



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
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YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

**Developing Academic Self-efficacy in Disadvantaged Black Students from the  
Extended Curriculum Programmes**

By

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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

**Supervisor:** Dr Michelle Finestone  
**Co-supervisor:** Prof. Nthabiseng Ogude

August 2022

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## **DEDICATION**

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I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my daughter, who has been my strength and reason for my growth and persevering through life and through the completion of this dissertation.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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I would like to acknowledge the following individuals as without their support and guidance, I would not have progressed and achieved so many milestones academically, in my career and in life. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the following people:

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- To my grandmother, Violet Nkabinde, your achievements in education have truly been an inspiration.
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Nosipho E Mthethwa

August 2022



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## **ABSTRACT**

The effects of poor education predominantly affect the academic success of learners from the township and rural schools primarily populated by Black individuals, who, as a result, gain limited tertiary education access. In the advent that university entrance is acquired, the success of such students is threatened. The Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECPs) of the University of Pretoria have, to an extent, managed to bridge the gap in academic access, success and retention in students from socio-economically challenged backgrounds through a robust student support model, which, among other attributes, fosters the development of self-efficacy. The purpose of this qualitative study was to uncover, through Appreciative Inquiry, the common factors that aided the development of academic self-efficacy by determining the external and internal strengths of Black, successful and socio-economically disadvantaged ECP alumni. It was evident from the results that academic self-efficacy is intensified by the presence of financial and emotional support at an institutional and social level. Support from family and peers (inclusive of verbal and emotional support) with the presence of positive models in participants' environments aided in their development of academic self-efficacy and goal orientation. Institutional support (student support services and financial aid) ensured that participants' academic self-efficacy was strengthened, thus ensuring their retention. This study highlights the importance of strong student support structures in ensuring student retention and success. Therefore, institutions must partner with student support structures to ensure that students from socio-economically challenged backgrounds are assisted financially and psychologically.

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## **KEY CONCEPTS**

- **Academic Self-efficacy**
- **Disadvantaged Black Students**
- **Appreciative Inquiry**
- **Student Support**
- **Extended Curriculum Programmes**

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE, PROBLEM AND PURPOSE STATEMENT**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE**

Due to the racial inequalities enforced by the Apartheid regime, the post-Apartheid education system has experienced challenges in addressing the imbalances associated with low education standards and poor matriculation throughput, more so in predominantly Black<sup>1</sup> schools (Van der Berg, 2007). The effects of poor education predominantly affect the academic success of learners from the township and rural schools populated mainly by Black individuals, who, as a result, gain limited tertiary education access; wherein the advent that university entrance is acquired, the success of such students is threatened (Van der Berg, 2007). As more Black students gained university admission status in post-apartheid South Africa, the financial constraints that come with tertiary education became an evident challenge for most of the Black South African population. In addressing this gap, students formed a #FeesMustFall campaign which advocated for free higher education to encourage equal opportunities for all South African students from various socio-economic backgrounds (Moloi, Makgoba, & Miruka, 2017; Ndelu et al., 2017).

In the advent of the announcement of free access to higher education for the economically disadvantaged in South Africa as a result of the #FeesMustFall campaign, citizens from poor socio-economic backgrounds rejoiced at the news in the hope of having the ability to obtain a semblance of economic relief for their families through higher education. Students from poor socio-economic backgrounds are predominantly Black and are often subjected to poor education due to the apartheid legacy (Van der Berg, 2007). Upon entering higher education institutions, these students are pushed to succeed against contextual odds, primarily financial and educational; thus, having a strong sense of academic self-efficacy<sup>2</sup> is essential in ensuring academic success. The development of academic self-efficacy in students is affected by socio-economic factors, which may affect student success rates (Bandura, 1995; Mbatha, 2015).

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<sup>1</sup> Black, also referred to as being of an African race, in the South African context is inclusive of Indian and Coloured races individuals, though the Indian population is not categorized as disadvantaged in

<sup>2</sup> Academic self-efficacy is defined as one's personal views of one's ability to organise and carry through set goals towards educational achievement (Bandura, 1995).

Though students should have an intrinsic drive to succeed, universities and higher education institutions have to ensure that students are aided towards academic success through student support initiatives to develop students holistically, academically, psychologically and emotionally (Trpcevska, 2017). The holistic development and support of students foster student retention and success. Such support is crucial for students from challenged socio-economic backgrounds as they are a cohort at higher risk of developing a mental illness likely to affect academic progress (Trpcevska, 2017). The Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECPs) of the University of Pretoria have, to an extent, managed to bridge the gap in academic access, success and retention in students from socio-economically challenged backgrounds with lower tertiary admission scores through a strong student support model which, among other attributes, fosters the development of self-efficacy and resilience (Ogude et al., 2015).

In light of the gradual change in student demographics in universities over the last ten years due to an even greater increase in the advent of free education, this research aimed to assist in determining how academic self-efficacy can aid in strengthening the student support structures at the University of Pretoria's Mamelodi Campus with a vision of a possible application in other institutions of higher education to ensure student retention and success.

## **1.2 PURPOSE AND AIMS OF STUDY**

The development of academic self-efficacy is crucial in students' academic progress and success; where the University of Pretoria's ECPs have paved a pathway toward academic success by implementing a student support system eliciting the development of self-efficacy. It was therefore of vital importance that students who have previously been enrolled in the ECPs and succeeded<sup>3</sup> against racial and socio-economic inequalities were interviewed to understand the positive core strengths of their success. The factors uncovered may aid student support structures towards a specific focus when assisting students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The purpose of this study was to thus uncover, through Appreciative Inquiry (AI), the common factors in the development of academic self-efficacy by

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<sup>3</sup> Success, in this study, refers to degree completion in regulation time.

determining the external and internal strengths which aided Black, academically strong and socio-economically disadvantaged students who were enrolled in the ECPs.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

#### **Primary Research Question**

How did the students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds in the ECPs draw from their internal and external resources to develop academic self-efficacy?

#### **Secondary Research Questions**

- 1.1. Which factors influenced the development of student academic self-efficacy to promote retention and success in higher education?
- 1.2. How did socio-economic challenges affect the development and academic success of the University of Pretoria ECP students?
- 1.3. What suggestions did participants have for a developmental change in the ECP's student support services or the ECPs?

### **1.4 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS**

The study by Lopez (2016) states that the academic success of Black students is not so much influenced by socio-economic conditions as is the case for white students, which thus raises the question of the applicability of socio-economic strains as a factor for academic success. Though the studies from the body of literature highlight the racial and social factors which influence academic success, students succeed despite the strains they face (Bandura et al., 1996; Hudson, 2015; Theron & Theron, 2014) and thus leading to the identification of intrinsic factors such as self-efficacy and resilience which lead to that success. Therefore, the researcher assumed that the factors that influence self-efficacy in ECP alumni might rely on the belief systems instilled in them, such as their cultural, religious and spiritual affiliation, role models and peers, demographics, and personality (Hudson, 2015).

The use of AI in identifying disadvantaged Black students' internal and external resources in developing academic self-efficacy might lead to the academic success and retention of disadvantaged Black students enrolled not only in ECPs but in other higher education institutions.

## **1.5 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION**

### **1.5.1 Appreciative Inquiry**

Commonly used to foster organisational change, an appreciative inquiry has been used in various contexts to encourage change and development in organisations instead of the deficit approach (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). AI uses various theories which foster involvement towards progressive change in participants within the organisations that it has been widely adopted and applied for its ability to empower and encourage participants in affecting a positive change (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). AI in this study was used to elicit, empower and utilise the positive views and resources that successful Black students from disadvantaged backgrounds have for improvement.

### **1.5.2 Extended Curriculum Programmes**

Extended curriculum programmes are a form of access programmes which are credit-bearing and designed to accommodate and transition academically at-risk learners into tertiary studies. This is accomplished through the progressive integration of university-level studies at a slower pace for one year or more, thus allowing students to progress into university mainstream studies (Rollnick, 2010). The progressive integration of students at the University of Pretoria Mamelodi Campus encompasses student support services for academic and psychological development to ensure that students develop attributes that foster academic and personal success, which was the key to student success in this study.

### **1.5.3 Developing Academic Self-efficacy**

Academic self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to meet challenges and succeed academically (Bandura, 1995). The development of academic self-efficacy is influenced by the socio-economic and educational environment in which the students develop. The presence of positive support structures and internal and external resources are likely to yield a positive development of academic self-efficacy (Bandura et al., 1996; Schunk & Pajares, 2002). In this study, such development would have likely been hindered by unequal socio-economic, racial, and disparities.

## **1.6 PARADIGMATIC CHOICES**

Paradigms are the lens research examined and carried out (Creswell et al., 2014; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher thus carries out research with assumed world views whereby the paradigmatic perspectives guide the researchers' study. Therefore, the study's epistemology was the researcher's lens for the study, while the methodological approach outlines how the researcher focused and carried out the research (Creswell et al., 2014).

### **1.6.1 Conceptual Framework**

The Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) holds that learning and development occur through interaction with the environment in which an individual occupies, as well as through social interactions, which consequently shape an individual's cognition and behaviour (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2005). Learning is, therefore, an internal process guided by environmental factors and is influenced by various internal (psychological, behavioural, cognitive) and external (environmental, social, educational) factors (Artino Jr, 2012; Bandura, 1989). People are thus participants and products of their environments (Bandura, 1989; Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005).

The application of the SCT in this study considered participants' socio-economic, educational and racial contexts. This study aimed to uncover the extent to which these factors may have informed participants' development of academic self-efficacy and led to their academic success. As a critical concept in the SCT, self-efficacy is informed by both internal and external factors in the learning and development process, which are 1) previous task performance, 2) verbal persuasion, 3) physiological factors, and 4) vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1989). The SCT highlights the interaction between the environment and the individual, which aligns with Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory.

This theory focuses on the notion that development takes place and is influenced in and by a system in which one is immersed (Donald et al., 2014). Therefore, this system has various levels the developing individual interacts: The Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, Macrosystem and Chronosystem (Donald et al., 2014). These various systems will be outlined further in the data analysis chapter and aligned with the SCT and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory to convey how their interaction informs the development of the participants in this study.

This study was additionally guided by applying the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach, which, much like the SCT, also acknowledges participants' contexts, knowledge and perceptions in the change process. AI follows a combination of Positive Psychology Theory; which is embedded in the joyous contentment and strengths of a positive group towards positive outcomes (Hefferon & Boniwell, 2011); as well as the Social Constructivism Theory; which assumes that reality is socially constructed (Cooperrider et al., 2014). The Social Constructivism Theory in this study aligns with the application of AI in those participants who collaboratively engaged in uncovering the positive core of the ECPs.

This also served as how the researcher could outline how participants were able to succeed academically and learn while in the ECPs and how they were able to develop and maintain high academic self-efficacy despite social and environmental challenges. The application of the Positive Psychology and Social Constructivism Theories served as a means to enforce organisational change and development through AI, in a shift from the deficit approach towards a more appreciative and socially constructive approach towards the development of a student support design, which may aid future students' academic self-efficacy (Cooperrider et al., 2008).

In interrogating contextual factors and the internal and external factors of students, the SCT and AI guided the study in uncovering the socio-economic factors that affected the development and academic success of the University of Pretoria ECP alumni.

### **1.6.2 Epistemology**

The epistemological paradigm of this study followed a constructivist paradigm, whereby emphasis was placed on the individual's ability to form meaning, as the basis of knowledge construction is not absolute (Creswell et al., 2014). Constructivism, in this study, henceforth noted the social contexts of participants and, through AI, uncovered the positive core, as well as the knowledge and belief systems that guided participants' development of academic self-efficacy (Bandura, 1989; Creswell et al., 2014; Mbatha, 2015). The greatest strength of the constructivist approach is the depth of knowledge and information the researcher can anticipate from participants through interaction. In light of the depth and variance of data that may be available, the limitation to this paradigm was descriptions from participants, which may have been

limited by exposure to certain knowledge and their understanding as it pertained to subjective worldviews (Creswell et al., 2014).

In ensuring that the information and data sourced through this paradigm were accurate and informed by unbiased interpretation, the researcher identified and understood her personal biases, worldviews, and experiences about the South African economic, social, racial and academic context that might have arisen in the formulation of research questions, the conducting of interviews and documentation thereof. The comprehensive and in-depth analysis of literature also aided in the elimination of personal bias.

### **1.6.3 Methodological Approach**

The method of this study was qualitative and was thus reliant on words communicated verbally, symbolically or conceptually to convey meaning and understanding (Creswell et al., 2014). This qualitative study employed an AI approach whereby the researcher was the participant observer through semi-structured interview questions to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell et al., 2014). With the active involvement of participants in the change and development process, the researcher guided the interview process. The data collected was analysed in themes and sub-themes.

The AI approach looked at the participants' strengths in achieving academic success through adversity and how the harnessing of these strengths may be developed in current and future students. AI follows a 4-D Cycle, namely the: 1) Discovery Phase (appreciating that which gives life and progress); 2) Dream phase (outlining the desired vision); 3) Design phase (how the dream can be constructed); 4) Destiny phase (executing and sustaining the dream) (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Though the involvement of participants in the change and development process ensures sustainable development, the attrition of participants usually challenges the process (Cooperrider et al., 2008).

Therefore, the participants were informed of the study's goals and committed to seeing the AI process through, though they were afforded the right to withdraw from the study at any time. It should be noted that AI is a process which does not aim to uncover

negative or traumatic experiences but rather is a process which focuses on the positive in order to develop and enhance systems (Grieten et al., 2018).

## **1.7 OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES**

The research methodology outlines the strategies and techniques that guide the research as it pertains to the research, selection of participants, data collection and documentation, and the analysis and interpretation of the data (Athanasou et al., 2012).

### **1.7.1 Research Design**

This qualitative study applied a multiple case study design that enables the researcher to conduct an in-depth study through flexible methods of data collection in order to formulate a theory or make comparisons on the phenomenon under study to identify trends (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014; Stake, 2006). In this study, more than one case (participants) was investigated to identify the factors in their development of academic self-efficacy in various challenging contextual environments. This informed the possible development of trends in academic self-efficacy factors, which may aid in the improved assistance of students through student support services.

Multiple case study designs can uncover how an individual develops over time and as a result of certain conditions and interventions, thus allowing for in-depth investigation (Athanasou et al., 2012; Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). The analysis of more than one case affects the depth of data per case (Creswell & Poth, 2018), where the researcher is to ensure that the selection of participants is purposive and the execution of research questions is focused and uniform throughout the research process to secure the depth of the data.

### **1.7.2 Selection of Case Participants**

The study followed the purposive sampling technique. This technique is widely used in the multiple case study design, whereby the sample selected will likely yield the most significant data concerning the research question and thus assist in the development of trends promptly (Athanasou et al., 2012; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). The population was academically successful Black ECP alumni who completed their ECP studies in regulation time with the aid of the National Student Finance Aid Scheme (NSFAS) funding between 2010 and 2017.

The sample size was eight participants. The research sample was determined by administering a self-efficacy questionnaire called the New General Self-efficacy Scale (NGSE) to select participants with above-average self-efficacy scores from the population. The researcher administered and analysed the tests and validated them by the UP ECP Psychometrist, who worked closely with the population and was willing to participate in the study.

The limited context of the ECPs, as well as the small size of participants, was combated by ensuring that participants from rural and township (this is taken care of by the NSFAS means test) backgrounds were selected in order to ensure that a realistic illustration of the broader disadvantaged South African context was represented. The researcher's bias in selecting participants was addressed by applying the NGSE scale, an objective sampling tool.

### 1.7.3 Data Collection

**Table 1.1: Data Collection**

| <b>Data collection strategy</b>                      | <b>Data documentation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Purpose of data collection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Semi-structured interviews                           | Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Zoom online platform was utilised for data collection and recording. Recorded data were thereafter transcribed and safely stored.                                                                                              | The application of semi-structured interviews is the induction of structured yet free communication between the interviewer and interviewee to encourage directed yet authentic conversation. (Athanasou, et al., 2012; Creswell, 2014; Creswell, et al., 2014). In the AI method, data collection is represented by the Discovery Phase, whereby the researcher formulates probing questions which allow the participant to discover the best aspects of their educational experiences as it pertains to their academic self-efficacy, personal development and the contexts in which they developed (Bandura, 1989; Cooperrider et al., 2018). This encouraged participants to focus on the positive aspects of their development to extrapolate the positive core of their development. |
| Focus group discussion with interviewed participants | Discussions took place and were recorded through Blackboard collaborate online platform, and thereafter transcribed. The use of PowerPoint Presentations and breakaway groups where ideas were shared for visual representation and interactions with the group. | The focus group interview allowed for a broader range of responses which participants may have had inhibitions in answering on a one-on-one basis (Creswell, et al., 2014). In the Dream phase of AI, participants gather in groups to imagine what could be based on the uncovered positive core from the Discovery phase (Cooperrider et al., 2003; Grieten, et al., 2018). The uncovered positive core from the diverse selected participants assisted participants in brainstorming ideas on how to ensure that the positive factors could be harnessed in students from similar contexts in order to best assist these students through student support. These positive factors are that which assisted participants in their development of academic self-efficacy.                  |

### 1.7.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation

**Table 1.2: Data Analysis and Interpretation**

| AI Phases       | Description                                     | Method of data analysis                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Discovery phase | Appreciating that which gives life and progress | During the discovery phase, the interview data were coded in key themes which highlighted the positive factors which led to the participants' academic success. Using the Atlas TI computer programme assisted in coding transcribed interview data. The data followed the process of crystallisation to identify key themes from each interview for trustworthiness and validity purposes (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014; Stake, 2006).                |
| Dream phase     | Outlining the desired vision                    | The focus group interviews were coded under new emerging themes, should there be new themes which arise.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Design phase    | How the dream can be constructed                | The themes that emerged therefore encouraged the design phase (Cooperrider et al., Appreciative Inquiry Handbook: The first in a series of AI workbooks for leaders of change, 2003) whereby the participants worked together with the researcher in designing a plan which may assist the development of academic self-efficacy in students as well as methods which may be applied in the ECP student support structure to support students. |
| Destiny phase   | Executing and sustaining the dream              | The execution is, therefore, be in the Destiny phase, which was implemented in this study but involved participants identification of short-term goals which may assist them in reaching the dream for the project.                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

### 1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research dealing with institutions and individuals has to include a moral code of conduct known as ethics to protect the research participants, the institution, and the researcher (Zeni, 2001). Ethical clearance was required for the administration of the student interviews from the ethics committee. An informed consent form was also used, and explained to the participants that they would be co-creators of active change

through their knowledge and participation. Permission from the University was required where the utilisation of student records was concerned, ensuring the confidentiality of such files.

Participants were alerted before the research commenced that they were allowed to opt-out of the research at any given time. No payment or reward for partaking in the study would be issued, except for refreshments provided during the focus group sessions. Participants' identities were kept anonymous, and the use of pseudonyms was applied. The data is safely stored for 15 to 20 years at the Faculty of Education.

Participants were those from a vulnerable population; thus, support from student services was on standby in the instance that participants might have felt challenged in reflecting on past experiences.

### **1.9 RIGOUR AND TRUSTWORTHINESS**

It is important to ensure that a research study highlights the strategies and methods applied during the research process to ensure that the research is trustworthy and rigorous (Creswell et al., 2014; Creswell, 2014). The researcher ensured that the issues of credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability were adhered to in this research study to enhance trustworthiness in the data analysis and interpretation chapter (Creswell et al., 2014). Rigour was enhanced using crystallisation to ensure that the in-depth meaning of data was captured through various methods of data collection (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher also guarded against their own bias by not using data selectively but adhering to responses provided by participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### **1.10 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS**

**Chapter 1: Introduction and rationale, problem and purpose statement, conceptualisation and methodological overview.**

Chapter 1 introduces the research and describes the key concepts that underpin the study and thus relate to the research questions. The methodological design and paradigmatic perspective are also described in this chapter.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Chapter 2 provides an in-depth description and discussion of the literature that applies to this study. A detailed description of academic self-efficacy, student support, the ECPs and the South African educational context as it relates to the disadvantaged black students is also outlined. The chapter also provides a conceptual framework to situate the development of academic self-efficacy as it pertains to the disadvantaged black student cohort.

