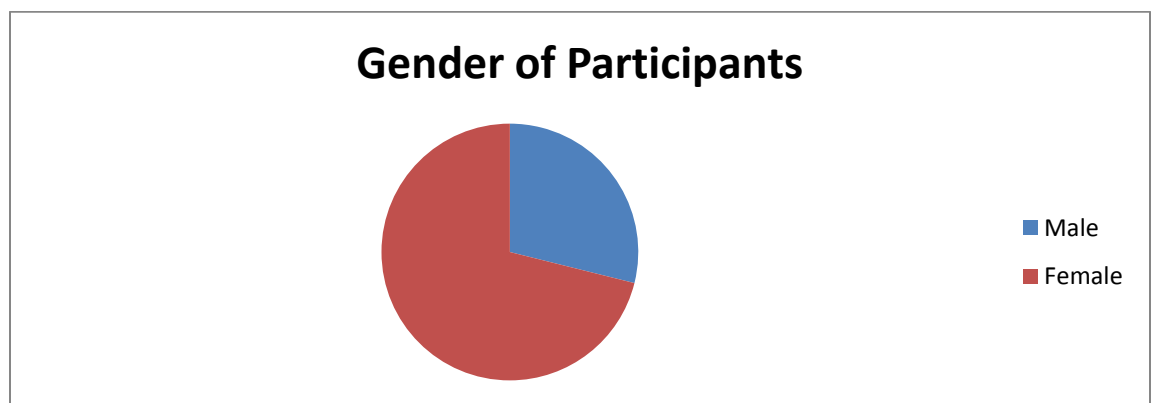
In this chapter, the data collected during the interviews was analyzed. The interviews were transcribed verbatim to allow for proper analysis, and nuances observed by the researcher were also included in the transcriptions. Responses to the questions asked during the interview were analyzed to pick up any themes, patterns or contradictions.

4.2. PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

The black South African ethnic groups represented in this study were from the Pedi, mixed (Tswana and Swati) and Xhosa ethnic groups.

The gender of the participants included two females and one male. The participants were allocated pseudonyms. Kate (female, Swati/Tswana), Bella (female, Pedi) and Daniel (male, Xhosa). Figure 4.1 shows participants' genders involved in the study, two thirds represented females (2 females) while a third represented males (1 male):

FIGURE 4.1: GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS



4.3. THEMES THAT WERE EXTRACTED FROM THE ANALYSIS

In the following paragraphs, 3 themes (shown in Table 4.1) identified in the study are explained in detail. The 3 themes are ethnic identity: identity confusion vs. certainty, personal experiences of inter-ethnic relations, and majority and minority ethnic groups' experiences. Furthermore, the researcher has noted sub-themes, and provided direct quotes, where applicable from the participants. Ethnic identity has no subtheme. Personal experiences of inter-ethnic relations has two subthemes, namely negative experiences and positive experiences, while majority and minority ethnic groups' experiences has no subtheme either.

TABLE 4.1: THEMES

1. Ethnic identity: Identity confusion vs. certainty	2. Personal experiences of inter-ethnic relations:	3. Majority and Minority ethnic groups' experiences:
	2.1. Negative experiences	
	2.1.1. Stereotypes	
	2.2. Positive experiences	
	2.2.1. A change or consistent opinion about another ethnic group	
	2.2.2. Learning from other ethnic groups	

4.3.1. ETHNIC IDENTITY: IDENTITY CONFUSION VS. CERTAINTY

Ethnic identity emerged as one of the study themes. Scholars have yet to agree on its standard definition, although the general inclination is that people usually strive for a positive ethnic identity (Horowitz, 2012; Kim, 2004). Therefore as mentioned in Section 2.2 in the literature chapter, Gonzalez (2009) conceptualized it as a type of social identity which is dependent on the individual's experiences with peers and their perceptions about the individual's ethnic group of origin.

In relation to this, one of the participants, Kate, attempted to define herself according to her ethnicity:

“Uhm, this is gonna be very funny: I am not sure. Why I am saying I am not sure is my mother is Tswana, right? I know I can't be Tswana. But my father is Swati, but he doesn't speak Swati now. He speaks Zulu.”

“...My mother is Tswana, right? I know I can't be Tswana... Ya, originally I can say I am Zulu because my dad is.”

“They (society) say you take the father's (tongue/language).”

Because she was from an ethnically mixed family, she struggled to decide which ethnicity to choose by suggesting that society should be the one to decide. The default decision to have society decipher her identity confusion is inconsistent with Verkuyten's (2018) statement that ethnicity is not a property of the community or groups but should be open to ethnic distinctions which can be made and believed. The abovementioned author suggests that an individual should not be rigid to society's rules on ethnicity as Kate might have felt, instead an individual should be allowed to fully explore their own ethnicity. Kate's dilemma is similar to that experienced by ethnically mixed students in a study at an Ethiopian university who had to

choose political parties to support based on ethnicity (Adamu, 2013). In contrast to Kate's choice to delegate her decision to society, most students were certain of their own choices and aligned with ethnic groups and consequently political parties which suited them. The apparent consequence of making their own choices was the strain in the relationship between these students and members ethnic groups that they did not choose. This may somewhat explain why Kate may have opted to have society decide her identity or ethnicity, so as to possibly avoid negative consequences.

In ethnic identity, individuals usually define themselves according to their ethnicity, culture and race (Villar, 2011), which are conflated in certain contexts (Adamu, 2013). In contrast to Kate, the two other participants in the study, Bella and Daniel, did not have identity confusion, as they had strong ethnic ties and displayed enthusiasm when talking about being members of their ethnic groups:

“Ok, uhm, it's who I am. I have been born into it. I feel proud about my ethnicity... But it's, ya I am very happy...”

“... Xhosa people are, oh mostly we love socializing with other ethnic groups compared to Zulus... and so, I like being Xhosa. I love everything about being Xhosa and yeah, even our language it's nice. True, it is the South African French.”

A study in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, found that individuals with strong ethnic ties to their own ethnic group easily identified with other ethnic groups (Harris & Findley, 2014) as evidenced Daniel's statement:

“Xhosa people are, oh mostly we love socializing with other ethnic groups...”

Although true that ethnic groups with strong ethnic ties may easily identify with other ethnic groups, findings in this study reveal that even individuals without strong ethnic ties such as the participant, Kate, who had uncertainties about her ethnic identity, are still able to easily form relationships with other ethnic groups as evidenced below:

“I met some lady and she said what language are you and I said I am Tswana right because I am from Pretoria, re bolela SePitori¹. And I am like I am Tswana. And she was like oh, ndingumXhosa². And I am like oh can you teach me. And she is like yes. So what we will do we will exchange contacts and I will teach you how to say hello, and uh then step by step.”

Therefore, the findings of this study show that with or without strong ethnic identity, individuals may still be able to form positive ethnic relations with members of other ethnic groups. The section below will present some of the positive and negative interactions which can make up these inter-ethnic relations in one.

4.3.2. PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS

4.3.2.1. NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

Inter-ethnic relations among members of different ethnic groups may lead to negative experiences. According to Thijs and Verkuyten (2014), ethnic diversity gives rise to negative experiences. This is supported by Vitoroulis, et al. (2016, p. 2) who stated that “ethnic diversity inevitably leads to frequent inter-ethnic contact, which may result in positive or negative

interactions between students.” However Moody (2001) and Vitoroulis et al. (2016) state diversity in an academic institution, however moderate, may propel negative interactions. The negative experiences may include discrimination, prejudice and stereotypes (Grossman & Liang, 2008; Liang, Grossman, & Deguchi, 2007; Qin et al., 2008).

As previously mentioned, ethnic discrimination refers to excluding an individual from activities and/or groups due to characteristics such as difference in language, physical appearance and person’s accent (Villar, 2011) cultural or ethnic backgrounds (Qin et al., 2008; Zeman & Bressan, 2006). Although ethnic discrimination may have been experienced by one of the participants in this study, it was not prevalent among the majority of the participants. However, stereotypes were prevalent among all the participants in the study and the findings on it presented below.