## **Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology**

Chapter 3 provides an in-depth discussion of the research process applied in this study. The chapter also outlines matters related to rigour, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations in the study.

## **Chapter 4: Research Results**

The data collected during the research process of interviews and focus group discussions is outlined in this chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Findings, conclusion and recommendations**

In chapter 5, the research findings are presented as well as conclusions and possible recommendations for further research and practice.

## **1.11 CONCLUSION**

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the research study. The introduction, purpose of the study, background and nature were described. The following chapter will discuss this study's key concepts related to literature in the field. The conceptual framework is also discussed in detail.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The literature review aspect of research intends to explore developments in the field of study on a specific research topic (Athanasou et al., 2012). This study focused on the development of academic self-efficacy in disadvantaged black students enrolled in the University of Pretoria's ECPs. In this section, the main concepts relating to the study are discussed. These concepts of self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, student support and extended programmes are explored to developments in the field as it pertains to the participants in this study.

#### **2.2 DEVELOPING ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY**

##### **2.2.1 Foundations and Critique of Self-efficacy**

The Social Cognitive Theory is the theory upon which self-efficacy is developed, of which self-efficacy is the centre of the said theory (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1989). In the Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Model, self-efficacy predominantly affects the persona aspect, whereby agency, cognitive processes and self-regulation drive the development and follow through of set goals (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2001; Bandura, 2005; Snowman & McCown, 2013). The development of self-efficacy, though based on the personal aspect of the Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Model, is contextual and thus is influenced by both the environment and biological aspects of human development and behaviour and vice-versa (Bandura, 1989).

Research has thus far identified that self-efficacy affects learning, drive/motivation and self-regulation (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2014). The higher one's self-efficacy is, the more effort, resilience and persistence one places in task completion (Bandura, 1989). Therefore, as a result of low self-efficacy, one may believe tasks to be unattainable and thus foster feelings of anxiety, depression and lack of task completion (Bandura, 1995; Maddux & Gosselin, 2012). According to Williams and Rhodes (2016), behaviour is directly influenced by self-efficacy. Through the self-efficacy theory, the sources of self-efficacy and behavioural processes are effective in developing behavioural interventions. According to Bandura (1977, 1989), self-efficacy is affected by four main factors: 1. Performance accomplishments which involve how well we

have performed in previous tasks; 2. Verbal persuasion is how specific key models or individuals encourage one to perform well in a certain task through expressions of confidence or advice; 3. Emotional/ physiological arousal refers to how one feels about completing a task, whether motivated or anxious and lastly, 4. Vicarious experience is how confident we may feel about completing a specific task after observing the successes and failures of critical models with whom we most identify (Bandura, 1989; Snowman & McCown, 2013). These factors, according to Bandura (1989), lend themselves to an anticipated behavioural outcome.

Williams (2010) argues that the self-efficacy theory may tend to be self-contradictory where outcome expectancy/behaviour is concerned, as the disproportionate focus has been placed on self-efficacy as the causal influencer on behaviour. Although Bandura (1977, 1989, 2001) states that outcome expectancies, otherwise known as reinforcement outcomes on behaviour, do not causally impact self-efficacy, they do, however, form part of an aspect of the four factors of self-efficacy, where previous task performance and vicarious experiences are concerned. One may assume that through modelling and previous task experiences, one's behaviour and motivation may be influenced, whether directly or indirectly, through outcome expectancies/ reinforcement and thus impact self-efficacy beliefs and development.

According to Pajares (1996), efficacy beliefs tend to mediate the outcome of skills and other self-beliefs in upcoming performance by impacting effort, perseverance and endurance. Zimmerman (1999) further elaborates on how self-efficacy beliefs also affect memory performance by enhancing persistence, which extends to various generalised tasks instead of focusing on a single task. The effect of modelling is also observed by Zimmerman (1999) and Snowman and McCown (2013), whereby the successes and failures of others may affect efficacy and motivation in students; even more so when a student, who usually performs well in specific subjects, fails, this significantly lowers motivation and efficacy beliefs in students of both firm and low self-efficacy beliefs.

Self-efficacy beliefs are, therefore, contextual and reliant on not only task performance by the individual but also collective group task performance and modelling (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2014; Snowman & McCown, 2013; Zimmerman, 1999). Self-efficacy forms a critical foundation for self-regulation, which is not only a self-reflective process

where one measures performance against set goals but also compares goal attainment against peers (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2014). In this study, self-efficacy, as the core of academic self-efficacy, was studied in order to understand how the four factors of self-efficacy in an academic context interrelate with the socio-economic factors and social contexts. This was to gain insight on how academic self-efficacy was developed in disadvantaged black students in light of challenges faced. This study was guided by the initial self-efficacy theory by Bandura, whereby self-efficacy beliefs were investigated from an outcomes-based perspective.

### **2.2.2 Academic Self-efficacy**

General self-efficacy is one's faith in one's ability to achieve set goals and cope amid adversity; task-specific self-efficacy is one's belief in achieving tasks in a specific domain, such as academics (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2014). Self-efficacy in an academic setting can therefore be referred to as academic self-efficacy, which is the belief in one's abilities to achieve academic goals amid challenges (Bandura, 1995; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2014). According to Honicke and Broadbent (2015), several studies have evaluated the relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic performance with positive outcomes. Self-regulated learning is central to academic self-efficacy and considers the interaction between academic performance's social, cognitive and motivational aspects (Honické & Broadbent, 2015).

The qualitative systemic review of 59 international studies between September 2003 and March 2015 on the effects of academic self-efficacy on academic performance by Honické and Broadbent (2015) aimed to identify and investigate the relationship between academic performance and academic self-efficacy and thus explain this relationship in university students. The review found that the relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic performance is relatively moderate. The study, therefore, identified factors contributing to high academic self-efficacy such as good academic performance, positive learning emotions and learning environment, conscious goal setting, cognitive variables, parental involvement, personality and emotional intelligence (Honické & Broadbent, 2015).

According to the studies reviewed, these factors mediate and moderate the development of academic self-efficacy, whereby the early development of academic self-efficacy is crucial in the long-term advancement of students' academic

performance (Honicke & Broadbent, 2015). Of the mediating factors, lack of effort regulation and procrastination were significant in negative academic performance (Balkis, 2011; Honicke & Broadbent, 2015). Of the moderating factors, variables such as time on task, positive emotions and emotional intelligence had a positive influence on academic performance, while negative emotions, the opposite of these, resulted in a decrease in academic performance (Honicke & Broadbent, 2016).

A quantitative study by Talsma, Schüz and Norris (2019) investigated the correlation between academic self-efficacy and academic performance in undergraduate university students as a predictive measure of future task performance. Participants were required to complete self-efficacy questionnaires before submitting formative and summative assessments to measure their academic self-efficacy and use students' self-efficacy results to compare their academic performance. The self-efficacy calibration scores measured were self-efficacy accuracy (the extent of the digression between self-efficacy and performance) and self-efficacy bias (the digression of the self-efficacy score from the academic achievement score) (Talsma et al., 2019).

Although academic self-efficacy was positively consistent with performance outcomes, the academically strong students' academic self-efficacy beliefs were significantly better than the poorest performing students when compared between students. However, academic self-efficacy beliefs were lower when the performing students' academic self-efficacy scores were compared to their academic performance. The opposite was true for weaker performing students, whose academic self-efficacy beliefs were much higher than their academic performance.

The study, therefore, concluded that under-efficaciousness predicted future performance outcomes more so in light of the students who performed well in the study but displayed low self-efficacy, which contradicts the theory by Bandura (1977) that self-efficacy serves as a self-prophecy for positive academic outcomes. It is suggested by this study that students who are self-regulated, aware of their abilities and cognitively and academically stronger were more likely to score lower in self-efficacy assessments due to modest self-doubt and not wishing to experience disappointment upon receipt of lower marks (Talsma et al., 2019).

The qualitative study by Honicke and Broadbent (2015) and the quantitative study by Talsma et al. (2019) acknowledge how academic performance is not strongly linked

to academic self-efficacy as much as other self-regulatory and external factors are involved. It is therefore imperative that the development of academic self-efficacy is not approached in a vacuum but with the lens that cognitive factors, as well as the environment and personal factors, play a role. This involves the development of academic self-efficacy and the execution of tasks.

Though research on self-efficacy and its development is rich, it does not address how the development of academic self-efficacy takes place in Black students, more so in the disadvantaged South African context (Bandura et al., 1996; Schunk & Pajares, 2002). With personal factors considered, academic self-efficacy development is strongly influenced by the environment in which one develops (Bandura et al., 1996). With only 27% of learners in predominantly Black schools passing with bachelor's degree results (Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2014), it becomes imperative to understand the factors and strengths leading to the development of academic self-efficacy in successful students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Research on at-risk students in South African Higher Education has focussed on student support initiatives to combat the adverse effects of socio-economic factors leading to academic success (De Klerk et al., 2017). According to Schunk and Pajares (2002) and Bandura et al. (1996), resilient student support systems are crucial in ensuring student success, rooted in a strong sense of self-efficacy. Therefore, the outcome of this study aims to guide student support structures in targeting black disadvantaged students' specific personal and contextual gaps and needs. The aim is to enhance students' academic development and self-efficacy towards strengthening their success.

### **2.3 STUDENT SUPPORT**

Students admitted to higher education institutions may be flustered with emotions of joy, anxiety and anticipation of what their academic journeys may entail. However, though they may be aware of the academic changes and challenges they may face, they are seldom aware of the external factors associated with enrolment in higher education studies (Fourie, 2018; Hassel & Ridout, 2018; Van Zyl et al., 2012). According to Hassel and Ridout (2018), students tend to underestimate the expectations from higher education institutions, while academic staff tend to overestimate undergraduates' abilities upon enrolment. This tends to lead to students'

inability to perform academically. Student retention and success have long been an issue, especially in the South African university landscape, with socio-economically challenged students at higher risk of dropping out and underperforming (Fourie, 2018).

Students from socio-economically challenging backgrounds tend to experience more traumatic life events than students with a comfortable socio-economic standing and thus tend to consult student support services at higher rates (Carrim, 1994; Fourie, 2018; White & White Perrone-McGovern, 2017). In the south African context, black students are likely to be more at risk for traumatic life experiences as they tend to come from challenging backgrounds as opposed to other racial groups (Carrim, 1994; Jaffer & Garraway, 2016).

Student support services bridge the gap between the student's academic, social and emotional adjustment when entering higher education (Carrim, 1994; Fourie, 2018; Kaur, 2016; Maimane, 2016). Therefore, student support services must be accessible to all students as they serve as a bridge between students and the university and their academic policies and staff (Maimane, 2016; Kaur, 2016). Carrim (1994) reflects on how the academic support programmes in higher education institutions were initially formed to combat the racial, educational and economic inequalities in post-apartheid South Africa.

As more black employees were required in the professional spaces, previously white higher education institutions enforced academic support to ensure the progress of black enrolled students. Today, academic and student support programmes cater to all students; however, the inequalities forged by apartheid still linger in the country as most black students come from economically and educationally underprivileged backgrounds (Carrim, 1994; Matsolo et al., 2018). Student support services cater to the needs of at-risk students to ensure that they transition smoothly from high school to higher education and ensure the repetition and success of said students (Carrim, 1994; Maimane, 2016).

In the study by Roberts and Dunworth (2012), international students reflected on the usefulness of their student support services. While students reported general satisfaction with the services, they were not pleased with the scarcity of appointments as well as the exclusionary aspect of the university (Roberts & Dunworth, 2012).

This study investigated the reflections of students in the study by Ogude et al. (2019). Students reflected on their satisfaction with student support services as a result of prompt and student centered interventions, which fostered a sense of belonging despite the off-site provision of the extended programme campus. The study by Ogude et al. (2019) found that a sense of belonging helped students in an extended curriculum programme thrive academically; coupled with a strong student support structure, participants in the study graduated in regulation time and went on to support other students.

The qualitative study by Ogude et al. (2019) discussed emergent themes, such as peer mentoring and support networks; coping with failure and developing self-efficacy; the underdog phenomenon, self-motivation and support for mainstream students, and extended curriculum programmes as a first option emerged. A strong student support structure allows students to navigate through academics and social aspects smoothly, thus improving student retention and success (Kaur, 2016; Maimane, 2016). Though the quantitative study by Fourie (2018) contends that South African higher education institutions have an essential role to play in ensuring the retention and success of students, more so through the instillation of a sense of belonging to the institution, external factors that are beyond institutions' control tend to play a more significant role in the student's success and reduction of dropout rates.

The study states that students who face negative external pressures, such as those from the family, community and those of a financial nature, tend to have higher rates of dropping out (Fourie, 2018; White & Perrone-McGovern, 2017). Students with more peer support are social, are intrinsically motivated to perform and value education are less likely to harbour intentions to drop out (Fourie, 2018). Though student support services help students navigate through social and emotional aspects in order to assist them in succeeding academically, they seldom address broader challenges faced by students, such as accommodation, access to study material, food and, more importantly, finances (Deans & Sloane, 2016; Fourie, 2018).

White and Perrone-McGovern (2017) found that students are likely to drop out due to financial constraints, while racial factors tended to affect retention and success the least. Though this international study by White and Perrone-McGovern (2017) predominantly focuses on financial constraints as the main factor affecting student retention and success, the historical racial segregation, more so in the South African

context, may highlight an alignment with race and financial constraints (Fourie, 2018; Jaffer & Garraway, 2016). The Black population in the country have higher rates of poverty than other races, and challenges in retention and success in Black students enrolled in higher education institutions have become more prevalent in this student demographic (Fourie, 2018; Jaffer & Garraway, 2016).

The study by Budescu and Silverman (2016) highlighted the importance of family support for students in transition. The study highlighted how interaction with direct and extended family played a crucial role in assisting students transition and adapt socially and academically (Budescu & Silverman, 2016). The study reported that students with positive relationships with families, supported emotionally, financially and academically by family members, reported higher levels of academic self-efficacy and increased persistence, as opposed to those with little or no family support (Budescu & Silverman, 2016).

Therefore, student support is not only an institutional matter but an external matter where family and communities are involved in the student's success (Budescu & Silverman, 2016). Budescu and Silverman (2016) state that students must receive support as this tends to lower emotional and mental strains, affecting academic performance and success. In the South African context, however, it is indicated that students support their families through student funds as they may be cognisant of the struggles at home (Deans & Sloane, 2016). This, therefore, places further strain on students. Internationally, students, especially those of low socio-economic standing, tend to work and study to ensure that they support their families; this student demographic ranges between Hispanic and Black students (White & Perrone-McGovern, 2017).

The studies by White and Perrone-McGovern (2017) and Deans and Sloane (2016) state how students with financial constraints tend to have more difficulties in higher education studies and therefore risk dropping out or academically underperforming. Therefore, addressing students' contextual needs in student support sessions remains vital. The development of academic self-efficacy is therefore imperative in the student support structures as students not only tend to face academic challenges by external challenges as well.

## **2.4 EXTENDED CURRICULUM PROGRAMMES**

The history of South Africa has been rife with social and economic injustices, especially with the legacy of Apartheid, which saw the segregation and intentional economic and social exclusion of racial minorities such as those classified as non-white (Fourie, 2018; Rollnick, 2010; World Bank Group, 2018). In the South African context, the black population makes up a majority of the population, which therefore meant that the Apartheid era catered economically and socially for the white minority, thereby subjecting the majority of the black population to inferior forms of service in aspects such as health, education land distribution and economic activity (World Bank Group, 2018). With the abolishment of the Apartheid and the voting in of new government administrators, significant reform was set to take place in the country (Carrim, 1994; World Bank Group, 2018).

These reforms would not only address the inequality related to race and access to resources but also look into redress and reform to ensure that resources and services are distributed equally and fairly amongst citizens (World Bank Group, 2018). In the education sector, the disadvantaged black population, previously subjected to economic exclusion and inferior education, were provided with the opportunity to participate in the economy and enrol in education institutions previously designated for white individuals (Rollnick, 2010; World Bank Group, 2018). These previously white education institutions, both in basic and higher education, had thriving resources, unlike those designated to the non-white majority, named the Bantu education (Rollnick, 2010; World Bank Group, 2018).

Schools designated for the non-white majority were under-resourced and did not prepare learners for higher education learning, where only in exceptional cases were learners allowed to enrol in higher education institutions (Rollnick, 2010). This setback in education structures meant that learners who enrolled in Bantu education schools were thus underprepared and needed assistance when enrolled in higher education institutions and access to enrolling in the institutions (Rollnick, 2010; World Bank Group, 2018). The South African government, noting the need for redress and reform in the education system, specifically for the underprivileged, supported and subsidised the ECPs.

ECPs are access programmes funded by government grants to broaden educational access and success to citizens (Rollnick, 2010). The aim is to relinquish the social,

economic and racial historical injustices to foster societal transformation in South Africa (Rollnick, 2010). With the increase in student enrolment in higher education institutions in South Africa and globally, access programmes are vital in ensuring that student needs are addressed (Agosti & Bernat, 2018).

The provision of access programmes on a global scale looks into how the change in international trends affects the global education system. More diverse groups from all over the globe are enrolling in institutions on different continents, many of which students are asylum seekers, while some may be exchange students. The education system must cater for all students with varying backgrounds (Brett & Pitman, 2018). With the workplace needing skilled labour, Agosti and Bernat (2018) state that economic and state policies need to consider the expansion of not only the labour force but the types of skills and access programmes to cater to vocational education pathways.

This will thus address the socio-economic demands that call for equity and equality in the local and global economy (Agosti & Bernat, 2018; Brett & Pitman, 2018). Though the government and higher education institutions have placed programmes to assist in bridging the educational and socio-economic gaps related to higher education through access programmes, there are still gaps related to student retention and success once students enter higher education (Engelbrecht et al., 2014; Davidowitz & Rollnick, 2018; Rollnick, 2010).

Higher education institutions have, according to Fourie (2018), Rollnick (2010) and World Bank Group (2018), long had challenges with student preparedness, retention and success, whereby the throughput of white students enrolled in a science course in the 1970s were so low that attempts at the development of the intermediate year were developed. Student preparedness, access, retention and success have thus been a challenge for institutions nationally and internally despite racial inequalities, though these inequalities may have deepened the cracks (Davidowitz & Rollnick, 2018; Rollnick, 2010; World Bank Group, 2018).

Fourie (2018) and Davidowitz and Rollnick (2010) mentioned how internal and external factors affect student preparedness, access, retention and success. These factors range from the school students come from, with well-resourced schools improving students' ability to access universities (Davidowitz & Rollnick, 2018; World Bank

Group, 2018). Such schools have easier access to those of good economic standing; however, well-resourced schools may not guarantee student preparedness upon enrolment (Davidowitz & Rollnick, 2018). The socio-economic status and background of students also factor in student preparedness, access, retention and success, especially when students have family support, not just in the financial aspect but also in the emotional aspect as well (Agosti & Bernat, 2018; Budescu & Silverman, 2016; White & Perrone-McGovern, 2017).

Access to resources, especially finances, is a big factor for student retention and success (White & Perrone-McGovern, 2017). The setback in academic advancement for black students, more so in the South African context, leads to the stereotyping of the black student demographic, more so in higher education, which in turn leads to the lack of self-esteem and motivation to pursue post-graduate studies (Cornell & Kessi, 2017). In the study by Cornell and Kessi (2017), a photovoice methodology was applied to gather the student voice on how black students experience a previously white higher education institution. Cornell and Kessi (2017) uncovered prevalent stereotypes about the black student demographic that linger in academic settings.

The stereotypes are that black students do not attain higher education access through merit but rather through redress and affirmative action; they are regarded as unmotivated and the leading cause of the decline in higher education institutions' success rates (Cornell & Kessi, 2017). The racial tensions still plague society may affect student interaction and the ability to harness a sense of belonging, which may negatively affect their progress (Cornell & Kessi, 2017). The study by Cornell and Kessi (2017) states that universities must take accountability in supporting this student demographic and not only attend to the economic support of students but also the decolonisation and transformation of the higher education curriculum, which will lead to the inclusion of the authentic South African experience of all students (Langa, 2017).

It is evident that the post-apartheid government has attempted to bridge the racial inequalities in higher education but has to bridge the socio-economic inequalities that linger in higher education institutions (Badat & Sayed, 2014). In the study by Badat and Sayed (2014), the solution to improvement in addressing the racial inequalities of South African higher education institutions is ensuring that redress policy measures through equity and not equality will likely bridge the gap for the socially marginalised and disadvantaged group in the country, which predominantly is the black population.

Seen as the key to freedom, education, according to Badat and Sayed (2014), should not be exclusive to those of a specific economic and racial class but should be accessible to all citizens in the country, regardless of class, race, gender and socio-economic standing. Failure of the government and higher education institutions to bridge the economic and racial injustices has led to student protests such as the #FeesMustFall Movement, which reached its peak in 2015 (Langa, 2017).

This movement saw students from various prominent higher education institutions violently protesting for government and higher education institutions' management to address the financial inequities and colonial structures of higher education institutions, as these factors were seen as a barrier to academic access and success for this previously disadvantaged student cohort. The protests raised not only public awareness of the financial and institutional inequalities but also placed much pressure on governments to re-evaluate their approach to student funding and institutional roles in the advancement of education, calling for the decolonisation of the student curriculum in the process (Langa, 2017).

Though the government has taken a stride in funnelling more funds to higher education institutions, more so in ensuring that they provide NSFAS funding to students in need, the call for institutional transformation is still underway. Various institutions have made means to ensure that they not only involve the student in enacting policies but broaden the discussion on transformation and decolonisation of the curriculum institutionally (Cornell & Kessi, 2017). Thus ensuring that students partake in not only the educational aspect but the transformational aspects of higher education learning provides an inclusive and transformative platform which fosters a sense of belonging in students, which translates into success in other educational endeavours.

Student support is, therefore, not only an institutional responsibility but also an internal responsibility (involving the students' motivation and drive), as well as an external responsibility (involving the students' social background) (Budescu and Silverman, 2016).

White and Perrone-McGovern (2017) state that students will most likely remain enrolled in higher education and succeed when they do not have to worry about finances. This study noted how education might be solution for getting out of poverty for most students from disadvantaged backgrounds. These students experience

increased pressure from their home environments to succeed with minimum financial resources (White & Perrone-McGovern, 2017). Rollnick (2010) and Fourie (2018) echo this concern as students from disadvantaged backgrounds tend to be considered more at risk of dropping out than their more privileged peers.

According to Fourie (2018), other than finances, there are various factors associated with student drop-out, such as academic difficulty; unclear goals; dedication and commitment; part-time study; difficulty with the transition into university; physiological troubles; student age maturity; stress and workload troubles and poor integration into the institution. These and many more factors contribute to student dropout rates; however, it remains vital that institutions apply means to ensure that students who experience various challenges are assisted holistically (Brett & Pitman, 2018; Davidowitz & Rollnick, 2018).

In light of the socio-economic constraints faced by not only first-generation students but also the financial and academic constraint placed on students due to financial and educational disparities, Institutions such as the University of Pretoria have thus far directed resources toward an institutional and systemic approach toward academic success (Ogude et al., 2021). This systematic approach developed by the student success steering committee applies faculty-based research focussed approach to managing student success (Ogude et al., 2021).

The Student Academic Development and Excellence Model (SADEM) was designed to track student success and progress in high-impact modules such as those in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields which students are likely to struggle with and thus result in a negative institutional performance (Ogude et al., 2021). The SADEM has thus far been applied across faculties, including that of the University of Pretoria's ECPs, to ensure that ECP students succeed in their first year and subsequent years of study through the application of its four principles, which the ECPs have thus far adapted to an online management system called the Mamelodi Referral system (M-RS).

This system tracks and analyses departmental activities and interactions with staff to support students and guide them towards academic success (Ogude et al., 2021). The principles of SADEM are, according to Ogude et al. (2021), addressed as follows: Principle 1 adopts a systemic approach to the first year of study, whereby all student

data and performance would be captured on the M-RS as opposed to individual lecturer spreadsheets (Ogude et al., 2021).

Principle 2 makes provision for the identification of student activities within the academic department as opposed to student support departments; this allows academics to engage and reflect on the data in order to identify structural gaps in the module in order to best support students as opposed to the assumption that poor performance is as a result of the student (Ogude et al., 2021). This, therefore, means that Principle 3 is addressed whereby links are applied to modules through staff involvement (Ogude et al., 2021). Principle 4 is addressed whereby performance indicators guide the support of diverse student populations by ensuring that the Faculty Student Advisors receive updates of at-risk students as identified by the data generated by the system in order to develop interventions that suit the needs of students, more so in light of how the students in the ECPs are likely deemed academically at risk (Ogude et al., 2021).

The diverse student population comprises high, average and low-performing students, where the low-performing students are provided with guidance and support to improve. In contrast, high-performing students are supported in order for them to continue excelling in their academic endeavours (Ogude et al., 2021). The average performing students comprise most of the student demographic and are supported in generic group settings, unlike the high and low performers who receive individual support sessions. Support for students comprises career guidance, study methods, parental support, academic identity coaching and clinical support services should the need be identified (Ogude et al., 2021). This study, though still in progress and under evaluation, highlights the importance of institutional engagement in meaningfully addressing student success, especially in light of the importance of incorporating a data-driven approach to student success.

Tracking ensures that meaningful transformation and student support are applied on all academic levels of the institutions, thus ensuring the success of the student and the institution. While it is vital to ensure that students succeed at an academic level, the various factors that make the student's ability to cope and succeed supersede the lecture halls, as Fourie (2018), Rollnick (2010) and Agosti and Bernat (2018) state that the success of students is to be addressed in and outside of assessments. Interventions such as ensuring that students are motivated through enthusiastic,

approachable and dedicated lecturers and staff of the institutions; encouraging student integration with the university's culture to promote a sense of belonging by upholding social engagement activities and encouraging student dedication by ensuring that student support initiatives cater to the mental and emotional well-being of the students (Budescu & Silverman, 2016; Fourie, 2018; Rollnick, 2010; White & Perrone-McGovern, 2017).

The holistic view of student success should address all aspects of the students, as the study by Ogude et al. (2019) addressed how a strong student support structure that fosters a sense of belonging can encourage student retention and success. Students in this study reported on how despite the stigma associated with the extended curriculum programmes, offsite provision further constitutes the alienation of the students in the programme, which, according to Davidowitz and Rollnick (2018) and Martin, Goldwasser, and Harris (2017) may hinder adjustment and academic progress. Enrolment in access programmes may come with its stigma, as the study by Martin et al. (2017) mentioned how students enrolled in developmental programmes in the USA tended to have a lower self-concept than those not enrolled in said programmes.

A decrease in a self-concept leads to a student's inability to believe in their abilities which may thus lead to a student's inability to set and reach academic goals (Martin, Goldwasser, & Harris, 2017). With various factors that affect student access and success, the disadvantaged black student group is most at risk, more so in the South African context, as they are more prone to factors that hinder their success (World Bank Group, 2018). The University of Pretoria, through its Extended Curriculum Programmes, has aided in the success of academically and socio-economically at-risk students through effective student support initiatives (Ogude et al., 2019). In a qualitative study by Potgieter et al. (2015), the students were interviewed to uncover the challenges students faced with preparedness and transition to the mainstream and their perceptions of their undergraduate experiences.

This study uncovered how successful the ECPs are in ensuring that students are equipped with skills to transition into the mainstream courses and expressed their satisfaction with the curriculum. This is pitched at a slower pace allowing opportunities for success. Although some expressed difficulties approaching some lecture staff, the academic support reported positively on the tutor support. Students developed coping mechanisms to assist them in adjusting to their new environments, with some

mentioning how financial and computer literacy constraints added to the challenges in adapting, along with various challenges such as study methods and time management (Potgieter et al., 2015).

More than 60% of the students expressed that they were prepared for the mainstream courses and added that the courses gave them an advantage over the first-year students enrolled in the mainstream courses as opposed to the ECPs (Potgieter et al., 2015). The quantitative study by Engelbrecht et al. (2014) for the programmes' success in ensuring student retention and success, as well as a comparison between UP ECPS and other programmes. Engelbrecht also looked into the enrolment of students from the programmes into postgraduate programmes.

The study reported a moderate success rate where completion and retention are concerned, specifically in comparison with other institutions, with a successful enrolment and migration rate of students from the ECPs to other faculties in an institution (Engelbrecht et al., 2014). These studies highlight the success of the ECP programmes in ensuring that students not only complete their degrees but equip them with skills to pursue further studies. However, the studies by Potgieter et al. (2015) and Englebrecht et al. (2014) did not highlight the success of the ECPs in addressing the redress aspect of the programmes.

Investigation into these aspects would ensure that access and success aspects do not supersede the redress and equity aspect of the programmes, ensuring that access to the programmes addresses the needs of the disadvantaged majority and ensure that recruitment of students is for those in need of the programmes. In ensuring targeted student success and support, the studies are yet to ensure that the holistic student needs are addressed, especially in the ECP and the student support aspects. The current looks into the nature of student support provided by the University's ECPs to propose an integration of the findings in the study within the student support structure for further student development and support.

## **2.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Unlike a theoretical framework, where studies are linked to a set theory in its context, a conceptual framework links theory principles to align the study's context to best elicit ideas around a study (Creswell et al., 2014). The current study applies theories such

as The Social Cognitive Theory, The Positive Psychology and the Social Constructivist theory embedded in the Appreciative Inquiry approach.

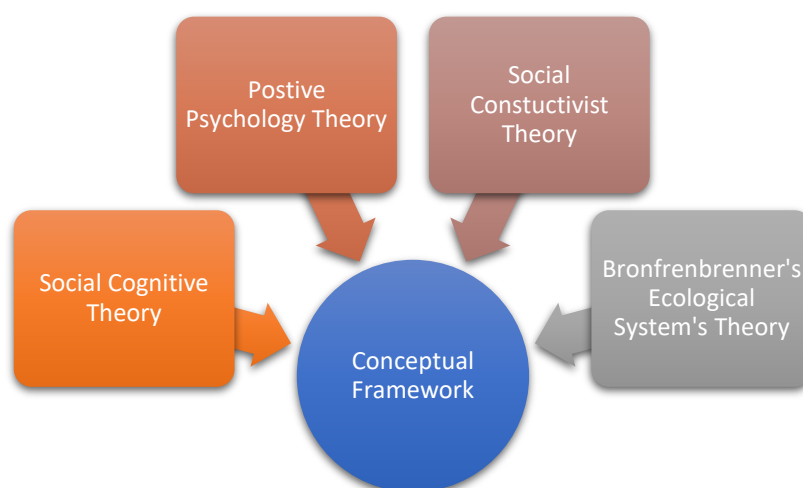


**Figure 2.1: Theories informing the conceptual framework**

### **2.5.1 Social Cognitive Theory**

Coined by Albert Bandura in 1977, the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) was initially developed as an extension of operant conditioning (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2005; Snowman & McCown, 2013). Operant conditioning, a behaviourist model coined by Burrhus Frederic Skinner in 1937, states that behaviour is elicited and altered by using positive and negative reinforcement (Snowman & McCown, 2013). This theory suggests that behaviour and learning are solely guided by the effects of one's actions as a result of consequences related to actions taken and elicited (Bandura, 2005; Snowman & McCown, 2013).

However, in light of the various other factors in the human experience, such as the external and internal factors related to one's ability to learn and behave, Bandura investigated the effects of behaviour, where the environmental, behavioural and internal personal factors were considered (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2005). Thus, the Social Cognitive Theory supposed that humans are agents of their actions and circumstances, intentionally and reciprocally influencing their environment and behaviour (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2001). This theory of behaviour, therefore, opposed the idea that behaviour could operate in a vacuum where learning would only

take place once the desired action is acted out, reinforced and imitated in order for learning to take place (Bandura, 1989).

In one of his most controversial studies, Bandura's Bobo Doll Experiment proved the modification of behaviour through observation, thus modifying behaviour by social and observed influences. In this controlled experiment, children averaging four years were studied in an experiment where Bandura aimed to investigate whether social behaviours can be obtained through observation and imitation (Bandura, 1965). The children were evenly divided according to their sexes, where different groups of children were exposed to an aggressive model and a non-aggressive model and the control group was not exposed to any model.

The groups exposed to an aggressive model were divided into two groups: The aggressive behaviour consisted of punching, kicking, sitting on the doll, and verbal slurs acted out by either male or female models. The children were then placed in a room with the bobo doll and other toys to see whether they would repeat the observed behaviour on the bobo doll. This study showed that though the children exposed to the rewarded aggressive behaviour portrayed aggressive behaviour, the extent of the behaviour was relative to the children's and model's sex and reinforcement.

The boys responded with more aggression than the girls even with the negative reinforcement, while the girls responded with aggression of lesser intensity, less so with negative reinforcement. This experiment highlighted how behaviour could be modified through observation with the presence of social models, whereby the internal drive to mimic behaviour was driven by the reinforcement that portrayed the participant's identification with the model rather than the participant's inability to learn (Bandura, 1965). This further entrenches the interchangeability of the environment's effects on learning and the internal drive through reinforcement to learn and thus express behaviour according to environmental standards (Snowman & McCown, 2013).

According to Bandura (2001, 2002, 2005), humans can intentionally influence one's autonomy and life circumstances; thus, the adaptation of the agentic perspective of self-development, change and adaptation. Core features distinguish this perspective of human development, and functioning embodies what it means to be a human (Bandura, 2001). The core features are: intentionality, which is the idea that one has

to be purposeful about actions toward making a change or having an influence on one's present and future circumstances; forethought, which is one's ability to motivate and direct one's actions towards intended future outcomes guided by environmental events; self-reactiveness is the notion that one makes appropriate/self-regulated actions relative to cognitive and environmental conditions towards the achievement of goals; lastly, self-reflectiveness refers to one's ability to reflect on their motives, actions, values and capabilities to evaluate one's thoughts and actions (Bandura, 2001; Bandura, 2002; Snowman & McCown, 2013). The self-reflective feature concerns efficacy beliefs which are the core of human agency (Snowman & McCown, 2013).

Given the features discussed above, the human agency would assume that humans can function independently. However, the social aspects of this theory include modes of a proxy, which is one's ability to reach out to individuals who have direct access to certain resources not available to the individual, and collective agency, which is one's social system that shares certain beliefs and thus utilise their collective power to achieve the required results (Bandura, 2002). Bandura's theory, founded on Triadic Reciprocal Determinism, states how human behaviour, personal factors and the environment influence one another depending on which factor is strongest at any given time to incite learning (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2005). These three factors are illustrated in the model below:

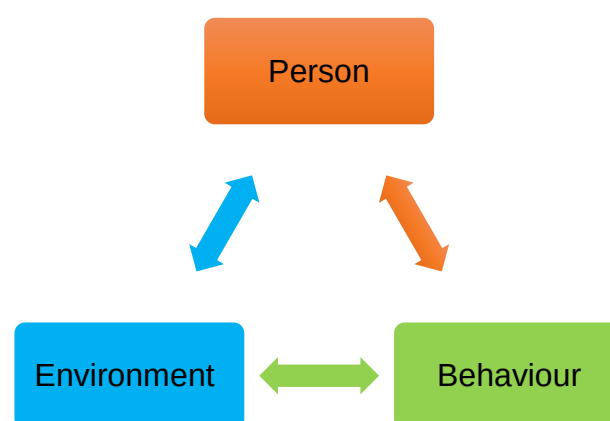


***Figure 2.2: Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Model***

### 2.5.1.1 Environment

The SCT applies the notion that the environment has a reciprocal relationship with one's personal development and behaviour (Bandura, 1989). One such example is that of social models whereby the individual will likely replicate behaviours modelled by another individual who may hold relatable values as the observer, more so if such modelled behaviour proves beneficial to both the observer and the model. According to Bandura (2002), models provide social cues for which the observer will likely match or abandon the behaviour pending the strength of the reinforcement. Models in not only one's immediate environment modify behaviour and efficacy beliefs in completing a specific behaviour but also one's social and cultural context (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2005).

According to Bandura (2005), social or collective beliefs influence one's ability to achieve or chart certain goals for one's self. In this study, the reciprocity between the participants and their home and learning environments was investigated to uncover the intricacies of this relationship and unearth the predominant factors that aided in academic development. Social persuasion and agency thus play a role in ensuring that such intricacies are uncovered.

#### 2.5.1.1.1 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

In order to gain a broader understanding of the participant's interaction with their development and learning, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory was applied. This theory identifies the reciprocity between the environment and the developing individual, highlighting how various levels of the environment influence the individual's development. The levels are as follows:

**Microsystem:** This is the developing person's first level of interaction, whereby interpersonal relationships are formed with other familiar individuals through roles and activities aimed at the development of cognitive, social, moral, and spiritual aspects. These are relationships with one's family (Donald et al., 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013).

**Mesosystem:** This is the level on which the developing person interacts with various other microsystems, which one might call the neighbourhood/ community in which the developing person resides. These interactions may be those with neighbours, peers and school. For example, should interactions in the developing person's microsystem

be lacking, it is assumed that strong relationships in the mesosystem may influence the person's development either positively or negatively (Donald, Lazarus, & Moolla, 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013).

**Exosystem:** The developing person may be affected by this level; however, they may not have direct interaction with it. This may affect the developing person through how it may affect those systems with which the person is in close interaction. Such as the parent losing their job may directly affect the developing person. School policy changes may affect how the person learns and interacts with teachers. The person does not directly influence the system but may be affected by its developments (Donald et al., 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013).

**Macrosystem:** This system consists of general societal norms, values, cultures, beliefs and economic structures that guide and influence other social systems. Municipal policies, for example, may affect how all social systems function and interact (Donald et al., 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013).

**Chronosystem:** The interactions between the developing person and their environment change over time and as the person develops, thus, influencing the person. For example, the deterioration of infrastructure and resources in the developing person's school may influence their quality of education and, thus, their level of cognitive development (Donald et al., 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013).

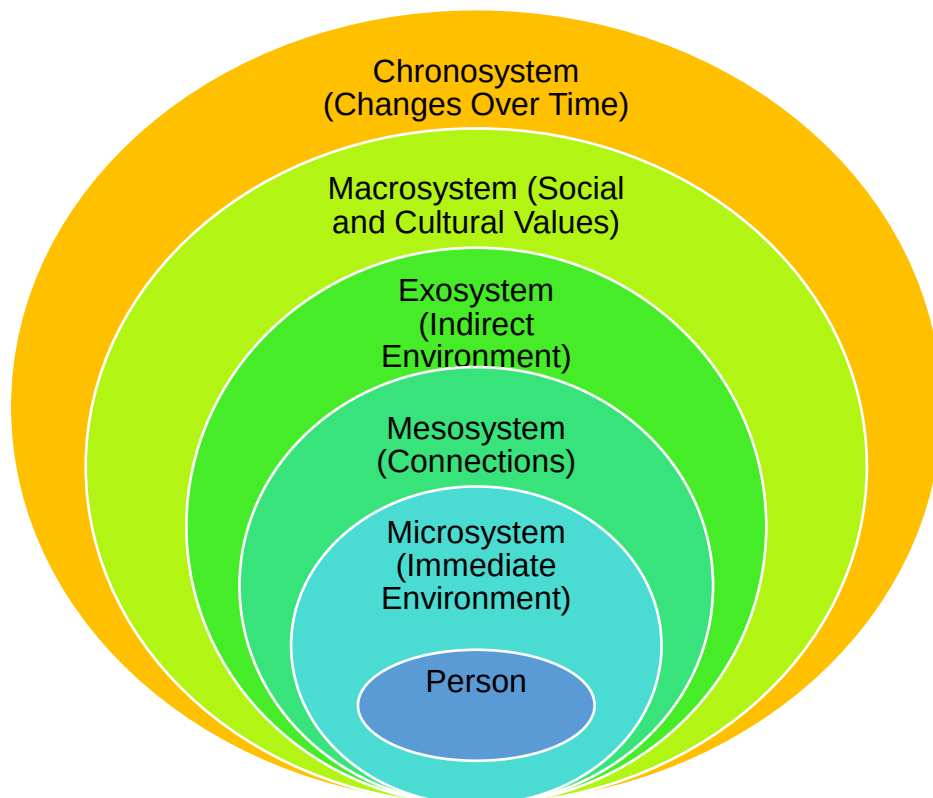


*Figure 2.3: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System's Theory*

Donald et al. (2014) mention four dimensions central to this system such as:

- **Person factors**- intelligence, motivation, temperament of the developing person, their caregivers
- **Process factors**- the types of interactions that take place between the developing person and their family
- **Context factors**- The neighbourhood where the developing person resides (schools, families, etc.).
- **Time factors**- patterns of change that take place over time.