A. STEREOTYPES

As previously stated, stereotypes are basic depictions of thoughts, ideas and perceptions (Bauer & Gaskell, 2008) which may be partially true (Harris & Findley, 2014). Additionally, these stereotypes can be transferred to other parts of the victim’s social life (Thomas & Wagner, 2013), which may prove to be detrimental. According to Armenta (2010), when the stereotypes are against a member’s ethnic group, the member may distance themselves from the group (Armenta, 2010). This distancing from the group may lead to feelings of low self-esteem (Vessey et al., 2009). However, this seems inconsistent with the findings in this study, as one participant, Daniel, defended his ethnic group instead of distancing himself from it:

“... I am not like that, I don’t lie... but I don’t lie honestly.”

“... I am Xhosa; I am not that loud...”

“... I feel like we are mostly misunderstood because, especially in the political context... If you are Xhosa you are linked to ANC, you are linked to greediness, you are linked to lying.”

As stated in the previous section on ethnic identity, Daniel has a positive ethnic identity. Consequently, his reaction to the negative stereotypes held towards his ethnic group is consistent with Armenta and Hunt's (2009) argument that a high sense of ethnic identification has the ability to shield ethnic group members who have been stereotyped and disadvantaged, as a result of their ethnic group, from the negative effects of stereotyping (Armenta & Hunt, 2009; Li, 2009).

Although, Daniel could personally safeguard against the negative effects of stereotypes directed towards either him or his ethnic group, some of the participants in this study were aware that they too applied stereotypes. This is evidenced by what seemed to be a unanimous realization by participants that they could not generalize their negative experiences with one member of another ethnic group to the rest of that ethnic group as that would perpetuate the stereotypes. In contrast, Wong (2009) states that a bad experience with one member of a different ethnic group can cause an individual to associate other members of that group with that bad experience. Bella and Daniel respectively illustrated the realization mentioned above, as follows:

“Just because one person is like this does not necessarily mean that it can be generalized with everybody...” (Bella)

“For that individual – yes. Their group, nah, I am more open-minded. I feel like I can't ditch their whole group because of one person. But then again if the whole group...now

then one thing is, if you now see a lot of people from that group acting the same way, I am human, I am bound to actually put them in the same boat. But I avoid doing that, because I understand that as much as they can be Pedi, there are Pedis in Joburg, there are Pedis everywhere, there are Pedis who are more calm, there are Pedis who are. So, therefore, I can't brush them with the same brush and be like all of you are the same. But because of that one, that one yeah, but for the rest of the group, nah.” (Daniel)

Similar to the above excerpts Moore (2006) states his highly recommended solution for dealing with stereotypes, as reducing generalizations. In his study after the 9-11 attacks, he found that a lot of ethnic, racial and religious groups who were associated with the perpetrators now experienced a spate of generalizations and consequently victimization, which had dire consequences for the victims. This was due to the subsequent assumption that because the perpetrator looked a certain way, then everyone who looked like the perpetrator could also be accused. The participants in this study found that indeed after minimizing generalizations, this opened up a window for them to speak to each other about these stereotypes and thus build establish more positive inter-ethnic relations.

This is evidenced below as Kate and Bella, respectively, found that by discussing these stereotypes with a member of the stereotyped ethnic group, they were better able to understand each other:

“...we just talk about such things how, those stereotypes about it, that's how you get to know especially if you become friends, very close to the people, that's how you will learn other people's ethnic groups.” (Kate)

“I mean like, I know a friend of mine who is Tsonga does not like to be called umShangane, Shangaan, so, I know khuti [that] she is Tsonga and yeah yeah, even if I

forgot, you know the explanations of why she is saying she prefers to be called Tsonga compared to being a Shangaan.” (Bella)

Based on the quotations above, it is evident that creating a safe environment to speak has advantages. A study conducted among students at a public American research university found that creating awareness about the plight of the victimized served to eradicate some of the stereotypes (Museus, 2008). The author also argued that it was important to allow both students and educators to educate each other on the negative assumptions held. The university went to an extent of forming diversity cohesion programs which were aimed at forming better relationships among the different groups. Although the participants in the current study may have begun the journey of ethnic cohesion in small one-on-one encounters with stereotyped individuals, the outcome, namely, building understanding among ethnic groups, is similar to that cited in Museus’s (2008) study. A noteworthy encounter in one of the programs in the American university was one of the participants exclaiming to the stereotyped student, “Oh I never realized you guys thought that way or you guys were that way.” The implications for this study are that although stereotypes may lead to negative inter-ethnic relations as evidenced by the participants, once positive contact is initiated and stereotypes eradicated positive inter-ethnic relations are possible. These positive experiences among the ethnic groups will be discussed in the proceeding section.

4.3.2.2. POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

Inter-ethnic relations among individuals from different ethnic groups may also lead to positive experiences. These are presented in the two sub-themes below.

A. A CHANGE OR CONSISTENT OPINION ABOUT ANOTHER ETHNIC GROUP

More positive contact among different groups allows for prejudices held by members of these groups to be addressed (Tredoux & Finchilescu, 2010). This was evidenced in this sub-theme, in which all participants had an opportunity to have a change of opinion, while some participants maintained positive opinions that they held after interacting with members of other ethnic groups. This was evidenced when Bella and Daniel, respectively, had a change of opinion (from negative to positive) about other ethnic groups after interacting with them:

“Because I mean I would say part of me yes there are certain ones where you are like ‘no man I mean maybe these people (Zulu group) are not rude the way they have been explaining them’.” (Bella)

“But when it comes to Zulus, and then your Sothos even Tswanas, I have come to find that Tswanas are actually the most gentlest people there, calm ... So in that way it is much easier to interact with them. So has it enhanced how I see? Some yes, some positively and some negatively.” (Daniel)

The change of opinions about other ethnic groups is consistent with the findings and previous studies stated in the preceding section on stereotypes in which individuals took the opportunity to speak to each other and eradicate the generalizations. By so doing, they managed to cultivate positive interactions. This is consistent with Swart et al.’s (2010) argument that the more positive contact there is, the more empathy is developed. Some of the participants found that in continued interaction, they maintained the positive views or opinions they held about other ethnic groups. This is evidenced by Bella and Kate, respectively, in the quotations below:

“Let me go to uhm, can I go to the Tsongas because they are the ones that I am close to. This thing of maybe they are saying they are not beautiful whatever, I think they are very beautiful and uhm... and also uhm their attitude also is uhm... as much as they saying they are loud whatever, think they are very intelligent people, I have learnt that. Uhm but the loudness is still there, I always tell her that it’s still there, how we express ourselves. So uhm ya, I would just basically say that about them, they are intelligent, very good people. Uhm loudness in the sense that, because now I am close to them I can now understand, I am used to it now. It doesn’t bother me anymore whatsoever. But like yeah I’d say that, I’d say that I have learnt that they are very good and I am positive about them but yeah.” (Bella)

“Because usually we have misconceptions, uhm uhm you would say you know, because we class ourselves, we don’t really love other ethnic groups as South Africa; you will say Venda people are careless right. And uh, well, Tsonga people... well they are normally dark; so, we would say, people say well they don’t bath; which is not really true...” (Kate)

Thus by being open-minded and due to increased positive contact, the participants had positive experiences with members of other ethnic groups and therefore enjoyed positive inter-ethnic relations. The added advantage of these positive interactions was that participants were able to learn from the other ethnic groups they interacted with as evidenced in the proceeding section.

B. LEARNING FROM OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS

All three participants referenced the opportunities that interactions between members of different ethnic groups brought forth, such as learning about other cultures, learning new languages and teaching others one’s own language. The participants realized that remaining open-minded when meeting other ethnic groups would leave them with a mountain of new

knowledge Not only were the participants able to learn about other cultures, but one participant, Kate, realized that they actually had more in common with other ethnic groups than they did differences and that therefore, inter-ethnic friendships could be cultivated:

“Uh, but uh learning their cultures and how they view life, very different from me, uhm their expectations of one’s culture are very different, but we really do have similarities. But I think it’s about what is it that is different that I learn from them.”

Kate’s assertions are consistent with literature as more positive contact among different groups is expected to minimize prejudicial attitudes (Tredoux & Finchilescu, 2010). This is understandable as in interacting in a safe and open space, individuals are able to ask questions of clarity and therefore understand each other better. This is further supported in the study conducted at the University of the Free State, South Africa, where different ethnic and racial group students placed in the same residences were found to mostly get along after getting to know each other (University of the Free State, 2012). Furthermore, participants such as Kate and Bella found that they were able to learn the richness of each other’s languages:

“Mmh people attempting to teach me isiXhosa (laughs). And I am up for that yeah but it’s hard. I must tell you it’s hard... But I have been trying but it’s hard (laughs). But it has been the most positive thing. Because you know the... the opportunity to learn is what matters.” (Kate)

“Zulus, Xhosas uhm ya, I had encounters with them and that’s why I am even able to speak their language because you know when you hang around people of different ethnic groups for a while and become their friends you tend to learn their language uhm and it makes communication also easier and it breaks off that barrier that you have because if a person, an immediate person who can be able to explain to you what this means, how do you say, how do you greet, or you know, etc., and as time goes on you really learn the

language, so I would say learning their language and also how they do certain things it also helps you as a person to become very sensitive in terms of uhm dealing with sensitive issues uhm, etc., because you know how the Tsongas are like.” (Bella)

A study at the Ethiopian showed that students reacted negatively to being ethnically discriminated against as a result of their language (Adamu, 2013). Therefore, by learning each other’s languages, participants were better able to break barriers and build stronger ethnic relations.

4.3.3. MAJORITY AND MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS’ EXPERIENCES

According to Tolsma et al. (2013), some ethnic groups are expected to victimize other groups. In a study conducted in Norway, ethnic minorities were more likely to be victimized than ethnic majorities (Fandrem, Strohmeier, & Jonsdottir, 2012). A member from the majority ethnic group, Daniel, had feelings of superiority over other ethnic groups while Bella and Kate, members from minority ethnic groups, had differing feelings as reiterated in these quotations, firstly by Daniel:

“The Ngunis are better, Zulus and Xhosas, we are better.”

“So it’s that thing of ‘oh since you think you are Zulu or Xhosa and you are from Joburg now you think you are better than us because we are from Limpopo... what what’.”

Participants from minority ethnic groups expressed views to the contrary:

“...sometimes it’s that thing of you think you are better than everybody else and only to find out it’s not, really it’s not.” (Bella)

And then now I'm realizing that we are all humans white or black. We have feet, same legs, can speak, you know we are people. Though we don't have the same mannerisms, but we are people. (Kate)

The quotations above therefore reveal the sense of superiority that majority ethnic group members possess, while minority ethnic group members do not. Feelings of superiority among majority ethnic groups, as displayed by Daniel, are to be expected, but unfortunately prove detrimental to the cultivation of positive ethnic relations. This is evidenced in a study conducted by Cunniff and Mostert (2012) in which found that minority groups in South Africa have a higher probability of experiencing discrimination and victimization compared to majority groups. As Daniel had already claimed his superiority, he referred to behavior that evidenced victimization of a minority ethnic group through taunting their traditions,

"I am Xhosa, initiation, for me to consider you a man, for me to actually give you the manly respect you should go through initiation. But then with Pedi's they also go there, but for them it's not more of you are a man. In the Pedi way, you are a man but for me you are not. So the conflict now occurs because the Pedi's think that they are men and I think nah, you are not a man. So now therefore now the conflict starts there."

Daniel's behavior was consistent with findings that state that there is often a high likelihood that a minority ethnic group will experience victimization (Pryor & Fitzgerald, 2003; Vitoroulis & Schneider, 2009).

Contrasting studies have found that ethnic minority students were more likely to bully others (Carlyle & Steinman, 2007; Shapka & Law, 2013; Wang, Ianotti, & Nansel, 2009)

however there was insufficient literature to support this view as being the emerging norm in society. Findings from my study did not support this stance, with victimization typically perpetrated by members of majority ethnic groups.

4.4. CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the themes extracted after data analysis. Each theme was interpreted and discussed in relation to literature. In the following chapter, the discussion of the findings will be explored in more detail.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 focuses on discussing the findings presented in Chapter 4. Conclusions resulting from both the literature review and data analysis results have been discussed. Part of the discussion in this chapter focused on whether the results support or refute information, statements and arguments from literature. The researcher endeavored to answer the research question, aim and objectives, through the themes extracted from the data. Finally, recommendations and limitations of the study were included.

A. Research Question: What are black students' experiences of inter-ethnic relations at a higher education institution?

The study found that the students' experiences of inter-ethnic relations are varied. Each one of the participants, even those with an ostensibly weak ethnic identity, was able and wanted to engage in positive inter-ethnic relations. Secondly, although the participants may have experienced negative ethnic interactions in the form of stereotypes, each of them chose to counter the negativity by either steering away from generalizations of negative experiences to the rest of that ethnic group or by having open conversations about these stereotypes. This counter-action cultivated positive inter-ethnic relations. Some of these positive interactions included learning from each other and getting an opportunity to cultivate new or consistent opinions about another ethnic group. Finally, participants from majority and minority ethnic groups had varying experiences. Daniel, a majority ethnic group member, did not readily interact with minority

ethnic groups; also considering his group to be superior, he was not able to easily form positive inter-ethnic relations, especially with members of minority ethnic groups. However, participants from minority ethnic groups easily engaged with other ethnic groups and therefore were better able to form positive inter-ethnic relations.

B. Research Aim: To explore inter-ethnic relations and experiences among students at a higher education institution. The aim was addressed through achieving the objectives listed below.

C. Objectives:

1. To explore ethnic identity among members of black ethnic groups;
2. To explore individuals' positive and negative personal experiences of inter-ethnic relations;
3. To explore experiences of the majority and minority inter-ethnic groups

5.2. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: OBJECTIVES

The discussion of the findings will be presented in relation to the abovementioned objectives. This study resulted in three main themes, which have been expounded further in this chapter. These include identity: identity confusion vs. certainty, personal experiences of inter-ethnic relations, and majority and minority ethnic groups' experiences. One of these main themes had sub-themes, which aided in addressing the research question and achieving the objectives.

OBJECTIVE 1: To explore ethnic identity among members of black ethnic groups

5.2.1. ETHNIC IDENTITY: IDENTITY CONFUSION VS. CERTAINTY

The first extracted theme is ethnic identity: identity confusion vs. certainty. As previously stated in the literature review chapter, “Identity includes belonging to a group, which provides people with a framework with which to articulate who they are” (Goldschmidt, 2003, p. 206). With a strong identity, most people are able to form proper relations with others (Harris & Findley, 2014). However, the findings of this study refuted this literature as it was not just the two participant students, in the study, with strong ethnic identity who could form positive ethnic relations, but the one participant with poor ethnic identity was also able to form positive ethnic interactions.

. The one participant, Kate, who had a weak ethnic identity, was from an ethnically mixed background. She did not believe she qualified to be regarded as Swati (her father’s ethnic group), as she did not speak his language. This was a logical conclusion according to Goldschmidt (2003), as South Africans place high regard on their languages. For Kate this further proved troublesome in social settings especially when she interacted with her father’s side of the family and Swati class-mates. As Gonzalez (2009) previously mentioned, ethnic identity is dependent on perceptions about the individual’s ethnic group of origin. The low ethnic identity experienced by Kate threatened relationships with her extended family members. Although the study in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, showed that individuals who had strong ethnic ties to their own ethnic group found it easier to identify with other ethnic groups (Harris & Findley, 2014), the current showed that even the participant without strong ethnic ties could easily identify with other groups. Therefore, in exploring ethnic identity among black

ethnic groups, the current study concluded that a low ethnic identity does not automatically mean that an individual will have negative inter-ethnic relations.