In this study, the interaction between the SCT and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System's Theory aims to align and deepen the understanding and interaction between the participants and the environments in which they have grown up. For example, the education systems they interacted with and the social networks they may have interacted with to gauge the factors that assisted in their academic self-efficacy and where improvement in student support may stem from.

### **2.5.1.2 Human Behaviour**

Though it is essential to note the argument on nature versus nurture in human behaviour, the SCT strongly considers how the biological factors, more so how they play a role in human evolution and adaptation, are highly shared by social and technological factors (Bandura 2001). Human behaviour is organised by experience, direct or vicarious experiences, social constraints, beliefs and emotional factors (Bandura, 2002; Donald et al., 2014). These experiences are coded through neural pathways to programme behaviour and adapt under specific conditions (Bandura, 1989). Humans are known to have neural plasticity, thus allowing humans to learn and adapt under increasingly complex environmental pressures (Donald et al., 2014).

Thus, humans can construct new environmental conditions and have environmental conditions structure their mannerisms and way of living (Bandura, 1989; Donald et al., 2014; Snowman & McCown, 2013). In this study, the participants' reactions and behaviour towards and within their environment were explored using the SCT, emphasising how their environment affected how they behave and adapt to progress in both favourable and unfavourable circumstances.

### **2.5.1.3 Personal Factors**

Cognition forms part of humanity's ability to engage with external influences through cognitive processes that assist in understanding and making meaning of their environment (Bandura, 1989). Cognitive processes allow the ability to manipulate and understand the information received through direct or vicarious experiences to expand knowledge, understand causal relationships, and make rational actional actions based on circumstances or emotional factors (Bandura, 1989). Cognition, as a mental process, involves one's intention, creation and use of personal agency towards taking a particular course of action to reach specific goals (Bandura, 1989). In order to achieve these goals and maximise knowledge attainment, one needs to be self-regulated, which is one's ability to consciously use one's cognitive skills, internal and external resources, emotions and actions to alter one's behaviour towards achieving set outcomes without being externally pushed to do so (Snowman & McCown, 2013).

Self-efficacy, which refers to how capable one feels about fulfilling a particular task, is central to the SCT and aids the aspect of self-regulation as it influences whether one approaches goal setting and attainment optimistically or pessimistically, thus either fulfilling or avoiding set tasks (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1989; Snowman & McCown,

2013). Bandura (1989) identified four factors of self-efficacy, namely: Performance Accomplishments, Verbal Persuasion, Emotional/Physiological Arousal, and Vicarious Experience. These personal factors were key in participants' engagement with learning, knowledge attainment, and efficacy beliefs through their academic endeavours. The resources they tapped into and the manipulation of said resources and knowledge to attain their goals were vital in identifying their processes in goal attainment.

The application of the SCT in this study considered participants' internal resources, motivators and factors, and socio-economic, educational and racial contexts. This study aimed to uncover how these factors may have informed participants' development of academic self-efficacy and therefore led to their academic success. Through the application of the SCT, the factors in the environment, participant behaviour and personal factors, which are primarily driven by agency and agency modes, as well as efficacy beliefs, will uncover the dominant relationships and factors that guided participants in their academic success journeys.

### **2.5.2 Appreciative Inquiry**

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) applies various theories to form its method. This study will focus on the Positive Psychology Theory and the Social Constructivism Theory as they apply to AI. Primarily concerned with moving away from treating the negatives of mental illness, Martin Seligman, one of the core founders of Positive Psychology, aimed to highlight that which also gives life to treating and preventing mental illness (Seligman, 2002). Moving away from the deficit approach, Positive Psychology aims to enhance positive emotions, strengths or assets and positive organisations (Donald et al., 2014). Positive Psychology in AI ensures that focus on development is placed on the positive factors and experiences of participants in an organisation/institution to overcome and develop from the negative towards the positive outcomes of an organisation (Cooperrider et al., 2008). The core of AI is the strategic development of what works; to Fiol and Lander (2013), individuals likely gravitate toward completing tasks they believe they can.

Social constructivism, a variation of constructivism coined by Lev Vygotsky, is a theory that holds that humans have the potential to develop abilities provided that conducive

environments and methods are put in place to guide such development; thus, resulting in knowledge predominantly being socially constructed (Donald et al., 2014). According to the Social Constructivism Theory, knowledge is flexible, not stagnant, and moulds according to social context, time and social interaction (Donald et al., 2014). The Social Constructivism Theory in AI views organisations as environments that determine their reality through social interaction to develop knowledge and expand on what is known and unknown towards organisation change (Bushe & Kassam, 2005; Cooperrider et al., 2008). Individuals are thus both receivers and participants in the social construction of the organisation (Fifolt & Lander, 2013). Unlike generic organisational development strategies, AI tends toward uncovering outcomes to be implemented with the participation of individuals, which results in new knowledge of the organisation being acquired through interaction with individuals as equal stakeholders in the organisational development process (Fifolt & Lander, 2013). AI also grounds itself in its ability to compel individuals to act on the resultant outcomes (Bushe & Kassam, 2005). Incorporating Positive Psychology and Social Constructivism in this study assisted in guiding participants towards the reflection and engagement of appreciative aspects of the ECPs, student support, their personal lives and social experiences, yielding an appreciative interview aimed at possible organisational reform.

AI as an organisational change strategy has thus far been applied in various contexts and fields and reflected in various studies (Naaldenberg et al., 2015). In 2010 the University of Oregon, according to Fifolt and Lander (2013), applied AI to enhance student support and learning for university on-campus residence students. Seeing as students spent most of their time outside of classrooms, the intervention aimed to encourage student residence staff and faculty members to reflect on using the AI 4-D cycle to uncover the core values of the university's academic mission and their power in ensuring that they, as staff, contribute positively to students' learning (Fifolt & Lander, 2013). The outcomes of the AI application were not only the confidence and competence that staff members gained in affecting students positively but their ability to collaborate to develop new programmes that benefit campus residential students (Fifolt & Lander, 2013).

Learning focussed conversations assisted the team in developing learning outcomes for students, which encouraged the development of their soft skills such as

interpersonal skills, directed goal setting and self-concept skills. Once the positive core of the department was uncovered, many of the old activities were done away with to make way for effective student learning programmes. The University of Alabama at Birmingham also used AI to develop vision and values statements for the whole student affairs division (Fifolt & Lander, 2013). As vision statements were developed, team members opened up various communication channels where individuals could ask questions, share their thoughts, and inquire with the facilitators and team members. This approach provided the student affairs division with a systematic and authentic means of organisational review (Fifolt & Lander, 2013).

In the workshop proceedings journaled by Naaldenberg et al. (2015), international professionals from various fields (health, research, education) gathered to uncover applicable outcomes for improving the treatment of individuals with intellectual disabilities using as AI approach. Employees engaged in various workshops, each themed towards ensuring that the awareness of individuals with intellectual disabilities transcended towards functional outcomes that aimed to support said individuals actively. The professionals actively engaged in the AI process, which led to participants' development of ideas which would later translate to the design and implementation of the programmes required to actualise the desired outcome for individuals with intellectual disabilities (Naaldenberg et al., 2015).

In the South African context, AI was applied in developing a research capacity development programme whereby the integration of research with teaching and learning was utilized at the University of Western Cape (Frantz et al., 2013). This process ensured that Junior academics evaluated their teaching practices through research. The capacity development programme applied the AI framework in their workshops and attained feedback from participants through questionnaires, research write-ups and programme evaluations. Participants willingly shared their experiences in all four phases of the AI process, including an additional Definition phase added to the programme. The outcomes of the Definition, Discovery and Dream phases were how participants could reflect on how research can be integrated into teaching and learning practice through shared experiences. Participants reflected on how the information shared during the workshop could assist them in future practice. The participants developed and presented their possible interventions for applying research to teaching and learning practice. The development of a research proposal

was guided during the programme and thus submitted for approval to the ethics committee; ethical clearance was thus received from the ethics committee for participants to begin their research processes (Frantz et al., 2013).

Though there have been various applications of AI in multiple contexts, more so in higher education, the application of AI using students' and students' voices is yet to be explored. Hence the application of AI in this study, whereby the student's voice is used to gain the experiences of those who have received the services of a higher education institution and apply that feedback to make positive changes. The application of the student's voice is thus seen as a gap in programme development, particularly in light of the literature consulted. The application of AI in this study served to identify students' self-efficacy and an existing student advising model to generate new ideas of improvement through student engagement in an appreciative approach (Bushe & Kassam, 2005; Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2008). The focus was on the strengthening and positive transformation of the university student support through student involvement and AI, intending to improve student retention and success in higher education.

## **2.6 CONCLUSION**

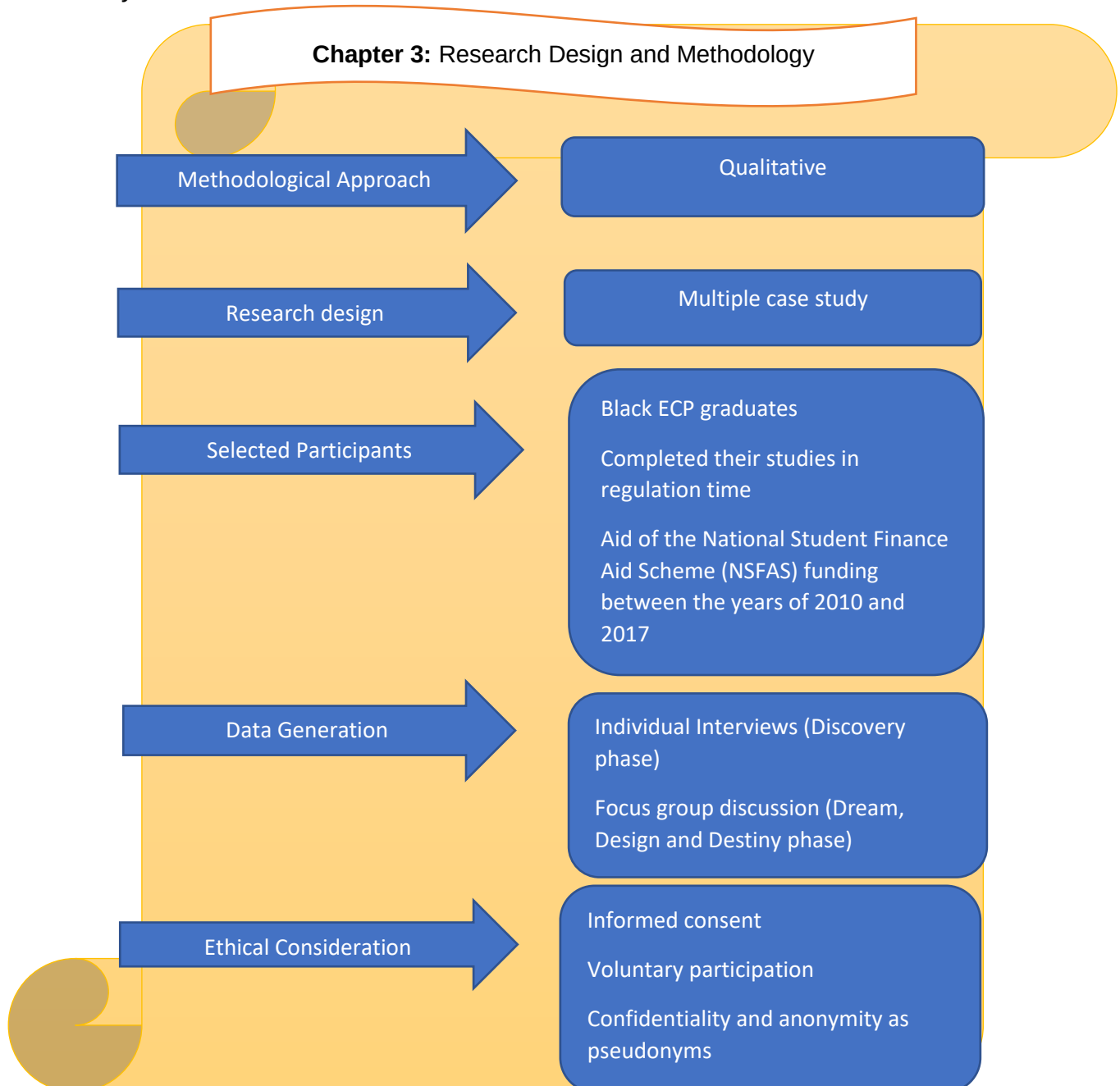
In this chapter, all concepts related to this study were discussed. The concept of academic self-efficacy was discussed and thus linked to the effect of student success and support as they impact student success. The Extended Curriculum Programmes were discussed, specifically their role in educational redress and bridging the gaps experienced in students' academic and socio-economic contexts. Lastly, the conceptual framework was discussed in this chapter and how it links to the development of academic self-efficacy and student academic access and success. The next chapter will discuss the research methodology that informs this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the research process and methodological strategies followed throughout the study. The sampling of research participants, the process of data analysis, ethical considerations and data generation have been discussed in this study.



## **3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

### **3.2.1 Research Methodology**

The method of this study was qualitative and thus reliant on words communicated verbally, symbolically or conceptually to convey meaning and understanding (Creswell et al., 2014). This qualitative study employs an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach whereby the researcher is the participant observer using semi-structured interview questions and focus group discussions. AI is usually used for organisational change and development by focusing on the organisation's strengths to foster such development. In this study, we focussed on the student's ability to affect change in their lives through uncovering resources leading to their development of academic self-efficacy (Bushe & Kassam, 2005).

The study also focussed on how the organisation (The University of Pretoria's ECPs campus) helped foster the development of academic self-efficacy in students through interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher guided the interview and focus group discussion process to uncover the strengths of participants' experiences through semi-structured questions, in-depth discussions and focus group activities. The AI approach looks at participants' strengths in achieving academic success despite adversity and how the harnessing of these strengths may be developed in first-time black students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The expected outcome of the AI process is a possible implementation of the design in order to ensure that change is sustainable and progressive; in this study, the AI process focused on the design process and possible solutions for future implementation due to time and resource constraints (Bushe & Kassam, 2005; Cooperrider et al., 2008).

The AI method not only harnesses and builds on the positive aspects of the organisation and participants who experienced the organisation to enforce positive organisational change; it also encourages participants to be part and parcel of the development process through commitment and interactive participation. Though the involvement of participants in the change and development process ensures sustainable development, the attrition of participants usually poses challenges to the process (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Participants were informed of the goals of the study in order for them to commit to seeing the AI process through.

With the active involvement of participants in the change and development process, the researcher guided the interview process. The data collected in the study were analysed in themes and sub-themes. The AI approach looked at the participants' strengths in achieving academic success through adversity and how the harnessing of these strengths may be developed in incoming students. AI follows a 4-D Cycle, namely the: 1) Discovery Phase (appreciating that which gives life and progress); 2) Dream phase (outlining the desired vision); 3) Design phase (how the dream can be constructed); 4) Destiny phase (executing and sustaining the dream) (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2008).

Though the involvement of participants in the change and development process ensures sustainable development, the attrition of participants usually challenges the process (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2008). It was, therefore, important that the participants were informed of the study's goals and had them commit to seeing the AI process through, though they were afforded the right to withdraw from the study at any time. It should be noted that AI is a process which does not aim to uncover negative or traumatic experiences but rather is a process which focuses on the positive in order to develop and enhance systems (Grieten et al., 2018).

### **3.2.2 Research Design**

This qualitative study applied a multiple case study design that enabled the researcher to conduct an in-depth study through flexible methods of data collection in order to formulate a theory or make comparisons on the phenomenon under study to identify trends (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2014). Multiple case study research is confined to space and time and thus studied in a real-life context in order to gain knowledge about a phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Leedy & Ormrod, 2014; Yin, 2014)

In this study, more than one case (participants) was investigated to identify the factors in their development of academic self-efficacy in various challenging contextual environments. The in-depth investigation of multiple cases, therefore, informed the data collection through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and the application of systematic analysis of the data through the AI method to identify the internal and external factors which aided participants' development of academic self-efficacy which led to their academic success (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Leedy & Ormrod,

2014). This informed the possible development of trends in academic self-efficacy factors, which may aid in the improved assistance of incoming students of similar socio-economic backgrounds through ECP student support services. The multiple case study design can uncover how an individual develops over time due to certain conditions and interventions, thus allowing for in-depth investigation (Athanasou et al., 2012; Leedy & Ormrod, 2014).

The advantage of the multiple case study design is its ability to uncover how an individual develops over time and as a result of certain conditions and interventions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). However, the analysis of more than one case affects the depth of data per case (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher ensured that the selection of participants was purposive and the execution of research questions was focused and uniform throughout the research process to secure the depth of the data.

### **3.3 SAMPLING OF PARTICIPANTS**

The study followed the purposive sampling technique. This technique is widely used in the multiple case study design, whereby the sample selected will likely yield the most significant data concerning the research question and thus assist in the development of trends promptly (Athanasou et al., 2012; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). Purposive sampling is also practical in qualitative research studies as participants predominantly represent the social unit related to the study's research questions and experiences (Niewenhuis, 2016).

The research sample was determined by administering a self-efficacy questionnaire called the New General Self-efficacy Scale (NGSE) to select participants with high self-efficacy scores. The NGSE is an eight-point scale measuring one's self-esteem and beliefs in one's ability to achieve goals despite adversities. The tool was validated by Chen, Gully and Eden (2001), who validated the tool's efficiency in construct and content validity, predictability and unidimensionality. Participants were asked to complete a google form which consisted of the NGSE questions which participants had to respond to in the following format: 1 strongly disagree; 2 disagree; 3 neither agree nor disagree; 4 agree; 5 strongly agree.

The NGSE questions are as follows:

1. I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself.
2. When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.
3. In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me.
4. I believe I can succeed at most any endeavour to which I set my mind.
5. I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges.
6. I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks.
7. Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well.
8. Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well.

The selected sample of participants was academically successful, Black ECP alumni who completed their studies in regulation time or are in the process of completion with the aid of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) funding. The sample were enrolled in the ECPs between 2010 and 2017. The sample size of the study was 8 participants. The population details were obtained from the senior faculty student advisor, a registered psychometrist of the UP Mamelodi ECPs. The student advisor shared the Google Form link with the NGSE questionnaire on her social media platform, which attracted 81 responses from the population. The researcher contacted qualifying respondents with an invitation to participate in the research project. The sample in the study is the participants who responded with interest to participate, which influenced the gender composition in the study as more females displayed interest in participating in the study as opposed to males.

The sample selected displayed an above-average score on the NGSE scale (<80%). With the guidance of the University of Pretoria's ECPs Psychometrist, the researcher analysed the responses and unveiled the results in Table 3.1. The development of academic self-efficacy depends on not only the context but also the intrinsic belief in one's ability to perform specific tasks and activities, which are thus measurable using the NGSE. The purposive sampling of participants thus ensured that relevant participants were selected to ensure that the development of academic self-efficacy in students who already possessed this quality was adequately investigated and uncovered in the data.

The advantages of this sampling technique lie in ensuring that the sample fits the criteria, which will aid in resolving the research question, as this technique also saves time by reaching the targeted participants systematically (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As reflected in Table 3.3., participants selected started their ECP studies between 2010 and 2017. They all received NSFAS funding, gained entrance into degree programmes in the University, graduated in regulation time, are currently employed or pursuing further studies, or are busy with their undergraduate studies.

The shortcomings of this sampling technique are the researcher's bias in choosing the context of the participants and the small portion of the participants, which limits the variety of data. The limited context of the ECPs, as well as the small size of participants, was combated by ensuring that participants from various types of disadvantaged backgrounds (economic, educational, social, geographical) were selected in order to ensure that a realistic illustration of the broader South African context is addressed. However, participants were selected solely from the UP ECPs. The researcher bias was addressed by applying the NGSE scale, thus involving an objective sampling tool.