5.2.2. PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS

OBJECTIVE 2: To explore individuals' positive and negative personal experiences of inter-ethnic relations:

5.2.2.1. NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

Under the sub-theme on negative experiences, stereotypes were explored to address the second objective. Stereotypes associated with some participants' ethnic groups cause them to distance themselves from their group (Armenta, 2010). This reaction was consistent with the findings in this study, as the affected participants responded by distancing themselves from their ethnic groups. According to Li (2009), those who choose to drift towards their own ethnic groups experience a decline in negative ethnic encounters, such as low self-esteem and low academic performance (Li, 2009).

Each one of the participants in the study held certain stereotypes about other ethnic groups. The participants believed these stereotypes had a negative impact on their ethnic relations, as they limited them from engaging with each other and therefore limited the cultivation of positive inter-ethnic relations. However, through reducing stereotypical generalizations and having more open conversations across ethnic groups, participants were able to make room for positive inter-ethnic relations.

5.2.2.2. POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

The sub-theme on positive experiences was expounded and classified into two sub-themes which assisted in exploring part of the second objective. These are a change or consistent opinion about another ethnic group and learning from other ethnic groups. In depicting this sub-theme, it was clear that despite the negative interactions already outlined, there were also positive inter-ethnic relations.

When there are different social groups in a given setting, members of a group (the in-group) assign negative attributes to members of other groups (the out-groups) (Vitoroulis & Schneider, 2009). This explains why most participants had negative views of other ethnic groups. However, after interacting with those ethnic groups, participants found that they were able to change negative opinions, while others maintained the positive opinions. Additionally, participants also got the opportunity to learn new languages and cultures from other ethnic groups. By learning each other's languages and cultures, they were able to form inter-ethnic relationships. This is supported by Suransky and van der Merwe (2014) and Swart et al. (2010), who state that the more contact there is among inter-group members, the more prejudice is reduced and empathy increased.

The participants in this study found that by interacting with other ethnic groups, they were able to eradicate the negative influences they were socialized into by their environment and therefore cultivate new ethnic relations within the academic environment.

OBJECTIVE 3: To explore experiences of the majority and minority inter-ethnic groups:

5.2.3. MAJORITY AND MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS' EXPERIENCES

Daniel, who is from a majority ethnic group, believed that some ethnic groups, such as the Nguni ethnic cluster, were better than other ethnic groups, which translated to him negatively judging and taunting other ethnic groups that he believed to be inferior to his. By victimizing members of ethnic groups that he considered inferior, he robbed himself of the opportunity to form positive inter-ethnic relations. This is consistent with Fandrem, Strohmeier and Jonsdottir's (2012) study conducted in Norway, whose findings state that ethnic minorities are more likely to be victimized than are ethnic majorities. This view was however not held by Bella, who is from a minority ethnic group, as she felt that everyone was equally human. Bella's view is consistent with the view that minority groups do not mostly consider themselves superior to other ethnicities (Griffiths & Nesdale, 2006). Bella displayed her belief by switching languages whenever she could so as to accommodate other ethnic groups. In doing so, Bella was better able to cultivate positive inter-ethnic relationships. Therefore, in addressing the research question of this study, minority and majority ethnic groups in this study encountered inter-ethnic relations differently. While the one participant from the ethnic majority ethnic group did not easily cultivate positive ethnic relations, participants from minority ethnic groups could easily do so.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

5.3.1. ETHNIC BULLYING

Cunniff and Mostert (2012) reported that bullying is prevalent as it affects a growing number of people. Bullying is described as the repeated negative behavior by an individual/group towards another (Vervoort, Scholte, & Overbeek, 2010). It is important to differentiate between ethnic and racial bullying. Racial bullying is the negative interactions between different races,

such as black and white racial groups while ethnic bullying is behavior that is directed to an individual's ethnic background or cultural identity (Scherr & Larson, 2009).

According to McKenney et al. (2006), ethnic bullying involves direct forms of victimization, such as taunts and slurs, derogatory references to culturally-specific customs, foods, and costumes, as well as indirect forms of aggression, such as exclusion from a mainstream group of peers because of ethnic differences. Research has shown such bullying may result in many consequences, which include low self-esteem and severe stress levels (Coffin, Larson, & Cross, 2010; Hinduja & Patchin, 2010). Konishi et al. (2010) reported from their study that bullying affects students' academic performance and general well-being. They argued that a healthier academic setting is needed to allow growth in diversity (Konishi et al., 2010). As ethnic bullying is prevalent and affects an increasing number of individuals, it may therefore prove beneficial to future researchers to explore the topic of ethnic bullying and further explore its impact on students.

5.4. LIMITATIONS

As this is a qualitative study, the results cannot be generalized and transferred to other contexts however, had this study been a quantitative study, it might have benefitted from such transferability. Transferability is the ability of the findings in the study to be generalized and be repeatable in other contexts and situations (Law, 2011). Additionally, it is impossible to completely eliminate researcher bias in a phenomenological study (Creswell, 2014; Janesick, 2011). Although the researcher remained neutral and separated preconceived ideas from those presented by participants, bias cannot be completely ruled out from this study. Therefore, the

researcher believes that future studies may benefit from reducing these limitations by applying quantitative research as it increases transferability and limits bias.

The current study included a bi-ethnic participant who identified as both Tswana and Swati as she had parents from different ethnicities. The researcher found this to be a limitation as the participant appeared to have more conflict with her paternal ethnic group than she did with other ethnicities. She had negative experiences with students from some ethnic groups not necessarily because of any negative behavior on their part, but solely due to their ethnicity. It may therefore be beneficial to only include participants from one ethnic group with common parental ethnicity for richer data collection on this topic.

Moreover, this study made use of a heterogeneous group instead of a homogeneous one. As a heterogeneous group constitutes a diverse sample of participants, a homogeneous sample which includes participants with similar characteristics (e.g. the same ethnicity or mono-ethnic participants) might have yielded different results. The use of participants with different ethnicities in this study, including a bi-ethnic participant, presented difficulty in determining whether the patterns and contradictions extracted in the themes were as a result of coincidental or ethnic similarities or differences between the participants.

Finally, the current study made use of three participants. The researcher finds this to be a limitation and believes that using more participants could have enriched the data. With more participants, the researcher could have also reached saturation, which would have strengthened the findings.

5.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the discussion of the findings by exploring the themes extracted and their implications for the study. The study aimed to expound experiences of inter-ethnic relations between members of different black ethnic groups in South Africa. The main question that the researcher aimed to answer in the study was “What are black students’ experiences of inter-ethnic relations at a higher education institution?” The findings portrayed that participants had experienced both negative and positive experiences. The research was necessary as South Africa has nine official languages spoken by black people and the researcher assumed that such differences might create noteworthy and unique interactions between the different ethnic groups. Although not all ethnic groups were included in the study, the few that participated provided rich information.

The limitations of the study were also noted, which if mediated, possibly could have yielded different results. Recommendations for future research were stated, which may allow other researchers the opportunity to duplicate this study, or further explore specific matters that became apparent during this research.

This study was important to conduct as it allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of students’ experiences of inter-ethnic relations. The findings may help university management structures to address the issue with a view to enhance students’ experiences on campus.

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APPENDIX A: RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Guide

1. What ethnic group do you belong to?
2. How do you feel about being a member of your ethnic group?
3. Have you had any positive personal experiences with a member of another black South African ethnic group?
4. If yes, please elaborate on the experience and the person's ethnic group.
5. Would you say that this positive encounter enhanced or changed your perspective of that person's ethnic group?
6. Please elaborate on your above response.
7. Have you had any negative personal experiences with a member of another black South African ethnic group?
8. If yes, please elaborate on the experience and the person's ethnic group.
9. Would you say that this negative encounter enhanced or changed your perspective of that person's ethnic group?
10. Please elaborate on your above response.

APPENDIX B: LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

LETTER OF INFORMATION & CONSENT

Dear Prospective Research Participant:

Please read this letter of consent completely before we can proceed with the research study.

Purpose of Study

This research is interested in exploring inter-ethnic relations among different black ethnic groups within a higher education institution in South Africa. As a student at [University A], you are invited to participate in this research study. Please note that this research study has been ethically approved by the Faculty Ethics Committee.

Your role in the Study

The research will require 30-60 minutes of your time to be part of an interview where you will be expected to share your views and experiences on the relationships between members of different ethnic groups on the university campus.

Your confidentiality, Privacy and Anonymity

The interview will be conducted in an environment that allows for privacy. Please note that the interview will be recorded using an audio-recorder, and notes will be taken. The audio-recorder will only be accessed by the researcher. Several steps will be taken to protect you, such as not revealing your name in the findings and using pseudo names. Once the research is completed, all collected data will be kept in a secure location in the Department of Psychology, Room 11:24, which will be destroyed after 15 years. The research data will be stored for archiving and for further research by other researchers.

Potential risks of participation

Participation in the study does not pose any foreseeable risks to participants, however if you experience any distress or discomfort during or after the interview, the researcher will refer you to University [A]'s Student Support Services, so you can receive psychological counseling. The Student Support Services is open weekly from 07h30-15h30, and can be reached on 012 420 2333. In addition, if you feel uncomfortable with any question during the interview, you have the right not to answer. You can also terminate your participation at any time without any negative consequence to yourself. You will be welcome to ask any questions for clarity during the interview.

Dissemination of study results

Once the research is complete, the results from this study will be reported in seminars/ conference presentations, academic journals and in the form of a dissertation. The dissertation will also be made publically accessible.

Contact details

If you require any information about this study, you are welcome to contact the **researcher**, Abigail Mulondo at 084 866 2553, email address: tshidzi.gail@gmail.com furthermore, my **supervisor**, Ms Angela Thomas, can also be contacted at angela.thomas@up.ac.za

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this study.

Kind regards,

Abigail Mulondo

Consent:

I have read the above information regarding this research study. Furthermore, the researcher has explained what the research entails, its nature, benefits and risks. In light of that, I voluntarily give consent to participate in this study.

_____ (Participant's Name)

_____ (Participant's Signature)

_____ (Date)

_____ (Supervisor's Signature)

_____ (Date)

APPENDIX C: ADVERT

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

RESEARCH STUDY

Title: An exploration of inter-ethnic relations among students at a South African higher education institution

This study aims to understand students' experiences of ethnic relations at university.

WHO CAN TAKE PART?

1. Students from any department within the Humanities Faculty, University [A].
2. Identifying as a member of any Black South African ethnic group

WHAT WILL BE EXPECTED OF YOU?

You will be asked to participate in a 30-60 minute interview about your experiences of inter-ethnic relations, at University [A].

CONTACT:

If you are interested in participating, please contact the researcher, Abigail Mulondo (Call, whatsapp or sms):

Cell phone: 084 866 2553

Email: tshidzi.gail@gmail.com

CLOSING DATE: 30 JANUARY!!

APPENDIX D: TRANSCRIPTIONS

Bella Transcription: Interview

M- What ethnic group do you belong to?

B- Well, I'd say uhm, Black, uh, anything else?

M- Language, basically your culture (laughs)?

B- uhm, I'm Sepedi speaking

M- And how do you feel about being a member of the Sepedi group?

B- ok, uhm, it's who I am (laughs). I have been born into it. I feel proud about my ethnicity uhm, my culture, or be it whatever yes uhm, I don't have any other things to say. But its, ya I am very happy and that I know where I come from and that in ya varsity uhm , my uhm the language ya SePedi is also integrated also as well forming part of I think, is it third language or something? But it is there also as well.

M- Oh ok, so just now we are going to dive straight into the interviews. What positive personal experiences have you had with members of other black South African ethnic groups within the campus?

B- Ok, other ethnicities except those of my own? (M- Yes) I think I, I have a good experience with them. I mean I get to learn uhm the things that are different from each other or those which are similar amongst each other. Might call it by a different name or whatever. Uh, but uh learning their cultures and how they view life, very different from me, uhm their expectations of one's culture are very different, but we really do have similarities. But I think it's about what is it that is different that I learn from them.

M's probe- Is there a particular uhm ethnic group, a black ethnic group that you have uhm basically encountered that you have had these experiences, which you have been explaining right now?

B- Yes, yes, friends that I have had. I have uhm Tsonga-speaking friend, uhm ok another SePedi who are living in res. Zulu's, Xhosa's uhm ya, I had encounters with them and that's why I am even able to speak their language because you know when you hang around people of different ethnic groups for a while and become their friends you tend to learn their language uhm and it makes communication also easier and it breaks off that barrier that you have because if a person, an immediate person who can be able to explain to you what this means, how do you say, how do you greet, or you know etc., and as time goes on you really learn the language, so I would say learning their language and also how they do certain things it also helps you as a person to become very sensitive in terms of uhm dealing with sensitive issues uhm etc., because you know how the Tsonga's are like. I mean like, I know a friend of mine who is Tsonga does not like to be called umShangane, Shangaan so I know khuti she is Tsonga and yeah yeah, even if I forgot you know the explanations of why she is saying she prefers to be called Tsonga compared to being a Shangaan. Uhm and also the stereotypes that are being talked about with different cultures Zulu's being stubborn, us (Pedi's) being just laid back and with them Tsonga's being loud, so it's just, ya ya ya we just talk about such things how, those stereotypes about it, that's how you get to know especially if you become friends, very close to the people, that's how you will learn other people's ethnic groups.

M- Ok so now you are saying since you have become their friends, the stereotypes that you used to have about them has that changed or has it in some way now been established, or say now that you have become friends with that person you still like that about them or now that you are friends with them the stereotype has been demolished?

B- (laughs) I wish it was demolished. Because I mean I would say part of me yes there are certain ones where you are like no man I mean maybe these people are not rude the way they have been explaining them. But that loudness is still there, with the Tsonga's for an example. Their loudness would be there not necessarily with your friends but you would see it be it in the taxi being loud, so it's not easy to just get to that point where-by you are like we are done now. Just because one person is like this does not necessarily mean that it can be generalized with everybody but uhm, from personal experience it's 50/50. Certain ones yes you know, but others I

think they still continue maybe because we grew up knowing that I see it so maybe its self-fulfilling prophecy I don't know. But uhm, certain ones I think they are just wrong, but uhm...

M's probe- Can you name these certain ones, which culture you are referring to.

B- Let me go to uhm, can I go to the Tsonga's because they are the ones that I am close to. This thing of maybe they are saying they are not beautiful whatever, I think they are very beautiful and uhm and also uhm their attitude also is uhm, as much as they saying they are loud whatever, think they are very intelligent people I have learnt that. Uhm but the loudness is still there, I always tell her that it's still there, how we express ourselves. So uhm ya, I would just basically say that about them, they are intelligent, very good people. Uhm loudness in the sense that, because now I am close to them I can now understand, I am used to it now. It doesn't bother me anymore whatsoever. But like yeah I'd say that, I'd say that I have learnt that they are very good and positive about them but yeah.

M- And now to go to the other side, what negative personal experiences have you had with members of other black South African ethnic groups on campus?

B- I think, I am not gonna say a specific ethnic group but uhm black people, you know when you uhm speaking English maybe let me just say on campus, because you get used to it, it's like your tongue you just really even when you communicate with them or is it because it is an academic institution and uhm you just speak English and when you are really communicating with others in that language already you know you are like what you are a coconut, you are well-learned and can't even speak your own language but uhm it's really not about that, I am very fluent and it's just that it depends also with the group of people that we are involved in, I mean we cannot generalize and say because we have got uhm other Black Africans as well, your Zimbabweans, we have got uhm, because I had one Zimbabwean friend also as well in my circle of friendships, so that's why it was easy for us to just speak in English, you would ask yourself but these girls uhm all of you you are black and you can see you know but I guess it's that thing of don't judge a book by its cover. When you are looking at me I might really not be a South African, black, typical ethnic group that you would place under, but speaking English for me it was just uhm like I don't anymore try to assume that really one is uhm, but I am just saying for me with me other

ethnic groups they took it as if like you are really a coconut, it's like you are not proud of who you are etc etc., but it has really got nothing to do with that. You look at context and uhm the people that I am with it's a way of communication and to include everybody else in the conversation unless if someone wants to learn something about the way we talk ethnic-wise, like SePedi, they will ask, we do have that, but it's just that if we have an external member in order to involve them in the communication you just have to speak English. So others take it in a very wrong way on the outside because they don't see what is really going on on the inside.