**Table 3.1: NGSE Response of selected participants**

| <b>Participant</b> | <b>1st year in ECP</b> | <b>Degree Completion</b> | <b>Highest Qualification</b>                  | <b>Current Activity</b>      |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Gwen               | 2014                   | 2017                     | BCom Hons Business Management                 | Employed                     |
| Lebo               | 2010                   | 2013                     | BSc Hons Geology                              | Employed                     |
| Mandisa            | 2016                   | 2019                     | BCom Hons Communication                       | Internship, Postgrad Diploma |
| Nelly              | 2015                   | 2020                     | Boom Financial Science                        | Honours studies              |
| Khensani           | 2013                   | 2017                     | BSc Hons Geography and Environmental Sciences | Employed                     |
| Thembi             | 2016                   | In progress              | MBChB Medicine                                | Fifth year                   |
| Terry              | 2015                   | In progress              | MBChB Medicine                                | Sixth year                   |
| Zolani             | 2010                   | 2017                     | BSc Mathematics and Statistics                | Employed                     |

**Table 3.2: Participant Profile 1**

| Participant | Gender | NGSE Score | NSFAS Funded |
|-------------|--------|------------|--------------|
| Gwen        | Female | 87.5%      | Yes          |
| Lebo        | Female | 95%        | Yes          |
| Mandisa     | Female | 97.5%      | Yes          |
| Nelly       | Female | 87.5%      | Yes          |
| Khensani    | Female | 100%       | Yes          |
| Thembi      | Female | 85%        | Yes          |
| Terry       | Male   | 100%       | Yes          |
| Zolani      | Male   | 85%        | Yes          |

### **3.4 DATA GENERATION**

#### **3.4.1 Introduction**

Data generation commenced on two separate occasions to ensure that the AI approach's discovery, dream and design phases were achieved. The one-on-one semi-structured interviews ensured that the AI approach's discovery phase was achieved, while the focus group discussions and activities fulfilled the dream and design phase of the research.

#### **3.4.2 Individual Interviews**

The individual interviews were semi-structured as the application of semi-structured interviews is the induction of structured yet accessible communication between the interviewer and interviewee to encourage directed yet authentic conversation. (Athanasou et al., 2012; Creswell 2014; Creswell et al., 2014). In the AI method, data collection is represented by the Discovery Phase, whereby the researcher formulates probing questions which allow the participant to discover the best aspects of their educational experiences as it pertains to their self-efficacy, personal development and the contexts in which they developed (Bandura, 1989; Cooperrider et al., 2003; Grieten et al., 2018). This encourages participants to focus on the positive aspects of their development to extrapolate the positive core of their development.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the interviews took place online through the Zoom meeting platform, where all interviews were recorded and thereafter transcribed. The

transcription took place through the Otter application, an automated transcription application that transcribed live and recorded audio. The researcher edited and analysed the transcripts.

### **3.4.3 Focus Group Discussion**

The second aspect of the research was a focus group discussion on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, 2021. The focus group discussion and activities allowed for a broader range of responses which participants may have had inhibitions in answering on a one-on-one basis (Creswell et al., 2014). In the Dream phase of AI, participants gather in groups to imagine what could be based on the uncovered positive core of the organisation and individuals from the Discovery phase (Cooperrider et al., 2003; Grieten et al., 2018). The uncovered positive core from the diverse selected participants will assist participants in brainstorming ideas on how to ensure that the positive factors can be harnessed in students from similar backgrounds as participants in order to assist incoming students through student support best. These positive factors will have assisted in their development of academic self-efficacy in the Destiny phase, which this study will not pursue.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the focus group discussion took place online via the Blackboard Collaborate platform. While breakaway group discussions where participants worked in pairs or groups of 3 were not recorded, the activities that participants completed in each group breakaway and feedback discussions were recorded through Blackboard Collaborate, as well as documents shared by participants and notes taken by the researcher during the focus group session. Table 3.3. outlines the activities participants engaged in during the groups' discussions.

**Table 3.3: Focus group activity process**

| Focus group Interviews                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dream Phase                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Design and Destiny Phase                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction to the session</li> <li>- Member introduction</li> <li>- Introductory activity</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p>Identify social architecture; Select relevant design elements; Provocative propositions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Choose three social architecture elements that will aid in assisting the design for student support in improving the support to disadvantaged black students. Motivate as to why.” <b>(Design)</b></li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Activity 1: Group activity (BB Collaborate Discussion rooms)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What kind of support you valued most about the ECP Student Support Services</li> <li>2. What qualities you still apply that you learned during consultation or ECPs in your current lives</li> </ol> <p><b>Activity 2: Collective discussion</b></p> <p>Rank the kinds of support you valued the most, from most important to least important.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. being most important</li> <li>2. being of moderate importance</li> <li>3. as least important</li> </ol> | <p>Determine common themes through ranking. Rank what they value from the FSA and the support they received, which aided in their development of self-efficacy. Incorporate the advice they would offer students [taken from individual interviews] and rank it. <b>(Design)</b></p>                                                                  |
| <p><b>Discussion Session</b></p> <p>Engage in Dream discussions for the improvement of the FSA on fostering the development of self-efficacy in disadvantaged black students by looking at the best of what is along with the possibility of what might be as a collective group.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>Determine short-term and long-term goals, as well as possible stakeholders in the design. <b>(Destiny)</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>- Looking at the points you have uncovered in the ranking activity, what do you imagine as the ideal Mamelodi campus and student support? How does it look like to you?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                              |
| <p><b>Discussion Session (Break away discussion in pairs)</b></p> <p>Identify common socio-economic challenges participants faced and how they have managed to cope and overcome them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What socio-economic challenges you faced or face in your life and how did you manage to overcome them?</li> <li>2. What are the best possible ways which the student support can assist students in overcoming these challenges?</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>The outcome is how the FSA can foster the development of academic self-efficacy in disadvantaged black students.<br/><b>(Destiny)</b></p> |
| <p>Imagine the best possible ideas on how the FSA can assist students in overcoming socio-economic challenges:</p> <p><b>Activity 3 and 4: Vision statements (Breakaway in pairs)</b></p> <p>Imagine you <b>are</b> an award-winning student advisor from the Mamelodi Campus. You are requested to write a report to the Vice Chancellor on the vision your department has followed to improve support for disadvantaged black students which has improved retention and success.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What is your vision statement?</li> <li>2) What are your attributes and attitudes of you and your department?</li> </ol> | <p>Pledges by participants towards participation in the application of ideas and strategies discussed.<br/><b>(Destiny)</b></p>              |

## **3.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

### **3.5.1 Discovery Phase**

The discovery phase of the research entailed appreciating that which gives life and progress to the individual and the organisation. During the discovery phase, the interview data were coded in key themes to highlight the positive factors which led to the participants' academic success—using the Atlas TI computer programme assisted in coding the transcribed individual interview data. The data followed the process of crystallisation to identify key themes from each interview for trustworthiness and validity purposes (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014; Stake, 2006).

### **3.5.2 Dream Phase**

The Dream phase of the research entailed outlining the desired vision for the University of Pretoria ECP Student Support. The focus group interviews were coded under new emerging themes aligned with the study's research questions.

### **3.5.3 Design Phase**

The Design phase explored how participants of the study can construct a dream. The themes that emerged encouraged the design phase of the study (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2003) whereby the participants worked together with the researcher in designing a plan which may assist the development of academic self-efficacy in students as well as methods which may be applied in the ECP student support structure to support students.

### **3.5.4 Destiny Phase**

This phase entails executing and sustaining the dream uncovered by participants. The execution of the design was not implemented in the study. However, participants outlined short-term and long goals which may assist in achieving the dream for the study in future. The advantage of the AI method is that it fosters the interviewee's unaltered meaning, allowing little room for researcher bias (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2003). The process of triangulation for both individual and focus group interviews was time-consuming though necessary in formulating accurate generalisations. The time constraint was combated for the focus group interviews,

where participants assisted in identifying key themes in order to formulate their design, bearing in mind the initial key themes the researcher will reveal after discussions.

### **3.6 Rigour and Trustworthiness**

It is important to ensure that a research study highlights the strategies and methods applied during the research process to ensure that the research is trustworthy and rigorous (Creswell et al., 2014; Creswell, 2014). Rigour in the research was applied through the incorporation of crystallisation. Much like triangulation, crystallisation applies various means of data collection, theories and researchers to retain the research's quality and depth (Creswell et al., 2014). Unlike triangulation, crystallisation encourages multiple dimensions of descriptions of phenomena (Creswell et al., 2014).

In this study, multiple methods were applied in sampling, data collection and analysis to arrive at the conclusions. The sampling method proved rigour in the selection of the right participants. The data collection methods made use of individual and focus group interviews. The framework of the study includes three theories, and various steps in data analysis were followed to uncover the research themes. Where trustworthiness refers, the researcher applied criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability throughout the research process.

#### **3.6.1 Credibility**

Credibility refers to the congruence of the finding with reality, whereby the researcher should employ applicable research designs with the research questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher in this study ensured that the case study method aligned with how the research and interview questions were structured. The qualitative research approach was applied to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' perspectives. During this process, participants were requested to make alterations during and after their interviews to ensure that their reality and responses were adequately captured.

#### **3.6.2 Transferability**

Transferability refers to the ability of the researcher to highlight the context of the research to encourage readers to make their inferences about the study and avoid

generalisations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, the context of the research study where the participants are involved (age, gender, education, race, academic predisposition) was clearly outlined and elaborated on to encourage the transferability of the research to contexts applicable to the readers. This was done so in the study's methodology and research design section.

### **3.6.3 Dependability and Confirmability**

According to Creswell et al. (2018), dependability refers to the researcher's ability to clearly define and abide by the study's research design and data collection method. This is done so by making sure that the consistent documentation of the research process and analysis are kept within reach. This was done by the researcher through electronic documentation and computerised software to retain qualitative data analysis. Confirmability relates to the researcher's ability to remain neutral throughout the research process, keeping bias at bay (Creswell et al., 2014). The researcher in this study reflected on the possible biases which may affect the research and consistently ensured that the research purposes were met by strictly abiding by the literature and research protocol and ensured that evidence such as participant quotes was included in the research as evidence in the data analysis aspect of the study.

## **3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Research dealing with institutions and individuals has to include a moral code of conduct known as ethics to protect the research participants, the institution, and the researcher (Zeni, 2001). Ethical clearance was required to administer the participant interviews and focus group discussion from the department of Educational Psychology and the University of Pretoria's registrar's office. Permission from the University was obtained where the utilisation of student records was concerned. Confidentiality was ensured between the university and the researcher.

An informed consent form was shared and explained to the participants that they would be co-creators of active change through their knowledge and participation. The researcher ensured voluntary participation by fully disclosing the purpose of the research and how the participants would be involved in a positive change process from which they could opt-out at any time. Participants were emailed a letter of informed consent which they were requested to sign prior to the commencement of

the research. In the consent form, the researcher highlighted respect for their confidentiality and anonymity as pseudonyms were used in the individual interview coding process.

No payment or reward for partaking in the study was issued. Participants' identities were kept anonymous, and pseudonyms were applied in the research study's analysis and discussion aspect. The interview and academic transcripts excluded any identifying information about the participants. Publication of the research dissertation ensured that participant identity was kept anonymous and confidential through pseudonyms. The recorded data using digital platforms were kept in the researcher's computer, password protected while the research was underway and only accessed upon request by the supervisors. The data collected is utilised to write a dissertation, presentations, and possibly a research article.

Noting that the participants were from a vulnerable population, support from student services was made available in the instance that participants felt challenged in reflecting on previous experiences. It should be noted that AI is a process applied that did not look to uncover the negative or traumatic experiences but rather a process that focuses on the positive development and progress systems (Grieten et al., 2018). To the researcher's knowledge, none of the research participants arranged for such assistance from student services.

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter elaborated on the methodology, research design, sampling methods, data generation, data analysis and ethical considerations. The next chapter will discuss the findings and a thematic analysis of the collected data.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **QUALITATIVE DATA RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter addressed the methodological strategies and sampling methods. Furthermore, it provided a summary of the study's data analysis process. This chapter provides a detailed inductive analysis of the qualitative research data collected from the interviews and focus group discussions. In this qualitative phase, the data is organised into themes and sub-themes through the generation of codes to address this study's primary and secondary research questions. The results are aligned with the literature to inform the findings and recommendations discussed in the following Chapter 5.

#### **4.2 DATA GENERATION**

In order to uncover how black students from disadvantaged backgrounds drew from their internal and external resources to develop academic self-efficacy, this inductive qualitative study incorporated multiple case-study design. This design allowed the researcher to investigate in-depth to uncover trends in the data that fostered the development of academic self-efficacy over time and the impact of their environment and student support structures in solidifying students' academic success. Using ATLAS TI (a data analysis programme), the data collected were coded and categorised, and the methods identified said trends in the data (Fiese, 2019).

According to Saldana (2013), coding in qualitative research entails capturing the essence and attributes of phrases or words collected through qualitative methods of data, be it transcripts, visuals or journals, to inform the research questions and meet research objectives. Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is an approach applied in the study which drives organisational change by encouraging a shift from a deficit organisational approach to an appreciative humanistic approach (Bushe & Kassam, 2005; Cooperrider et al., 2008). Incorporating the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach ensured that the research was focused on discussing aspects of the ECP Student Support Services.

These helped participants thrive in order to uncover the positive core of the structure and thus further build on this core to foster positive results. AI informed the analysis of the data into the different AI phases as follows:

#### **4.2.1 Individual Interviews**

The Discovery Phase entailed semi-structured interviews where participants reflected and appreciated that which gives life to themselves and the Extended Curriculum Programmes Student Support Structure. The inductive analysis of these interviews uncovered and generated a total of 294 codes, with 28 categories/ code groups, seven sub-themes and four themes. These discussions yielded an outcome whereby, as per the AI approach, an organisation's positive core was to be identified. According to Cooperrider, Whitney, and Stavros (2008), the positive core drives the inquiry and is that the future is constructed. Based on responses recorded from the individual interviews, support (family and academic) was the central theme. From an organisational perspective, the Mamelodi student support services offered support in the academic setting, thus aiding participants' success. Focus group discussions were centred around improving and developing student support services in assisting students from more or less similar backgrounds as participants.

#### **4.2.2 Focus Group Discussions**

The focus group discussions focused on activity-based group discussions, whereby the group responses were recorded by participants and shared with the researcher. Responses from the activities helped uncover the positive core of the student support services and the ECPs.

1. In the Dream phase, participants collectively outlined their desired visions for the ECP student support services.
2. The Design phase explored how the dream can be constructed.
3. Lastly, the Destiny phase is when the design is executed to sustain the dream. Due to time constraints, in this study, participants made pledges and shared a preliminary plan of action toward the execution of the design.

### **4.3 Data Analysis Process**

This section provides an overview of the process of data coding, categorisation, and theming.

#### **4.3.1 Individual Interviews**

In order to systematically code and analyse the individual interview transcripts, the researcher assigned each interview question with its own set of codes per coding cycle, as represented in Table 4.1. In order to uncover the research themes, the two coding cycles were applied, namely the first and second cycle coding methods. The researcher assigned codes as guided by Saldana (2013).

#### **4.3.2 First Cycle Coding Methods**

According to Saldana (2013), the first coding cycle occurs during the initial data coding, where codes are assigned to words, phrases, lines, or paragraphs in transcripts. In this study, data were coded as the researcher read and analysed the data using mixed coding methods within the first cycle. Using ATLAS Ti, these codes were organised into different categories/ code groups and thereafter organised into Visual Networks to get an overview of the emergent patterns and frequencies of the codes. The first cycles yielded 294 codes and 28 categories/ code groups. Memos and comments were recorded in some code sets, which informed the selection of the main themes as well as the analysis of the data.

#### **4.3.3 Second Cycle Coding Methods**

The second coding cycle involves analysing, classifying and synthesising codes and memos for drafting informed theme and theory development (Saldana, 2013). In this study, the emerging patterns observed in the visual networks, codes and memos informed the formation of the themes and sub-themes in the study. Thus, the outcome of the second cycle was the emergence of 7 sub-themes and four main themes. Table 4.2. represents the main themes, sub-themes and research questions aligned to each research question.

**Table 4.1: Codes aligned to research and interview questions**

| Research question                                                                                                                                                             | Individual Interview Schedule                                                                                                                                                                                                        | First Cycle Coding Methods                                           | Second- Cycle Coding Methods |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Primary codes: Structural coding, In-vivo, Sub-coding, Values coding | Theming data                 |
| <b>RQ1: How did the students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds in the ECPs draw from their internal and external resources to develop academic self-efficacy?</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                      |                              |
| <b>1.1. Which factors have an influence on the development of student academic self-efficacy to promote retention and success in higher education?</b>                        | 1. What do you value most about yourself? Mention as many as 10 qualities you can think of.                                                                                                                                          | Primary codes                                                        | Pattern coding               |
|                                                                                                                                                                               | 2. Think back to an important moment in your academic career where you achieved something great. In a brief story, highlight on the following: What were you feeling and what did you do right that that contributed to this moment? | Primary codes, Causation coding, Emotion coding                      | Pattern coding               |
|                                                                                                                                                                               | 2.1. What challenges did you face and how did your valued qualities help you overcome challenges? Who are the people that supported you through this phase and how?                                                                  | Primary codes, Causation coding, Emotion coding                      | Pattern coding               |
|                                                                                                                                                                               | 2.2. Mention aspects of your environment that played a role in motivating you to achieve academic excellence or success and how?                                                                                                     | Primary codes, Causation coding, Emotion coding                      | Pattern coding               |
|                                                                                                                                                                               | 4. Imagine you are speaking to an ECP student who has is facing similar circumstances that you faced, what advice would you give that student to believe in themselves and stay academically motivated?                              | Primary codes, Causation coding,                                     | Pattern coding               |
| <b>1.2. How do socio-economic challenges affect the development and academic success of the University of Pretoria ECP students?</b>                                          | 3. What core internal (e.g. resilience, goal orientated) and external factors (e.g. supportive family, teachers) motivated you to succeed academically?                                                                              | Causation coding, Emotion coding                                     | Pattern coding               |
|                                                                                                                                                                               | 3.1. How did they make you believe you could achieve academic success?                                                                                                                                                               | Causation coding, Emotion coding                                     | Pattern coding               |
| <b>1.3. What suggestions do students have for a developmental change in the ECPs student support services or in the ECPs?</b>                                                 | 5. What do you value most about the UP Mamelodi Student Support?                                                                                                                                                                     | Causation coding, Evaluation coding                                  | Pattern coding               |
|                                                                                                                                                                               | 6. How, in your view, can the FSA in Mamelodi develop self-confidence, self-motivation and directed goal setting in disadvantaged black students?                                                                                    | Causation coding, Evaluation coding                                  | Pattern coding               |

#### 4.3.4. Themes and Sub-themes Uncovered

Four themes emerged from participant interviews:

- Self-awareness, grit and optimism/ resilience as factors influencing student success

- Reciprocity between environment and academic success
- Advice to future Extended Curriculum Programmes students
- The Value of student support services for student academic development.

Themes and sub-themes are described and thereafter substantiated with tabulated categories and quotes from the interviews. These themes are aligned with the research questions, as illustrated in Table 4.2. The discussion in Chapter 5 will align the secondary research question results with the primary research question, linking results with the research questions and the purpose of the study.