M- Would you then say is it because now you couldn't really specify which ethnic group, is it uhm, all black people that do that to you when you speak in English with another black person, is it all the black people?

B- Yo, I wouldn't really generalize. I wouldn't know because uhm you know typical guys will be like uh lenna you know you like whatever (M- can you really just give me an ethnic group, I am really interested in knowing which ethnic group...) ok, I have come across, that's why I am speaking about this particular experience, I don't know but those guys I think they are from Joburg or something. I think ke MaSotho, Kasi township guys would typically be the ones who would be like why are you now speaking in English and whatsoever. And sometimes it gets uncomfortable because you tend now to also be conscious of that and whenever you are within certain type of context you try to hold that back and just try to communicate in the language that is mostly used and understood. So how I know is by listening to how they speak then I know then I can actually switch and speak something that they can understand.

M's probe- So you are saying that you guess that it was Sotho's. So you are saying that Sotho's are very proud of their language and they prefer you speaking to them in their language more than other cultures?

B- No, no, no, not more than, I don't know about other cultures, but I think it was mostly the Sotho's that I came across who were like that specific experience, I was talking about that, so it was uhm the Sotho's, others uhm no, I was just not conscious about that like that's why I am like, I am thinking about it right now and no I don't remember anything else if I am being honest beyond what I have just mentioned yeah.

M- Ok uhm, just to find out, would you say that this negative encounters from the Sotho's that you are guessing did it enhance or change your perspective of that person's ethnic group?

B- uh well, not really. I think if it's that thing of if you don't know, uh, how can I put this? Uh, you do better when you know better. So it's that thing of had them maybe knew that we are trying to accommodate someone else you wouldn't just budge in and say khuti uh guys Sekoa you know, why can't you. But yeah for me it's that thing, what do you call this thing uhm I'd say that they like making assumptions of things that maybe they don't know prior or maybe it's a guys' thing, cause you know guys vhana u phapha. Yeah yeah, I wouldn't know but I would say uh, it doesn't change the way I know the Sotho's because sometimes it's about where you grew up, I mean if you are comparing a Sotho person who are from the villages to those ones vha tswang ko Kasi, its two different people. Its two different ones, so those ones that I had encountered with where the ones who were Tjatjarag ones who are from the township thinking that we are more like you know we got, we are up there now we think we are white and all that. Uhm so I think it's that thing of not knowing better sometimes it's a problem. Assuming and not even knowing. Because already they assume that just because all of us we are black in skin color, it simply means that we are of one ethnic group, but we are not. We had a Zimbabwean there but they missed that but it happens. It really happens. It happens to me sometimes when you greet a person you are like dumelang, he is like hi, then that's when you pick up quickly, that no no no, this is something that's just gonna go away. So for me it's easier because when you are greeting someone in English you are less likely to actually embarrass yourself maybe let me say and assuming that someone is this ethnic group and they are not so. So yeah it's just, no you are just assuming, but it is understandable they did not know, so it makes sense. If I was them probably I would also think the same, but it's also about where you are also in your life because people like projecting certain things about them to other people, uhm or or things that maybe they might think they can't do but when someone else is doing it and someone of your own kind doing this kind of thing, sometimes it's that thing of you think you are better than everybody else and only to find out it's not, really it's not. Really because I didn't find anything wrong with speaking English with my fellow colleagues, I mean it is an academic language that we are using. It is something that I need to get accustomed to, I mean we are using it in writing in whatever so in the context it is fitting I mean within the academic institution it's not like we were elsewhere.

Even if we were elsewhere still maan, why should you dictate how I should be speaking certain things to some. Uhm it was only just an encounter with the Sotho's, that particular township, Sotho guys. I can't remember anything else or I would be lying.

M- Alright, oh thank you so very much for an enriching interview and thank you for opening up. Thank you

Daniel Transcription: Interview

M- So we are gonna get straight into our interview, now we are ready. So what ethnic group do you belong to?

D- Black, Xhosa

M- Xhosa ok; and how do you feel about being a member of the Xhosa," I can't say the Xhosa click, I can't say it."

D- Its ok. So how do I feel about it? I feel like we are mostly misunderstood because, especially in the political context. It's one of those things, if you are Xhosa you are linked to the ANC, you are linked to greediness, you are linked to lying, you are linked to this... So now most people find out that you are Xhosa, its one of those things, oh he lies, oh he is that. So at some point it's a stereotype obviously. I am not like that, I don't lie, I don't do.. I lie (laughs) but I don't lie honestly. But its and also I feel like we, Xhosa people are, oh mostly we love socializing with other ethnic groups compared to Zulu's. (M's probe= Really?) Come on, we like, yeah and so I like being Xhosa. I love everything about being Xhosa and yeah, even our language it's nice. (M- it is a special language, we can't even say the clicks) True, it is the South African French. (Laughs)

M- Oh very cool. And then uhm what positive personal experiences have you had with members of other Black South African Ethnic groups while on campus?

D- Positive? (M- just positive). Mmh, with regards to me being Xhosa? (M- Yes, yes while you relate to other ethnic groups, South African ethnic groups that is) Positive, do you mind explaining more? Cause I feel like its (M- Yes like its actually quite broad. So when you interact with other ethnic groups within South Africa, how do you relate with them? Do you feel it's

more in the positive? Especially the positive relations, basically do you feel they treat you well? How have you related?) Oh how? Within the South African context, if I can bring it back with my Zulu friends, we are more likely to vibe, even in our conversations because it's part of the Nguni language. So in that way we can have conversations without even getting confused with what I am saying since I am Xhosa, because most Xhosa's are speaking Zulu. So in that way, it is easy for us to converse, and we are actually able to understand each other and we boost each other even though at times it gets a bit shaky. But we, we try and make it work. Then when it comes to the Sotho's, your Sotho's, Tswana's, Pedi's, that's where now the problem or the conflict begins. Cause now (M- Oh, what conflict?) Well no, it's still the positive, let me leave that part. So with them I feel like when we interact we learn a lot from each other because I feel like there is a lot of stigma especially attached to them since they are from the upper part of South Africa, since now even now I get to learn about their culture, how they do things, their values, why they do some of the things they do. So in that way I am able to interact with them, in a less offensive way because I uhm we are different, I wouldn't lie to you, we different. But with the differences I feel that with my friends we get to use those differences to interact in a more positive light.

M's probe- I want to ask you about what you just said. You said the Sotho's, the Tswana's and the Pedi's are more upper, in the upper part. What did you mean?

D- Geographically so.

M's probe- Oh ok, I thought maybe you meant when it came to money etc., and wealth.

D- I wouldn't say in terms of money they are upper because looking at their provinces where they are actually located within the country even the service, the public service everything that's bad and what not. So in those parts I feel like if you don't have the right connections or if you are from an affluent family therefore there is things that you are going to lack, i.e. your education, i.e. your upbringing, people to actually push you in life. But I feel like it is the same thing also with people from the lower parts if, the coastal, KZN, Eastern Cape even the Western Cape, but at least there I feel like people try to make it compared to, I don't know, I just, maybe it is a stereotype.

M's probe- So you think you guys are a lot more, uhm wealthier and richer compared to the Sotho's and the Tswana's and the Pedi's? Is that what, what would you guess?

D- Not really, cause, not really I think we are equal. No we are not equal that's one thing

M's probe= So who is better? (laughs)

D- The Nguni's are better, Zulu's and Xhosa's we are better.

M's probe= How did you come to that conclusion?