**Table 4.2: Emergent themes and sub-themes aligned with research questions**

| <b>RQ1: How did the students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds in the ECPs draw from their internal and external resources to develop academic self-efficacy?</b> |                                                                                                 |                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Secondary Research Questions</b>                                                                                                                                           | <b>Themes (4)</b>                                                                               | <b>Sub-themes</b>                                                           |
| <b>1.1. Which factors have an influence on the development of student academic self-efficacy to promote retention and success in higher education?</b>                        | <b>(1)</b> Self-awareness, grit and optimism/ resilience as factors influencing student success | Internal factors/ qualities                                                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                 | Steps and aids towards successful academic milestones                       |
|                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                 | Participant background and nature of adversities faced and overcame         |
| <b>1.2. How do socio-economic challenges affect the development and academic success of the University of Pretoria ECP students?</b>                                          | <b>(2)</b> Reciprocity between environment and academic success                                 | Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory on motivation of student success |
|                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>(3)</b> Advice to future ECP students                                                        | Communication, Grit, Dedication to studies, resilience                      |
| <b>1.3. What suggestions do students have for a developmental change in the ECPs student support services or in the ECPs?</b>                                                 | <b>(4)</b> The value of student support structures on student academic development              | What the UP Mamelodi Campus has done right and implications thereof         |
|                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                 | Areas of further development for the student support structure              |

#### **4.3.4.1 Theme 1: Self-awareness, grit and optimism/ resilience as factors influencing student success**

##### **4.3.4.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Internal factors/ qualities**

Sub-theme one of theme one was categorised into seven categories, followed by quotes relating to the categories. In table 4.3., the summary of internal factors/ qualities portrayed by participants is represented. The first category related to participants' beliefs. **Beliefs** signify the guiding external constructs, principles and values participants take to inform their world views (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Two participants overtly mentioned their beliefs as qualities they most valued about themselves. Khensani mentioned her faith in God and herself in her quote, "the most important thing is I believe in God, and I also believe in myself", while Mandisa highlighted how morals for herself and everyone around her forms an integral part of what she values about herself in her quote "I would say that I value my morals". Although Mandisa did not provide details on the specific morals, one may assume they are the standard societal norms and values as one's general moral guide.

The category of **Emotional Intelligence (EQ)** includes quotes from Gwen and Lebo whereby Gwen explicitly mentioned how she values her EQ, stating, "What I value is my uhm my EQ", and further went on to elaborate on how she can remain compassionate with others without having her boundaries overstepped. During the interview, Gwen mentioned how these boundaries allow her to have healthy and supportive relationships. This is a quality outlined by Lebo, though she implied EQ in her statement, "I also value the fact that I have like the understanding when it comes to different personalities"; she mentioned that how she understands different personalities proved helpful in her being supportive, yet with clear boundaries. This statement was therefore aligned with that of emotional intelligence.

Five participants were quoted as valuing their **Compassion/ Empathy** with kindness, social justice (worrying about the community as shared by Lebo) and sympathy towards others prevalent in responses from participants. For Terry, his sympathy for others pushed him to give himself to those in need as he would internalise their need in his statement, "Like, I have sympathy in almost everything. Anything that doesn't go well, it touches me and all that stuff". Compassion and empathy were prevalent themes throughout the interviews.

**Goal Orientation** was another category streamed throughout the interviews as participants indicated that they predominantly persevere towards attaining their goals and ambitions, especially in the academic context. Phrases such as "I am a go getter", shared by Mandisa, and "Whatever I put my mind to I can do and I can do it excellently, if I want to" shared by Gwen, are evident of how participants valued their ability to achieve their goals. It seemed that there was a link between Goal Orientation, **Confidence and Optimism/ Resilience**.

With **Confidence**, participants such as Zolani not only stated how he was "a people's person", he also said, though he spoke of himself in the third person, that "he always finds a way in whatever challenges he's faces". This is strongly aligned with **Optimism/ Resilience** as this is a quality of not giving up and being optimistic, more so in order to reach one's goals. Gwen, in the category of Confidence stated that she believes in herself and is confident, then further goes to say in the Optimism/Resilience category "I never give up, especially if I want something, uhm if I don't want something I can be like no its fine, but if I really want something I'll be like I will get towards it and I will somehow get it. In participants realising their goals, they had confidence in themselves and remained optimistic and resilient about achieving their goals. Participants therefore valued these intertwined internal qualities.

Khensani mentioned that she values her **Intelligence** , while Mandisa, Gwen and Terry mentioned qualities related to intelligence such as the ability to adapt (Gwen: "Adapting to a situation and actually being like how do I best utilise this for myself in order to actually succeed"); open-mindedness and the willingness to learn (Mandisa: "Always open to learn new things"); the ability to be innovative and solve problems (Terry: "I like to explore stuff, to look for new invention, and new, like, anything that can be able to come and resolve challenges that we face as a world") and the ability to be resourceful and apply knowledge where necessary (Terry: Take whatever information that you got and try to put it into practice or try to find a solution or new way that you can use that information to solve the challenges"). **Appendix D1 refers.**

#### ***4.3.4.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Steps and aids towards successful academic milestones***

In the application of AI in the study, participants were guided through a reflective question whereby they reflected on a positive academic **Achievement** so as to encourage the positive nature of the AI approach; as well as to centre responses

around the appreciative approach instead of the deficit approach. The participants mentioned achievements such as honorary awards, the completion of studies as well as acceptance into their preferred fields of study. These results elicited positive emotions from participants as they reflected on their achievements. The **Feelings/emotions** such as excitement, disbelief, pride and validation were experienced upon confirmation of achievements. These achievements elicited feelings of relief and a sign to continue with the next goal, as stated by Zolani in saying "So every time I achieve something, it feels like, okay I'm done with this part, what's next?".

In order to obtain data on how participants were able to attain the achievements, the researcher inquired on what participants believed they did right in order to achieve success. The **What was done right** category therefore yielded responses that predominantly highlighted on asking for help and remaining determined and focused on reaching their goals. In asking for help, participants reached out to students support services for support and study skills and went into consultations with lecturers and tutors, much like Thembi who stated that "Lectures, I was there. Tutorials, I was there. Practicals, I was there. And I went to see (the student advisor) as well to help me with study methods so that I study as effectively as I can". Participants like Thembi, Lebo, Zolani, Gwen and Lebo asked peers for help which, as a result led to peer tutoring and study group sessions. Being a shy person, Terry consulted more with lecturers as he could not engage in a crowd. These steps taken by participants signified their determination to achieve their goals which therefore motivated them to work hard academically and succeed. They took initiative to pave their own success.

It is not to assert that participants felt motivated at all times as they faced challenges as well. Khensani would feel anxious and demotivated at times, however, having support from a relative assisted her in staying motivated to continue her studies as stated in her quote "I would tell him I feel like giving up, especially with my research... he would be like you have the ability to move on and make it, just keep doing it. If you need help I am here". This support kept Khensani motivated to not only express her frustration but also to continue in her academic journey. In the **Support** category, there is, however, a link with the **What was done right** category as the academic support received by participants during these times were highly significant in them attaining their achievements. This support received by participants from not only relatives but

academically strong peers and friends, student support, lecturers and tutors, proved helpful in their academic journey. **Appendixes D2 and D3 refer.**

#### ***4.3.4.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Participant background and nature of adversities faced and overcame***

In order to gauge the nature and context of participants' challenges and push to succeed, the participants were asked to share their histories and **Backgrounds**. With only three of the participants (Gwen, Mandisa and Thembi) having attended good resourced schools, Terry, Zolani, Khensani and Lebo mentioned that they went to poorly resourced schools with poor academic outcomes. Reason for this being that they were located in either the township and/ or rural areas. Zolani stated "The school didn't have the resources, that's number one, it's in the townships.... The teachers sometimes, you find that they don't attend classes". Terry stated "I am from a Township from Bronkhorstspuit. That's where I did my grade 6 to my Matric.... that high school it never produced any of the students which will say were going to varsity". Lebo recalled the infrastructure of her school stating: "The schools there we didn't have infrastructure.... I remember I used to sit in a three-legged chair, like, I remember I sat on that chair for the whole year". Lastly, Khensani stated: "I was coming from a township school which was considered one of those poor township schools".

Though, at some point all participants lived and experienced life in the rural and township areas, these experiences took place in different time frames for each participant. Whereas Terry, Zolani and Lebo predominantly grew up in the township or rural areas, Mandisa, Thembi and Gwen experienced some of their lives in the suburbs and township/rural areas due to a shift in finances in their families. Mandisa stated: "From a very young age I stayed in aim a township and then my dad got an opportunity to work in a bigger mine here in North West, so we moved from Gauteng to here North West, and when I got there it was a suburb vibe community". Mandisa continued to say, "I would say that I was privileged, you know, because we could afford a lot of things, back then when I was in primary, like they took me to uhm private school... so it was still a private school until grade twelve". Mandisa's financial situation changed when her father lost his job. She stated: "it has been a shaky road financially at home because that period where we got disturbed my father couldn't recover from the job that he had and he couldn't afford the things that he used to". Though Thembi grew

up in both the rural and township areas stating: "It's like a township but I also grew up in the rural areas, growing up with my grandparents", her parents could afford to take her to a good school as she said: "When I started at the school it was one of the best schools in the area... When I started it was predominantly an Indian school". Until their financial situation changed and they had to move to a smaller house. In her response she said: "When my dad lost his job... We moved from a 3-bedroom house to a 1 room. Not one bedroom but 1 room where it was the kitchen, the bedroom in one room and when we moved there, I knew things just got different". Though her financial situation was tough, she managed to get a scholarship in a private school and completed her schooling as she said: "It was a school of excellence and it was a scholarship". Gwen, However, started off well, grew up in the suburbs and went to a good school until her parents' divorce, which change financial dynamics for her and her mother. She said: "We didn't have much money and through the divorce my mom lost everything cause my dad took everything, he got houses, cars, money he got everything so my mom only got me because she fought for me". This financial situation would affect her throughout her schooling, though she did manage to go to good schools through academic scholarships as she stated: "I went to high school where I got was a bursary because of the church I went to, so I got a sixty percent bursary and that is the only way they could afford my school fees for the private school".

Zolani, Terry and Lebo mentioned that the communities and environments they were living in were counter progressive. Zolani stated: "There was no motivation from the community... most of the time you are being encouraged to actually not go to school". Terry said: "I grew up in the area whereby my mindset was like 'The aim is to just finish school and after finishing school, find someone have children and that's it. Go and find a job and then that's it'". Lebo, having grown up in a squatter camp and thereafter moving to better housing in the same township mentioned: "Overall, I think everyone there we couldn't dream big because of the situation that was around us... We were squatting like squatter camps, you don't have space to even plant, but when you go to your own space you start doing things like oh okay we can also have burglar guards".

Ultimately, either throughout their lives or toward the end or beginning of their high school years, all participants experienced a variety of difficulties, with all of them aligned with finances. **Appendix D4 refers.**

Throughout their academic careers, participants experienced several **Challenges**, which, as a result, affected their **Emotional and Psychological States**. These upcoming paragraphs cover these two categories of the research study.

Where challenges are concerned, participants mentioned how they predominantly faced academic challenges, be it not having enough finances (as mentioned by Zolani, Khensani and Terry), to being emotionally and mentally affected by academic and environmental factors (as mentioned by Gwen, Thembi and Lebo) as well as financial challenges. Zolani stated: "The biggest challenges, I think it's what every black child is facing. It's the financial exclusion and accommodation"; Terry stated: "My first challenge actually it was the finances" and Khensani stated: "Though I had parents who were working but I was not the only child at home. So, whatever they are working and getting they have to cover for me and my siblings and I had a brother who was in varsity as well, like there was a time when I had to run around with NSFAS". These responses align with the financial difficulties these three participants faced.

Gwen, much like Thembi, had more psychological difficulties associated with her academics. These were mostly due to teacher bullying as well as emotional abuse she endured at home. She stated the following about her being bullied: "I obviously know that those teachers were bullying me I wasn't doing as well in those subjects"; she went to further state that "I was emotionally abused in that house without realising it was emotional abuse uhm because they were like even if I told her like an achievement she'd be like ahh it would never be like a well done". This lack of validation and support for Gwen while she was staying with her extended family led to her stating: "I started suffering from depression". She realised that she valued affirmation and without that, she could not cope "I need for me I think there is an internal need to be affirmed, there is an internal need to be recognized".

Thembi mentioned failure in tertiary as her biggest challenge by saying: "Biggest challenge is for the first time in my life in tertiary, in my school life I failed". Her inability to ask for help was a contributing factor which led to her psychological challenges and coping as she said: "The most painful thing for me was I couldn't ask for help. At some point I didn't see, at the beginning I couldn't see I was drowning. I saw I was struggling but I didn't see how bad it was". She went on to say: "I was putting all the I could put. which was practically nothing because I was exhausted. I think I was borderline depressed as well and I felt like I was working but I wasn't working effectively".

While Khensani also worked hard academically, she also mentioned having experienced difficulties such as isolation due to language barriers "I didn't know anyone on campus and also the language barrier, I'm Tsonga, most people are Pedi, Tshwana, Zulu. I ended up having to be a quiet person.... I didn't know anyone on campus" and her transition from Mamelodi to main campus "When I got to main campus it was difficult for me where the pace I was used to in Mamelodi was I think twice or three times harder." As a result of the challenges, academic and financial, Khensani also experienced psychological distress, though she kept an optimistic view point, as she stated: "I can say I was depressed but not like the other people explain cause my depression was different because I had this thing at the back of my mind like I have to make it, I have to push even though I failed".

Due to finances, Lebo had trouble with getting to campus on a daily basis as she had to use the rail, which she describes as an unpleasant experience "The fact that we didn't have money, I had to use metro rail, every day, like every day and it was far, like it was far from my place to the train station... I don't want to think about it". Another challenge she mentioned was isolation and the feeling of being underprepared for university. She stated: "The most problem that I encountered was, I did not fit in.... people that are in varsity it's like they knew that they were ready, and with me I think there we were only two from my school who came to UP that year, from my school, I did not know anyone".

Through participants' accounts, it remains that finances were the primary factor in their experiences and psychological distress. Though Thembi did not say it as blatantly as Khensani and Lebo, the transition into tertiary education remained a factor in her challenges which led to her failing, which subsequently led to her experiencing depression and burnout. **Appendix D5 refers.**

Through their background and challenges that participants faced and experienced, they had an internal drive to succeed. The **Push to Succeed** category had Gwen state how she was predominantly pushed by the need to get her family out of financial strain as she said: "My biggest-biggest motivation was to get my family out of the struggle they have". She added that she also wanted to ensure that she gives back in society by stating: "I want to leave this world having made some kind of impact". And then lastly, her need to be affirmed, which therefore encouraged her to work hard. She stated: "Like I need for me I think there is an internal need to be affirmed, there is an

internal need to be recognised. And so, for me I'm like in order to do that, I must be the one to work my hardest cause also another thing is no one owes me anything but I owe it to myself to try my best".

While Khensani stated that she was pushed to succeed due to her receipt of her bursary "I thank God that ended up getting NSFAS for studying and I was able to complete my studies"; Mandisa stated that her push to succeed was motivation from her high school teachers who believed in her. She said: "My teachers motivated me... that I'm going to do well".

In their push to succeed, participants mentioned how their values aided them in succeeding, thus explained in the **Aiding Values** category. For Gwen, her *optimism, conscientiousness, independence and goal orientation* aided in her success, as she mentioned in her responses by saying: "I want to succeed... I need to finish everything and I need to do it well"; and "I don't like it that people do things for me, I like to be the one who did for myself" and lastly, "I must be the one to work my hardest cause also another thing is no one owes me anything but I owe it to myself to try my best".

For Khensani, her *confidence, resilience and optimism* aided in her success as she said: "My belief in myself, because I told myself that that next year I am reducing these modules and passing the module that I failed"; "I try to work through my challenges and "Always saying encouraging words to myself". While Thembi's *goal ordination and resilience* kept her focused despite challenges as she said: "When I got my result that I failed... I went to all my lecturers and I told them I am going to be repeating.... They advised me to start preparing in advance before the classes started and I said I will do that".

Terry's *resourcefulness and goal orientation* pushed him to succeed as he said: "I didn't have resources... let me see, like let me use the resources that I have to keep moving" and "I'm that one person after writing almost every test I'll come sit down take that paper and reflect before the results even come out, take that paper". Lebo's ability to remain *true to herself and maintain her goal orientation* aided her in succeeding as she said: "I didn't pretend to be someone I am not, people knew my situation".

Although these values were initially not stated by participants when asked in the first question, their responses unravelled more values as they stated how they were aided and pushed to succeed. It is evident that participants predominantly maintained their

goal orientation as they navigated through their challenges, which was further aided by their ability to be resilient through challenges and make use of available resources in order to succeed. This therefore meant that they remained optimistic about their futures and outcomes regardless of challenges they faced. **Appendix D6 refers.**

As participants navigated through their challenges and academics, they mentioned the external resources and **Support Received** in the process. Over and above working hard and remaining goal oriented, it was evident in the responses from participants that consultation and support from peers, teachers, lecturers, student support and family aided in their success. Gwen stated that: "I had some teachers that did support me"; "My family were a big influence in supporting me especially my mom and my aunt"; "My best friend (from school) so both of us and we never had a competition we just both did very well in everything" and "I remember one of the first people I met was (Psychologist)". Gwen's statements encapsulate how her family, teachers, peer/friend, as well as the FSA psychologist supported her.

Financial aid was a big supporting factor for Zolani as he stated: "I think the biggest challenges, I think it's what every black child is facing. It's the financial exclusion and accommodation. Well, for me, there were... it's better because I had a backup in terms of that, I had a bursary for that". He owed support from his parents and the financial aid administrators by stating: "(Administrators) from my bursary, they were very supportive, and my parents there were supportive in terms of transporting me".

Terry stated how support from his parents, community and the Mamelodi student support and lecturers helped him as he said: "So my support structure okay, I will say the most one are my parents and my family as a whole"; "I got a sponsor from my community, the company from my community was willing to offer me money"; "Mamelodi support structure, the like of (Psychologists in student advising) and the lecturers also, they were so welcoming".

It is evident from the responses that support from family, peers and academic support structures play an important role in the academic success of students. In the unique case where Terry received financial support, finances remain a factor in ensuring that students transition smoothly from high school. As Lebo stated: "I didn't want to live in poverty... then and seeing my uncle doing things for us", further embeds how support

in not only emotional but also financial form becomes vital in students' academic pursuits. **Appendix D7** refers.

#### **4.3.4.2 Theme 2: Reciprocity between environment and academic success**

##### **4.3.4.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory on motivation of student success**

Theme two explores the reciprocity between the environment and academic success with alignment to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. This theory states that a person's development does not exist in a vacuum, but instead is influenced by the different levels of a system in a social context wherein the child exists and interacts with such systems (Donald, Lazarus, & Moolla, 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013). The levels of the system consist of the following: The Microsystem (individuals first level of interaction i.e. family); Mesosystem (the second level of interaction i.e. neighbourhood and community); Exosystem (the third level of interaction i.e. parent's job, school policies, etc.); Macrosystem (fourth level of interaction i.e. societal norms and values) and; Chronosystem (change over time influencing the developing person person) (Donald, Lazarus, & Moolla, 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013). Through the lens of the Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Theory (TRD), the data collection and analysis of this study was guided by how the human behaviour, personal factors and the environment influenced how participants progressed academically (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2005).

Participants in this study mentioned various aspects of their social systems which influenced their development of academic self-efficacy. Whereas theme 1 briefly touched on the above-mentioned dimensions that guide development, this section will systematically align socio-economic motivators for their success as well as factors which prompted their development of academic self-efficacy to the Bronfenbrenner's Systems model. These outcomes will outline which levels of the social system affected participant success more as well as how these interactions with the levels may be developed to encourage incoming students.

In the **Internal Motivators** category, participants outlined internal factors that motivated them to succeed. These are factors outlined by Donald et al. (2014) as *Person Factors* of which participants communicated factors such as resilience, goal orientation, confidence and optimism, competitiveness, the need to get out of poverty,

passion for their desired profession as well as their need to make a difference. These factors are what motivated the participants to seek better improvement for themselves and therefore informed their interactions with all the system levels. Were it not for these factors, participants may have engaged differently with their systems and this may have resulted in alternative academic outcomes.

In resilience, Gwen mentioned: "For me internal it ties back to my values where I'm like resilient". In goal orientation and passion, Terry said: "I was one that person who was like more passionate like, in trying to be ahead all of the time, because I'm one person who learn by trying to study ahead. With the need to make a difference and a passion for the desired profession, Gwen said: "I want to leave this world having made some kind of impact, so for me those are my internal motivators" and Zolani said: "What motivated me academically, was the fact that... I wanted to be a professional, and... I wanted to make a difference in South Africa, and not just for myself".