D- With interactions from here because uhm my first year I stayed in res, ya, so they, you understand now that we different. Obviously sometimes when we get here first year, sometimes your, the way you speak tells much of where you come from. So sometimes even the way you do things, the way you handle yourself. Cause you find like me, I am Xhosa, I am not that loud or what not but with them being loud it is ok. And for me being loud I can associate it with certain. Because I feel like no need for noise. (laughs) No this is what I got to see in res, because especially with my Pedi counterparts, we would argue, always want to argue with you, and you are seating there like, but this, we are not arguing here, but then now it would get to the black privilege thingy, because you think, because I am not from Eastern Cape, my parents are from Eastern Cape, I am from Joburg. So it's that thing of oh since you think you are Zulu or Xhosa and you are from Joburg now you think you are better than us because we are from Limpopo what what. Of which it is not like that. So in that way, that's when I got to, I honestly associated them with noise and chaos and... no offense. (M's probe- are this the Pedi's?) Yes the Pedi's especially (laughs)

M's probe- And you mentioned black privilege? I didn't know we had black privilege, I thought it was only White privilege? What is black privilege?

D- Black privilege is one of those things, which you have the white privileges but you are Black. (M- How do you have black privilege, explain that to me). The way I see it is, black privilege is when uhm ok, in terms of Education. The Education that we have especially in Joburg, even the public schools, even maybe the former white schools and what not, the type of Education that they give, so even the thinking capacity differs compared to the

M's probe- oh so you were comparing the rural areas with the more affluent Gauteng areas?

D- Yes

M- Ok, and then, would you say that this positive encounters that you have had with the Zulu's and the Sotho's etc, have they enhanced or changed your perspective of those individuals, groups, ethnic groups?

D- Have they enhanced? (M- or changed it? Did you use to think differently of the Zulu's and now you think of them in a more positive way or negative way, also with the Sotho's etc...) I wouldn't say, especially with the Pedi's I feel they have confirmed what I have always thought of them uri they are loud, and they are more out there, but when it comes to Zulu's, and then your Sotho's even Tswana's, I have come to find that Tswana's are actually the most gentlest people there, calm they are what not. So in that way it is much easier to interact with them. So has it enhanced how I see? Some yes, Some in a positive, some in negative.

M's probe- So with the Pedi's it more confirmed it what you already knew?

D- Let me be honest especially with Julius Malema. He confirms it. And even most of the Pedi people that are EFF, they like him. So maybe I am wrong.

M- uhm, and then ok, now we spoke about the positive, so what negative personal experiences have you had with members of other Black South African Ethnic groups on this campus? So now it is more of the negative side.

D- Misunderstanding each other most times because, sometimes it might not be because of what's said, but because of what's done. (M's probe= What do you mean?) What's done for an example uhm, I am Xhosa, initiation, for me to consider you a man, for me to actually give you the manly respect you should go through initiation. But then with Pedi's they also go there, but for them it's not more of you are a man. In the Pedi way, you are a man but for me you are not. So the conflict now occurs because the Pedi's think that they are men and I think nah, you are not a man. So now therefore now the conflict starts there. I have had a lot of those encounters before especially as guys maybe we will be chilling there and talking and then they would be like no I went to the initiation school blah blah blah, in my mind I am like ok, ok fine, then again, the

other thing is that they go when they are still young into their initiation school. So for me it's like how do you consider yourself a man at the age of nine-ten, let's be honest. And then here I am Xhosa, I went when I was 18, therefore I could reason more and I feel like in that sense they actually taught me how to become a man. So the conflict starts there, brews from there.

M's probe= So do you literally ask a person, is this like your ice-breaker question? Do you ask if you have been to an initiation? Is that what you do?

D- No, it happens, it's one of those things people would actually ask you oh you are Xhosa, so have you? Especially if it's a guy. Sharp ya I have went bra, so it would basically lead there at some point. So negative I would feel like even our different cultures they are actually the ones that cause the conflict.

M's probe- But mostly in initiation?

D- Yes, in that context. And even in some of their practices I would find myself asking, especially the, for Pedi's it is ok for them to marry within their family, especially your cousin and what not, so I have seen family friends with that. So I will be like ok, it doesn't make sense, you are family and what not. So now when you start questioning such things. now therefore now conflict, it's like now you are looking down at them. Sometimes it's not because, it needs to be a negative thing. You are just asking out of curiosity. And you are trying to understand and therefore now it becomes, the whole conversation becomes negative.

M- Very interesting hey, wow, I never even knew about that. (D- laughs, you are lying to me) Honestly, I never even knew there were conflicts about initiation and about marriage etc...

D- Ok uhm, I don't know. A good example now. Especially I don't know if you have heard of Tuks confessions? Early January it was closed down because now they were bashing Xhosa's, the Xhosa initiation. And a lot of remarks were made there. So supposedly they were made by Pedi people, and a Xhosa guy actually posted it and he was like he is going to report the page. And within the following day, the page was closed. Another page was opened, and that page was dedicated to Xhosa bashing and the initiation school. That is a typical example. You see now, something that shouldn't give us conflict, but it does.

M- Ok uhm, and then would you say that this negative encounters, these ones that you have had with Pedi's, have they enhanced or changed your perspective of that person? I think you answered it but can you, with the negative encounters especially, have they changed or enhanced?

D- For that individual- Yes. Their group nah, I am more open-minded. I feel like I can't ditch their whole group because of one person. But then again if the whole group, now then one thing is if you now see a lot of people from that group acting the same way, I am human, I am bound to actually put them in the same boat. But I avoid doing that, because I understand that as much as they can be Pedi, there are Pedi's in Joburg, there are Pedi's everywhere, there are Pedi's who are more calm, there are Pedi's who are. So therefore I can't brush them with the same brush and be like all of you are the same. But because of that one, that one yeah, but for the rest of the group nah.

M's probe= so you are still open to the rest of the Pedi's having different views than the person that you spoke to?

D- Ya

M- so more open-minded? Very interesting. Ok, thank you so much. This is actually the end of the interview. (Laughs) Because I just wanted to learn more about the interactions between the Black ethnic groups. So I just wanted to hear your view on that. (D- oh, so is it for a paper?) Yes

Kate Transcription: Interview

M- Ok, thank you so much. Ok, now we are just going to dive straight into the interviews ok. So, what ethnic group do you belong to?

K- uhm, this is gonna be very funny: I am not sure. Why I'm saying I am not sure is my mother is Tswana, right? I know I can't be Tswana. But my father is Swati, but he doesn't speak Swati now. He speaks Zulu. But I also can't speak Zulu properly I studied Tswana. So it's a bit, I can't speak, I can hear it properly, but I can't speak it clearly cause I did SeTswana in High school and in primary school, so yeah.

M's probe= oh ok. So you are more Tswana than you are Swati or Zulu?

K- Ya but originally I can say I am Zulu because my dad is (M= Is Zulu?). Yeah ok

M's probe= Do you believe we take the mother tongue language, they do say mother tongue and some say we take the father's?

K- They say you take the father's. The problem with that is that I don't know half of that (M= mmh, alright interesting)

M= And then how do you feel about being a member of your ethnic group "basically how do you feel about being a member of the Tswana or the Swati group"?

K- I feel like we are running away from that. That is like my prime interest. We are running away from being our own selves. We are running away from being Tswana. You know it is so funny when you see two black girls on campus speaking English fluently like the white people and when you turn they are black (laughs). And you are like, oh my God, why can't you establish what language you speak? Because I, my room-mate is Zulu uhm I stay on res and my room-mate is Zulu and I am Tswana. But we try to establish that base, it can't be English all the time. Like meaning I don't want to let go of what I was taught, especially uhm I would say greeting elder people that is like the prime thing I was taught. And you know when you greet the cleaners, the gardeners they normally ask in color and you will go like dumelang, le kae you know. You can't pass there and say hello. So for me being who I am is is grounding in the sense that it breeds a lot of respect. So that's why I feel that I should stick to this uhm Tswana or

Zulu path because it it it grounds me. Whereas English is more modernized and it's a quick-quick-quick world, it's a, an education world, it's a class world where they class you mmh not really literate you know. So you get respected based on what you do and who you are. Whereas in our culture you get respected for who you as a person are, you being black and you being an elder person.