Khensani remained optimistic and confident about her academics and future as she stated that: "I grew up being a child that knew that academically I am able, maybe because of the support but I knew that I am able and that I can do this thing". Thembi was not only confident and goal-oriented but also mentioned how her competitive streak was a key motivator as she said: "Internally I'm a very competitive human being. I always want to achieve more than I have achieved. I always do the best for myself. That is the biggest internal motivating factor for me". With Lebo's need to get out of poverty she stated: "I didn't want to live in poverty". **Appendix D8 refers.**

The categories: **External motivators, Community Motivators as well as Method and Cause of Motivation** are outlined according the systems levels and thus will be described accordingly so as to outline the interaction between the participants and their interaction between the different levels in the system.

### **Microsystem**

The microsystem refers to a person's first level of interaction. At this level, interpersonal relationships are cultivated with individuals in close proximity of the developing person such as family. The roles and activities that take place amongst the people at this level tend to develop a person's cognitive, social, moral and spiritual aspects (Donald et al., 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013).

Participants were positively affected by their microsystems as they all mentioned how their families played a big role in their success in the form of financial and emotional support and in the form of emotional support as well motivation and encouragement. Interactions with student advisors assisted participants in aligning their academic pathways with their goals as well as the provision of guidance and support.

For Gwen, her family offered financial support in the midst of financial strain as she recalls: "I honestly cannot tell you how but they managed to pay our school fees and I remember the was one time when they didn't but they somehow found a plan". She stated: "My mom and my aunt they wanted the best for me obviously, so everything I did they'd be like "No you can do it'. They never said 'No, give up' that was not in their vocabulary, it's just working harder or find a way to do it. So for me that was a bit supportive". She mentioned how her mother was her biggest supporter as she motivated her through positive verbal affirmations and encouraged her to achieve her goals as she stated: "The biggest, biggest thing is my mom. To this day I would never forget it and it's so true. She said to us, 'You have to be twice as good to in order to get half as much as the people you're going to school with'". She also stated that guidance from the student advisor aided in her academic journey as she navigated her way through university. She reflected on her session with the advisor and said: "I'll never forget her saying there is no such things as a friend in varsity, there's no such things as a friend in terms of, you are here for yourself, and do not determine what you're going to do and how you operate because of friends, because friends can easily leave you in the dust".

Thembi mentioned how her the support, encouragement and motivation from her parents, particularly with them having a vested interest in education, influenced her views on education and encouraged her to do well; even as they faced financial hardships. Therefore, positively aligning her interaction with getting an education and her participation in academic activities. She said: "My family, my dad and my mom were big on education. They literally preached to me that school is your way out of here and they were very encouraging with school work". When she failed her module reflected on her father's reaction upon telling him, she said: "My dad said you're still young. You will repeat, they didn't kick you out right. I was like no, so I was like okay, go back to school, repeat it, get the rest of the year and get rest. So, when I get back it was like a huge load had just been lifted and that support that they gave me actually

motivated me” Over and above support and motivation from her family, her living situation after her father lost his job and they had to move to a smaller dwelling pushed her to want better. She said: "When I found myself in that environment. This place was built of planks.... Now we had to sleep on the floor with one blanket. It was the three of us and I didn't want to be there. That was one thing I knew for sure, I didn't want to be there and I sort of made an executive decision that I will work harder at school and it was the only thing I had and it was the only thing that was guaranteed to get me out of there".

Mandisa received financial and emotional support from her sister, more so after her mother passed on. She stated: "My sister, externally I would say that whatever I needed she would give me money and I buy it for myself you see". Her sister would regularly check up on her wellbeing which kept her motivated as she said: ""My sister, I would say that, uhm she would call me every day, I'd say she would call me five times a day, just to check up on me to see if I am okay if I have eaten, how to ask me how was school, what am I doing that time and she would ask me how are you planning to study for exams, do you need anything for your exams you see". Though her mother had passed in, she recalled motivational words she had said before her passing which echoed in her heart as motivation for her to remain resilient in her academics as she said: "I don't know if it falls internally or externally before my mom passed away, she literally asked me and begged me to go, "My child whatever you do please go to school and study". And from then those words kept playing in my mind saying to me this is what my mom wanted from me and I'm not going to let her down".

For Khensani, family support motivated her to do well academically and therefore informed how she went about her schooling and tertiary studies as she was less anxious due to the support. "Family was there for me and they are still there for me". She also had to work towards passing as her family could not afford to pay for her should she not do well in school as she said: "I was not the only child at home. So, whatever they are working and getting they have to cover for me and my siblings."

Terry's motivation and support from his family, more so his education-oriented parents motivated him to succeed as he stated: "I'll say my close family, my mum, and my late dad and my younger brother they played a big role because my mom, my dad only had my matric and mum only had a diploma. And one thing that they wanted from us is that they want us to graduate and to be something in life, and anything that I wanted

despite not having enough money. While his uncle provided him with the necessary resources to succeed as he said "My uncle came through also, made sure that I get the books". Making use of the student advisor informed his career choice and how the support he received while in university as he said: The student advisor, I was taken to her because I was so stressed, I was so worried, all those stuffs, and she kept telling me that, "no, I can see you doing well, you will be fine.

### **Mesosystem**

The mesosystem is the level at which various microsystems interact with each other. This may be the community or neighbourhood in which the person resides. These interactions take place between peers, neighbours, school, etc. in order to develop a person's interpersonal skills and overall positive development (Donald, Lazarus, & Moolla, 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013).

With Gwen's determination to do well, fostered by her family through motivation, and her need for external validation, her interaction with her school and peers was positive as she directed herself at achieving her academic goals which resulted in positive academic outcomes, validation and affirmations as she said: "At school I was just working because I was so determined to do so well, I remember I was an all-rounder and everyone was like 'oh my word".

Thembi, after moving to her home after financial constraints took place, she was determined to work her way out of the environment which therefore motivated her to achieve academically and have a goal-oriented view of her studies. She said: "When I found myself in that environment. This place was built of planks.... Now we had to sleep on the floor with one blanket. It was the 3 of us and I didn't want to be there. That was one thing I knew for sure, I didn't want to be there and I sort of made an executive decision that I will work harder at school and it was the only thing I had and it was the only thing that was guaranteed to get me out of there" Her living environment at home motivated her to want to leave as these were uncomfortable living conditions.

As Terry's parents wanted more for him and his brother due to them having not studied as far as they probably would have wished, they motivated and supported him and his brother to succeed. This encouraged their outlook and interaction with their school and university studies and thus pushed them to succeed. Terry said: "I'll say my close family, my mum, and my late dad and my younger brother they played a big role

because my mom, my dad only had my matric and mum only had a diploma. And one thing that they wanted from us is that they want us to graduate and to be something in life, and anything that I wanted despite not having enough money”.

Terry also consulted the student advisor who informed how he navigated through his career choice and in university. He says: “The student advisor, I was taken to her because I was so stressed, I was so worried, all those stuffs, and she kept telling me that, “no, I can see you doing well, you will be fine”.

The interaction Khensani has with her community and them making provision of platforms for her to share knowledge to the youth motivated her to succeed as she was leading as an example in her community. She said: “Being given platforms whenever I am home, sometimes when I am home I like gathering young girls to speak to them to open up. In most cases where I come from, parents are working and they stay with their grandmothers and they need someone to talk to talk to. So, I make that platform to talk. So, I would sometimes be given those opportunities for when I come back and people they want me to talk to them.... its fuel for me to do more”.

## **Exosystem**

The Exosystem may not have direct interaction with a developing person however, this level may affect the systems that interact with the person which may affect the person (Donald, Lazarus, & Moolla, 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013). The loss a family member’s job may affect the developing person’s financial well-being for example.

For Gwen, her parent’s divorce and the lack of employment opportunities for her mother resulted in and thus finances influenced Gwen as they struggled, though her mother and aunt were able to pay for her fees. She said “I honestly cannot tell you how but they managed to pay our school fees and I remember the was one time when they didn’t but they somehow found a plan”.

When Thembi’s dad lost his job, they had to move to another house which was uncomfortable for her and thus pushing her to work hard so as to change these living circumstances. She explained her the nature of her environment and said: “When I found myself in that environment. This place was built of planks.... Now we had to sleep on the floor with one blanket. It was the three of us and I didn’t want to be there.

That was one thing I knew for sure, I didn't want to be there and I sort of made an executive decision that I will work harder at school and it was the only thing I had and it was the only thing that was guaranteed to get me out of there".

Lack of medical services in Terry's the community motivated him to want to study medicine as this affected him negatively when he got injured. This lack of services drove him in his career path. He said: "Where I come from initially also, I grew up in an area whereby facilities and service delivery weren't really on par, because of I grew up in the area whereby the doctors were scarce.... I got injured, called the ambulance, ambulance didn't come. Take a car like it was where, like, what motivated me a lot is was situation that happened to me while I was still young".

### **Macrosystem**

The macrosystem consists of the economic structures, societal norms, values and beliefs which influence other social systems (Donald, Lazarus, & Moolla, 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013).

For Lebo, moving from a squatter camp to a developed area in the township aided in her shifting her mindset, as the values in the squatter camp community were not aimed at dreaming big and reaching goals. Lebo said: "I think everyone there, we couldn't dream big because of the situation that was around us. And then the reason I'm also saying that is once we moved into the RDP the mentality changes there. We were squatting like squatter camps, you don't have space to even plant.

Zolani's community's mindset of not having the ability to create work influenced him to want to be a job creator in his community, thus leading to his career ambitions: even when I was doing grade twelve, my realisation was that if you go to areas in the rural areas, they want to work but they don't know what to do, because opportunities are not there, but they are saying, that: "we would love to work", but they don't know what to do. So, with that in mind, I told myself that, why can't I just create?".

### **Chronosystem**

The chronosystem interacts with the developing person and the changes in their environments over time. These changes influence the developing person (Donald, Lazarus, & Moolla, 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013).

The developments and changes over time, especially financially that took place in participants' lives affected their views on not only their lives but the lives of those around them. For Gugu having grown up in a well-off nuclear family, to having experienced the financially strenuous divorce on her mother, she not only aimed to succeed but to help her family and have a positive impact in society. For Thembi and Mandisa, the loss of the father's jobs altered their comfortable lifestyles and changed their perspective on why they needed to succeed academically. Through the challenges and changes that participants faced in their academic careers, they learned and were moulded into the academic successes that they are proud to be today. **Appendixes D9 and D10 refer.**

#### **4.3.4.3 Theme 3: Advice to future ECP students**

##### **4.3.4.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Communication, Grit, Dedication to studies, resilience**

Participants were asked to share advice to incoming students enrolling in the university. It was evident in their responses that asking for help, collaboration with peers and remaining focused on academic goals were prevalent ideas.

In the **Communication** category, most percipients mentioned "asking for help", more so as soon as the student realizes they are struggling, as a means to manage academic challenges and gain success. Be it collaboration with other students or asking for help from lecturers, tutors or students support services. Gwen said: "find ways like to help yourself, so you're not the only one struggling as well. You find people who can help you when you can't help yourself"; while Terry said: "If you face this challenge, you just need to go look for help in an area where you think is the appropriate area". In stressing early intervention, Khensani said: "If you feel like you need help consider getting help and don't wait until you are at the breaking point" and Thembi said: "The first thing, and I think it is the first and the most important thing, ask for help".

In the **Focus, Dedication and Resilience** category, participants urge students to remember why they are enrolled in their respective courses and to remain resilient while using failures as stepping stones to achieving academic success. This is then combined with the **Study** category as part of remaining focused is the making sure that students study. In encouraging students to remain resilient amidst failure, Gwen

said: "Failing teaches you to succeed..... doesn't mean you that you're unable to do what you want to do it just mean that they will see and recognise that you just need the help to make you succeed". In ensuring that students remain focused, Zolani said: "Remove the mindset that this is an extended programme and, two, make sure that you strive for excellence" and Khensani said: "I know that there is a reason why you were placed in Mamelodi, try to figure it out and why you were brought to Mamelodi and fight to get to the end and fight to get to that degree that you left home saying you are going to obtain". While keeping this in mind, Mandisa Reminded students: "The only way to pass is to make sure that you study" and Xolani said: "Make sure that you achieve everything you study everything in time". **Appendix D11 refers.**

#### **4.3.4.4 Theme 4: The value of student support structures on student academic development**

##### ***4.3.4.4.1 Sub-theme 1: What the UP Mamelodi Campus has done right and the implications thereof***

In reflecting on what the UP Mamelodi Campus did right and what that implied for participants, they mentioned how the student support services and the Mamelodi campus provided participants with a **Sense of Belonging**. This came in the form of how they were able to make lifelong friendships, how student advisors treated them with warmth and kindness and how one is made to feel accepted. On the treatment of student advisors, Zolani stated: "The student advisor treats you like you, her child, and you are struggling in school"; and Khensani said: "Such a platform they make it in a way that you don't feel like you are talking to a shrink or something like that. They make you open up and speak". In making friendships, Khensani said: "It even gave me a platform to make friends who are still my friends even today"; while Zolani said: "I think that Mamelodi, it was my peers.... this friend of mine, we always strive to say we want to do well and we want to excel, and we had our challenges". While Gwen elaborated on the feeling of belonging and being assisted on campus by saying: "'Like it wasn't about how different you are from other people. It's about how you going to succeed and be the person you need to be here".

While all university campuses provided student support services, the students highlighted on the uniqueness of the student support services in that they provide students with **Dedicated student-centred support**. This was by means of providing

enough time, care and kindness to each student's case, especially going above and beyond for each student to ensure that they are assisted. In the dedication shown by student advisors, Thembi said: "She studied me as an individual and told me how I am supposed to study.... Like there is so much she's invested in and I truly value her work. She goes above and beyond for her students"; while Gwen said: "What I really appreciated about them is you get like you get the sense you get the feeling uhm that they are there to really help you uhm so for me like it's not just a job to them it's a calling, it's a passion about them so I really appreciated that".

Mandisa appreciated the time taken to resolve her case by saying: "I felt it was one on one, it was not rushed. ko main campus they rush you because they have a list of students at Mamelodi it was one on one and was not rushed". The holistic approach to the Mamelodi student services, whereby student advisors look at the students' marks as well as their career choices gave students comfort in knowing that they have their best interests at heart. Terry said "Mamelodi campus you get all the support that you need like they talk to you, they speak to you like they just sit down and look at the overall performance of students and try to say; here there's a problem we see this problem if you have a challenge in this, try"

While participants appreciated how the student support services approached their cases, they mentioned how, during their consultations and enrolment in the ECPs, they were equipped with skills that they used during their enrolment in the ECPs and throughout their academic and work careers. These skills consist of time-management, communication and study skills. These skills assisted participants to **Smoothly Transition** into the main campus. Terry mentioned how skills from the ECPs helped him transition by saying: "Those people who started in Mamelodi... as soon you transit and you come to any campus in the university you already get to know okay, if I have this problem I need to go to the student support system and because you already have that knowledge.... if I have this problem I need to go to this and look for that in that area.... It helped me to be prepared for the busyness... of other campuses ". In her transition from a township school into higher education, Khensani expressed: "I am very grateful actually to have been given the opportunity to go to Mamelodi campus. Especially having that transitioning platform from a very poor township school to a pre-university before the hectic main campus".

The campus helped Khensani with her communication skills by saying: "It also taught me that as the year went on coz the first semester I was a bit scared to interact with lecturers, it gave me that platform to interact with them to go and ask and consult if I don't understand something. By the time I when to main campus I would go to the lecturer or tutor. Mamelodi was a very good transitioning for me". The student support services helped provide study skills and career guidance to Zolani and Mandisa. Zolani said: "I've spoken to the student advisor and she wants to give me some methods of studying..... she actually gave me direction in terms of what I need to go in terms of career"; while Mandisa expressed her gratitude to the student support advisor by saying "I went to talk to the psychologist, booked appointments and she would tell me what I need to do 1,2, 3 1, 2, 3 and it helped me a lot because I felt like if I didn't go to that psychologist I'd still be struggling even now". **Appendixes D12 and D13 refer.**

#### ***4.3.4.4.2 Sub-theme 2: Areas of further development for the student support structure***

The final question involved participants making recommendations for further development of student support services. The common statements were that student support should be made compulsory for each student to take. Zolani and Lebo expressed this by Zolani saying: "And what probably you can do that can improve is to make sure that every student is aware of you guys, because I feel some of them they don't do well because they're not aware, or even if they do, they just go and say, we, we better, we did well in high school without these things"; and Lebo saying: "Let's make it compulsory (Student Support), to everyone, to everyone. Because now, some of us have issues without even knowing that they were there". This would ensure that students address social and psychological issues and learn study skills. Participants such as Zolani stated how in high school, one is not taught such skills as he said: "Another thing is that they come to school to tax, with no structure of study. So, when you're back in high school you are told that, work hard, but you're not being told that. Okay, you need to study this amount of time. This number of hours, and then you need to sleep this number of hours". Thembi also highlighted on the study skills saying: "The student advisor. That woman. I think if you ask any student from Mamelodi about one person, it's her. She, I think for me, she sort of trained me how to study, she equipped me on all the skills I needed for my academics"

Gwen mentioned how it would benefit students if some of the advisors had similar ethnical backgrounds as them so as to accommodate language barriers, she said: “People who come from disadvantaged backgrounds because I found a lot so for instance in one of the students who come from really disadvantaged backgrounds they speak different languages, or English is tough for them”. Gwen also suggested that less group interventions be administered as she said: “They tend to do a lot of group, like motivational speeches, how do you do goal setting.... I think it would be great thing if it was individualised”.

Zolani highlighted on the aspect of parental support and bridging the gap between high school and tertiary by saying: “I think the first thing that we need to address in terms of parenting to support”. **Appendix D14 refers.**

#### **4.4 FOCUS GROUP ACTIVITIES**

During the focus group discussions, participants engaged in online group discussions and activities guided by the researcher. These discussions took place in three phases outlining the AI approach. Table 4.17. outlines the discussion activities of the participants' Dream, Design and Destiny phases. Their responses were shared via the Blackboard Collaborate comment section and WhatsApp. The researcher thereafter synthesised these responses into one document.

**Table 4.3: Focus group Interview Outline**

| Focus group Interviews                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dream Phase                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Design and Destiny Phase                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <p><b>Activity 1: Group activity (BB Collaborate Discussion rooms)</b></p> <p>3. What kind of support you valued most about the ECP Student Support Services</p> <p>4. What qualities you still apply at you learned during consultation or ECPs in your current lives</p> <p><b>Activity 2</b></p> <p>Determine common themes through ranking. Rank what they value of the FSA as well as the support they received which aided in their development of self-efficacy.</p> | <p>Identify <b>social architecture</b>;<br/>Select relevant design elements;<br/>Provocative propositions</p> <p>- Choose 3 social architecture elements that will aid in assisting the design for student support in improving the support to black disadvantaged students. Motivate as to why." <b>(Design)</b></p> |
| <p><b>Discussion Session 1</b></p> <p>Engage in Dream discussions for the improvement of the FSA on fostering the development of self-efficacy in disadvantaged black students by looking at the best of what is along with the possibility of what might be as a collective group. (Formed part of Activity 2)</p>                                                                                                                                                         | <p>Determine short term and long-term goals, as well as possible stakeholders in the design. <b>(Destiny)</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <p><b>Discussion Session 2 (Break away discussion in pairs)</b></p> <p>Identify common socio-economic challenges participants faced and how they have managed to cope and overcome them.</p> <p>5 What socio-economic challenges you faced or face in your life and how did you manage to overcome them?</p>                                                                                                                                                                | <p>Outcome is how the FSA can foster the development of academic self-efficacy in disadvantaged black students. <b>(Destiny)</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 What are the best possible ways which the student support can assist students in overcoming these challenges?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                    |
| <p>Imagine the best possible ideas on how the FSA can assist students in overcoming socio-economic challenges:</p> <p><b>Activity 3 and 4: Vision statements (Breakaway in pairs)</b></p> <p>Imagine you <b>are</b> an award-winning student advisor from the Mamelodi Campus. You are requested to write a report to the Vice Chancellor on the vision your department has followed to improve support for black disadvantaged students which has improved retention and success.</p> <p>3) What is your vision statement?</p> <p>4) What are your attributes and attitudes of you and your department?</p> | <p>Pledges by participants towards participation in the application of ideas and strategies discussed.</p> <p><b>(Destiny)</b></p> |

#### 4.4.1 Dream Phase

The Dream Phase of the study outlined the vision that the participants have for the ECP student support. To outline the vision, participants engaged in activities. An activity where participants stated the nature of support they valued and then ranked them in order of importance in a follow up activity. The participants also made provocative propositions which outlined the best of what is in order to link it with what might be. Lastly, participants outlined the socio-economic challenges they faced in order to understand the nature of challenges that may be addressed in making the 'Dream' come true.