M's probe= So you feel you are very proud of being a Tswana person?

K- Because it grounds me, yeah

M- wow, ok, and uhm what positive personal experiences have you had with members of other black South African ethnic groups on this campus?

K- On this campus. Uhm (M- positive experiences) oh positive? (M-yes, yes). Mmh people attempting to teach me isiXhosa (laughs). And I am up for that yeah but it's hard. I must tell you it's hard. I met some lady and and she said what language are you and I said I am Tswana right because I am from Pretoria, re bulela SePitori. And I am like I am Tswana. And she was like oh, ngi mu-Xhosa. And I am like oh can you teach me. And she is like yes. So what we will do we will exchange contacts and I will teach you how to say hello, and uh then step by step. But I have been trying but it's hard. (laughs) But it has been the most positive thing. Because you know the the opportunity to learn is what matters.

M's probe= So you feel the person was willing to share their language with you. And also equally willing to learn your language.

K- Yes that was positive

M's probe- That is actually quite beautiful hey. Ok and uhm, what was that person's ethnic group? The person that was willing to teach you was it a Xhosa person? (K- Yes she was Xhosa)

M- And would you say that these positive encounters enhanced or changed your perspective of those individuals' ethnic groups?

K- Yes it did. Even if it is not Xhosa's only. Because usually we have misconceptions, uhm uhm you would say you know, because we class ourselves, we don't really love other ethnic groups as

South Africa, you will say Venda people are careless right. And uh, well Tsonga people well they are normally dark so we would say, people say well they don't bath. Which is not really true (M- wow, really?) People would say, well I promise you people really say mean stuff. So she taught me that be open to the idea of learning about people because at the end of the day we are people. Cause I used to question the analogy around Apartheid. And then now I'm realizing that we are all humans white or black. We have feet, same legs, can speak, you know we are people. Though we don't have the same mannerisms, but we are people. And she taught me to open that door to learning and teaching people my language. I have two uhm Afrikaner ladies next to my room who I am currently teaching SeTswana, so you know it has opened, really really opened my mind to teaching and learning about languages.

M's probe= So how, previously before you had this friend that opened up and wanted to teach you their language how did you use to view Xhosa people?

K- Uhh shuu, I wouldn't even want to date a guy who is Xhosa (M- ok? Why?) or who is Tsonga because I used to think (M- oh so just any culture?). Yes any culture outside my own ethnic group. Because you know when you are a girl and are growing up and have the list? every girl has the list. I want him to be a pastor. My list would be like he must be Tswana ok. So now I have, it changed. Because I used to view them, I used to box them in that, uhm Sotho people are like that, Xhosa people are like that, and that would be really very negative.

M's probe- and where do you think you got those view-points from?

K- From society, from society. That is what people say. Even if, well they can't come from home. If you are Zulu they teach you that Pedi people are loud, they are extremely loud so get away from them. So it can be from home as well but mostly from society and because with especially, (laughs, oh my goodness), with groupings right? You find a particular area having a majority of Tsonga people let's say. And you find that area especially in townships, you find an area with Tswana people, area with Zulu people. Then mostly you find that there are categories where as in your Tsonga area it would be more dirty, lot of littering, a lot of loud music, different music. You know just a lot of mess, and people will say this people asi batho- they are not humans you know. And that is society, it does that.

M's probe= Do you also see that in media by any chance?

K- Media is a huge contributor of that but not really. But I feel like media is more focused on grounding and grooming on how literate and how a woman of power are you, or how man of power are you. Than it is focused on, hence you have uhm, something going on in media right now, where they will incorporate and have Tsonga shows, and Venda shows right? Those language policies that are currently establishing it is because media was closed to that so now they have opened doors to that.

M's probe= In school when you were growing up, did you feel like they they uhm, encouraged you guys to be friends with other cultures within your school or was it all Tswana because you are from a Tswana back-ground?

K- Yes, we were all Tswana's (M- oh, so there wasn't a lot of assimilation of other...?) And and there was a primary school, a Tsonga primary school where I come from in Atteridgeville, Mahlahle. So people would say nah kids from Mahlahle, they are not really you know ideal, you know so obviously there would be that divide.

M- ok, and then what negative personal experiences "this is now in contrast to the other question about positive", so what negative within the campus did you also experience?

K- when you are in lecture halls, let me tell you something, when you are in lecture halls and you are seating on the, what is it? On the bench, and probably a friend is seating right next to you and you happen to be in the middle and the other friend comes that side, and they converse like over you in their language that you don't know. They converse over you, because I am inquisitive, I will be like what are you guys saying? And they think you are rude, so that is negative.

M's probe= why do they think you are rude? Is it because you are butting into their conversation?

K- Not exactly, because you want to understand, what are you guys saying? They will be like nah she is nosy, people's businesses.

M's probe= Do you think they do that because they actually wanted to have like a private conversation without you?

K- Yeah but they are having it over you, they do; but they are having it over you cause they start conversing in either IsiSwati, SeSwati or IsiZulu, Xhosa or that.

M- ok, and your particular personal experience that you just mentioned; which ethnic groups were those?

K- Swati (M- So the Swati's are the ones that were conversing over you?) Yes they are the ones conversing over me. The funny part is that my surname is a Swati surname but I have no idea of the language. (M- wow, interesting)

M- And would you say that these negative encounters enhanced or changed your perspective of Swati's?

K- uhm, I have some Swati aunts, but obviously I cannot hear what they are saying. But it has to some degree prompted me to want to learn about about, or learn IsiSwati. I feel like I am a bit old for my tongue to adjust to all these different languages. But yeah it has prompted me to want to learn. But also it has really kept me out of people's businesses at times.

M's final remarks- This has been very interesting. I have learnt quite a lot from you. (K- oh really?) Yeah, I did not know most of the things that you were actually talking about of issues that students have within the classroom and actually wanting to be interested in someone else's language. This is actually quite interesting to know that that happens within the University.

K- Yes it does. Well the fitting in happens quite a lot. The boring part is that when you want to fit in that they want to change the way you speak English in order to sound like them. It would really be very negative.

M's final remarks- Oh wow, thank you so much, this has actually been the end of our interview. It has, I am very enriched by, and you sounded like you were really prepared to come tell me everything. It was really interesting. Thank you. (K- Thank you so much for having me.) Ok I am just going to...

APPENDIX E: DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING



15 February 2018

To whom it may concern

LANGUAGE EDITING

I, medical writer/editor, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Free State, hereby declare that language editing was performed on the dissertation prior to submission.

Title of dissertation: *AN EXPLORATION OF INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS AMONG STUDENTS AT A SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION*

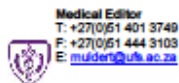
Author: MUTSHIDZI ABIGAIL MULONDO

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Struwig', is written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Daleen Struwig

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APPENDIX F: ETHICS APPROVAL



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Research Ethics Committee

2 December 2016

Dear Prof Maree

Project: An exploration of inter-ethnic relations among students at a South African higher education institution
Researcher: MA Mulondo
Supervisor: Ms A Thomas
Department: Psychology
Reference number: 28090998 (GW20160704HS)

Thank you for the response to the Committee's correspondence.

I have pleasure in informing you that the Research Ethics Committee formally **approved** the above study at an *ad hoc* meeting held on 2 December 2016. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should your actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

The Committee requests you to convey this approval to the researcher.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof Karen Harris
Acting Chair: Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
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Research Ethics Committee members: Prof MME Schoeman | Deputy Chair: Prof K. Harris; Dr L. Blokland; Dr R. Cassel; Ms K. Geyl; Dr E. Johnson; Dr G. Paredelena; Dr D. Pulleril; Dr D. Reynolds; Prof GM Spies; Prof E. Tafard; Ms B. Teebe; Dr E. van der Klemp; Mrs V. Sibole