##### 4.4.1.1 Activity 1: Kind of support you valued most and skills you still apply

The participants engaged in activities that outlined the kind of support that participants valued most while enrolled in the ECP and a ranking of the support valued. According

to the outcomes of activity 2, the support that was valued the most by participants was the emotional support they received from the student support. This was followed by time management, career advice and lastly the positive treatment they received from staff.

### **Gwen and Mandisa**

1. Career advice to support in life, pushing to do what's right for you instead of expected
2. The best working/studying style to have time management

### **Nelly and Terry**

1. The student advisors assisted with student support. The treatment we had was amazing and they were kind.
2. The student advisors made us do tests that made us identify how we should study and we still use today. Her advice on study methods, routines and lessons.

### **Zolani and Khensani**

1. Emotional Support
2. Time Management

#### **4.4.1.2 Activity 2: Determine common themes through ranking**

##### **Ranking of values (everyone)**

- 1: Emotional Support
- 2: Time management
- 3: Career advice
- 4: Treatment

#### **4.4.1.3 Activity 3: Vision statements**

The vision statements outlined an overall theme of a supportive environment which supports students holistically. The following statements were made by participants:

##### **Gwen and Terry**

1. Our vision is to see the successful integration of our students to contribute to making UP the best university in South Africa that produces the knowledge needed for South Africa by South Africans.
2. Has a holistic view of support, not just academic but emotional and social support as well. Innovative approach to facilitating the needs of students and not just following traditional methods, while ensuring to use evidence-based approaches.

##### **Zolani, Nelly, Khensani**

1. As the student support, we aim to ensure that all the students should be in an environment where their stresses will be managed and create spaces where their social skills will be developed without worrying about socio-economic challenges.
2. Our attributes towards the department is cheerful, positive and always strive for the best.

#### **4.4.1.4 Activity 4: Provocative Propositions:**

According to participants, the following provocative statements applied in order to make the Dream come true:

1. The successful integration of our students
2. UP the best university in South Africa that produces the knowledge needed for South Africa by South Africans

3. All the students are in an environment where their stresses are managed
4. Where their social skills will be developed without worrying about socio-economic challenges
5. Has a holistic view of support, not just academic but emotional and social support as well
6. Innovative approach to facilitating the needs of students and not just following traditional methods
7. Use evidence-based approaches
8. Our attributes towards the department is cheerful, positive and always strive for the best.

#### **4.4.1.5 Discussion 1: Socio-economic Challenges**

Participants outline the following socioeconomic challenges they faced and believe may need to be addressed through the application of AI:

##### **Zolani**

1. Funding, residence and food. Secure students that they have a place to stay, eat and are funded)
2. The policy around how students are allocated at res. The first preference is for students who are far away and cannot afford private accommodation, students who are closer but cannot afford private accommodation, and those who can afford it. Student support to do a survey on which students have accommodation to allocate them.

##### **Further suggestion:**

Need Alumni to step in. Maybe next year we can meet as a group and pick one school where we make high school learners aware that they have a chance to do well in the university. Market the ECPs. Shift the focus that by the time they get to ECPs they are motivated to continue. In one year to implement.

## **Terry**

1. Which students deserve the fees or res systems to access. The NSFAS system to allocate the. Look at the quintile of the school you come from.
2. Equity. Giving money. Background of the students.

## **Gwen**

1. Forgotten middle. Looking at where you stay and money but do not grant you what you need.
2. Advocacy aspect that is lacking from the university, the student support to advocate for the forgotten middle.

### **4.4.2 Design Phase**

The Design phase is an aspect of AI which focuses on the development of plans to realise the Dream. Participants engaged in an activity whereby they were provided with a table from which they were to select 3 social architecture elements which would assist in improving student support for black disadvantaged students. They then had to motivate why they selected the specific elements. Participants identified social architecture elements such as competency; vision and purpose; stakeholder relations, ecological environment; policies and system. Below are the responses from participants:

#### **4.4.2.1 Identify social architecture**

Choose three social architecture elements that will aid in assisting the design for student support in improving the support to disadvantaged black students. Motivate as to why.

**Table 4.4: Social Architecture**

|                        |                          |                                   |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Business processes     | Management practices     | Stakeholder relations             |
| Communication          | Policies                 | Strategy                          |
| Competencies           | Relationships            | Structure                         |
| Culture                | Results                  | Systems                           |
| Education (training)   | Shared values            | Technology                        |
| Vision and purpose     | Social responsibility    | Beliefs about power and authority |
| Governance structures  | Practices and principles | Alliances and partnerships        |
| Leadership             | Staff or people          | Knowledge of management systems   |
| Distribution of wealth | Ecological environment   |                                   |

**Description of Elements:**

**Group1**

1. Competency - we need the ability to communicate and work as a team.  
Problem solvers
2. Vision and Purpose - to reach any goal we need a version and goal.  
Timeframe is a key. If we don't have anything to work towards then we won't have direction
3. Stakeholder relations- we all need involve everyone who will affected by this version. We need everyone who will be working towards the same goal.

**Group 2**

4. Ecological environment: the entire institution should not isolate certain campuses and be one ecological system and function as one system
5. Policies: We need policies which are going to ensure that our ecological system is managed efficiently.

6. System: after having the policies and the ecological environment. Have policies but need something that will drive policies which is the system. And will need to be taken care of year after year.

#### 4.4.3 Destiny Phase

The Destiny phase is where the Dream is executed. In this phase, participants outlined short-term and long-term goals in which the Dream can be realised. Participants also identified possible stakeholders that could assist in realising the Dream.

##### 4.4.3.1 Short-term and long-term goals

**Table 4.5: Short-term and Long-term goals**

| Short term goal                                       | Time frame | Long term goal                                                                                                                                                                | Timeframe                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Surveying - gathering information (student's need and | 6 months   | Piloting: Do a pilot study of the project of the long-term goals. Pilot after the short-term goals.                                                                           | 12 months                                           |
| Consultation of Stakeholders                          | 6 months   | Integrate phase: Integrate students of the ECPs into the Main Campus activities                                                                                               | 2 years                                             |
| Piloting                                              | 6 months   | High research output: For institution to be the best in the country, the institution has to have a high research output. Contributes to the vision statements.                | Ongoing                                             |
| Teach students to write or review research            | 1 year     | Skills needed to be successful: after integration phase, students have all the skills to meet the vision to make UP the best Uni in South Africa, more so through integration | Within and after 2years of integration then ongoing |
|                                                       |            | Assessing the support from all the stakeholders                                                                                                                               | For one year after the 2 years                      |
|                                                       |            | Monitor and revise the implementation                                                                                                                                         | After 3 years of the above 6 months                 |
|                                                       |            | Full programme will be implemented                                                                                                                                            | 5 years                                             |
| <b>Group 2</b>                                        |            |                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                     |

|                                                                                                                                               |             |                  |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------|
| Gather data: trying to understand hypothesis on trying to build a better environment for students. Given that previous years data is provided | 6-12 months | Full integration | 3 years |
| Integration of developing policies: Mamelodi integrated with the university to foster unity and sense of belonging                            | 6months     | Full integration | 3 years |
| Policy of Integrating classes implementation: Between campuses                                                                                | 1 year      | Full integration | 3 years |

#### 4.4.3.2 Possible stakeholders

**Table 4.6: Possible stakeholders**

| Internal stakeholders (ECP and University) | External stakeholders (outside the university) |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Students Support                           | Families                                       |
| Students themselves                        | Schools                                        |
| Head of Residences                         | Business and Government                        |
| Lectures                                   | Alumni                                         |
| Student governing bodies, e.g. The SRC     | Corporate donors                               |
| Dean of students                           | Community leaders e.g. counsellors             |
| Res committees                             |                                                |
| Faculty Dean                               |                                                |

Pledges by participants towards participation in the application of ideas and strategies discussed.

**Table 4.7: Participant Pledges for Destiny Phase**

| <b>Name</b> | <b>Interested or not (capacity)</b>                                                                                  |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Zolani      | On a consultation level. Interested to bring ideas, finding stakeholders, drafting ideas and plan.                   |
| Nelly       | Interested. Ideas, drafting ideas. Not on operational level.                                                         |
| Gwen        | Not operational level. Jack of all trades at a consultation level                                                    |
| Khensani    | Consultation. Not on the operational level.                                                                          |
| Terry       | Interested. Willing to help at any level depending on where he will be depending on the phases. Including operation. |

#### **4.5 SUMMARY**

The individual interviews comprised of Discovery phase, whereby participants were encouraged to reflect on their experiences in their academic and personal journeys. The Dream phase of the focus group discussions aimed to uncover what they valued the most about the student support they received and what they valued about the student support services. The student support services treated participants with much support, kindness and eagerness to assist; some of the values they held in high regard. The design and delivery phases saw participants engage in ways in which the student support and ECPs could be more inclusive. The involvement of internal and external stakeholders was identified, while in the Delivery phase, participants set a timeline in which goals to achieve the development of student support would be achieved.

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the results of the qualitative case study were presented and analysed. The analyses involved inductive thematic analysis, whereby themes and sub-themes were presented for the individual interviews. Themes and sub-themes were aligned to the interview questions, which were thus aligned to the research questions. The focus group discussions presented activity and discussion outcomes presented by participants during online discussions. In the following chapter, findings are presented, which thus aim to address the research questions and links to the literature discussed in Chapter 2. Recommendations based on the findings from the study are also provided.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This qualitative case study aimed to explore how students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds in the ECPs drew from their internal and external resources to develop academic self-efficacy. This study aimed to uncover the factors that aided participants who were previously enrolled in the ECPs and successfully ventured into their desired faculties and graduated. The further aim of the study was to inform future research and practice in the development of student support initiatives, more so for the previously disadvantaged cohort. In chapter 1, the introduction and intention of the study were outlined, along with the purpose, problem statements, and methodological paradigms. Chapter 2 of the study elaborated on the research in the field and the developments nationally, internally and historically. Chapter 3 discussed the research design, process and methodology, and chapter 4 outlined the study's results.

In this chapter, the findings were drawn from the results obtained in chapter 4 and the literature reviewed in chapter 2 to outline the similarities and discrepancies between the literature and the findings. The findings addressed the research questions in chapter 1 and discussed the possible limitations, implications and recommendations for future research and practice.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

In order to respond to the research questions, data were assorted into themes. These themes highlighted the key findings in the study, which informed the discussion of the implications on research and practice and possible recommendations. For this study, the conceptualisation of the Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Model of the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Bronfenbrenner's Ecosystems Theory Model outlined the findings and thus linked them with the existing literature relative to the themes uncovered in this study. Bronfenbrenner's Exosystem Theory Model states that humans are influenced and interact with and in different systems in a social context, such as the Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, Macrosystem and Chronosystem (Donald et al., 2014).

The Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Model asserts that humans are agents of their own experiences, which reciprocally influence their environment and behaviour with factors, i.e. Person, Environment and Behaviour (Bandura, 1989; Bandura, 2001). Below, Figure 5 shows the graphic conceptualisation of the two combined models below.

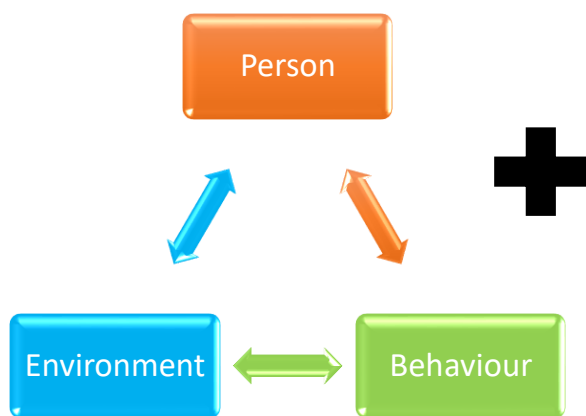


**Figure 5.1 - Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Model**

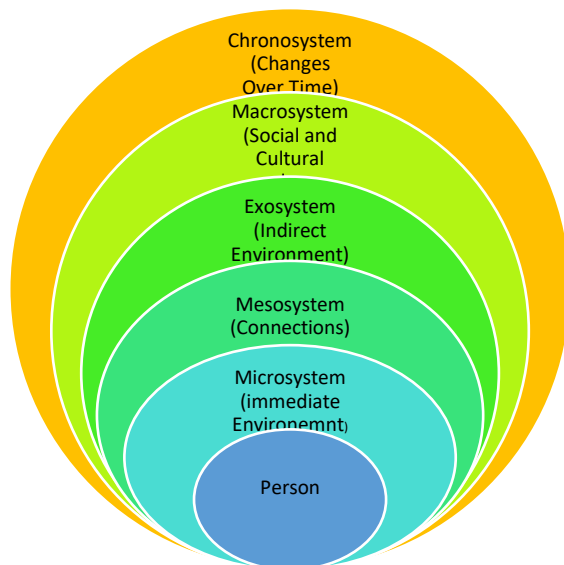


**Figure 5.2 - Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System's Theory**

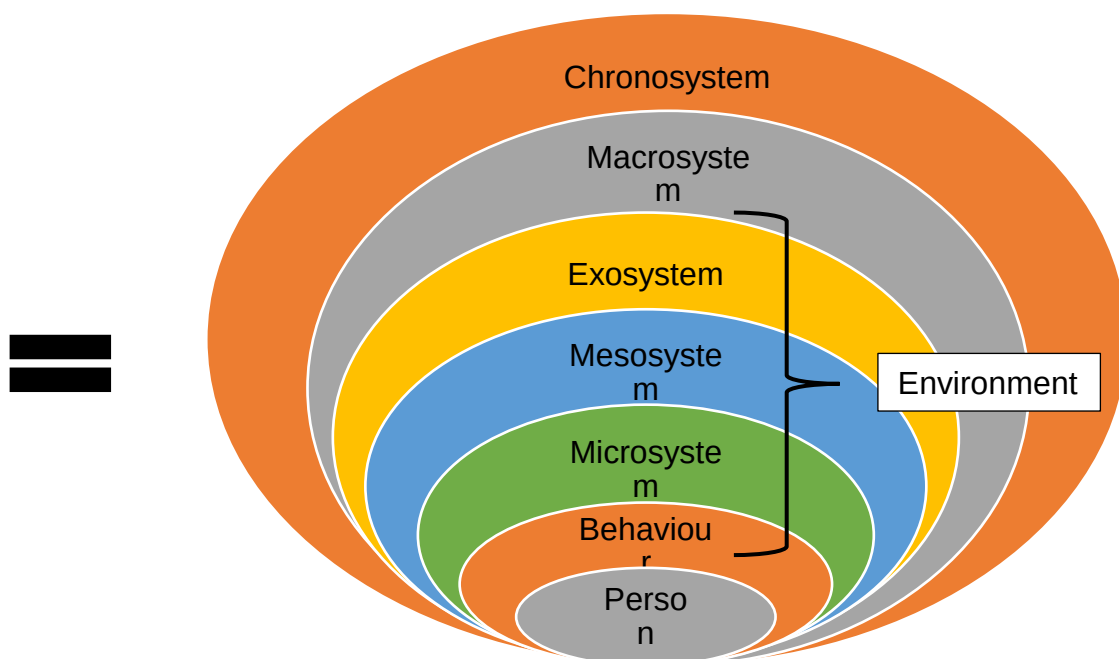


**Figure 5.3: Conceptualisation of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model and the Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Model**

### **5.2.1 Environment Factor**

In the SCT theory, the environment interacts with the person to impact the behaviour a person portrays; this behaviour impacts the environment and thus goes back to influencing the person, hence the reciprocity in the triadic model of the theory (Bandura, 1989). The presence of models in one's environment that hold relatable values yields beneficial outcomes that tend to influence how the person behaves and thus more likely to replicate the models' behaviours (Bandura 1989; Bandura 2002). In Bronfenbrenner's Systems theory, one's development is relative to the influences and interactions in and of one's environment (Donald et al., 2014; Neal & Neal, 2013). The SCT and the Systems Theory thus correlate as they best outline how the development of academic self-efficacy in participants and their socio-economic backgrounds influence their behaviour and lead to academic success.

#### **5.2.1.1 Microsystem and Mesosystem**

A microsystem comprises one's direct interaction with the elements of a system, such as interaction with one's family, peers, school and teachers, neighbours and the community, which influences an individual's psychosocial development (Donald et al., 2014). The mesosystem comprises the interaction between various microsystems that may impact the person and their behaviour (Donald et al., 2014). In this study, various systems interacted with one another and the participants to influence their success in their studies.

The interaction with the microsystem in the participants in this study assisted in ensuring that they developed the qualities that fostered their development of academic self-efficacy. Fourie (2018) assumed that students with supportive peers who were well socialized and had an internal drive to succeed educationally were less likely to drop out of higher education. The participants in this study confirmed the latter. The participants in this study were all black and had some socio-economic struggles, noting the historical context of South Africa, which left the black majority at a social and economic disadvantage (Fourie, 2018; World Bank Group, 2018).

The participants experienced many external difficulties such as accommodation at home and in university, financial difficulties and access to food as a result and mental/psychological challenges due to the hardships experienced; however, they remained

resilient and motivated to succeed despite these contextual difficulties. However, the study by White and Perrone-McGovern (2017) emphasized how financial constraints were a major contributing factor in student drop-outs, specifically in the South African context where students are prone to use their bursary funds also to take care of their families. Participants in this study flourished academically despite such constraints due mainly to their support from their micro-systems (Fourie, 2018; Jaffer & Garraway, 2016).

At some point in their lives, the participants of this study grew up in a township and a rural area and attended township schools. The participants who did not attend such schools and went to more affluent (also known as Model-C schools) did so on a school bursary. The participants reflected on their experiences in their communities as they grew up as communities lacked infrastructure and service delivery. The mindset of the communities was deprived of knowledge of higher education, where one of the participants stated that their community supported learners who completed school and opted to find work as opposed to tertiary education studies.

Owing to one participant who valued the support she received from her community, Khensani stated that the support she received from her community and that which she gave back to her community was what kept her motivated to succeed to be a good example for those who wished to leave the community in pursuit of further studies. The communities in which most participants grew up were not as supportive as one might anticipate, as participants had such high self-efficacy beliefs. The communities in and of themselves were not conducive to the academic development of participants; however, one can draw assumptions that specific models and support from certain members of the microsystem such as those in the family, peer groups, school and/ academic environments compensated for not only the financial constraints but the counterproductive environment. This aided the development of academic self-efficacy.

Though most of the participants, due to financial constraints, attended under-resourced schools with teachers that were not as dedicated and motivating, the participants in this study drew from their social models, mentors and peers for their vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1989). These vicarious experiences through their models allowed participants such as Zolani and Lebo to be encouraged to do better for themselves. These mentors would also use verbal persuasion to encourage the participants to aim higher and do better academically. Participants such as Gwen,

Mandisa and Thembi had an experience of going to well-resourced schools and looked at their experiences with their teachers and highlighted how the teachers would use verbal persuasion to encourage them to perform academically. These teachers would see the best in them and the potential in these participants, thus motivating them to be more goal-oriented and increase their emotional/physiological arousal towards academic achievement.

The study by Budescu and Silverman (2016) emphasised the importance of family support for students transitioning from high school to university; and further stated how positive interaction with family members, both direct and extended, assisted in ensuring the retention and success of students in transition. Emotional, financial and academic support is crucial as these play a role in developing students' academic self-efficacy as opposed to those with no family support (Budescu & Silverman, 2016). The participants' support from their families was predominantly emotional support and verbal motivation/ persuasion. The participants received NSFAS funding and therefore had little to some financial support from a family with financial gaps.

This Verbal Persuasion factor in the development of academic self-efficacy relates to how parents, siblings, family friends and extended family of participants would encourage them to continue their studies. When participants felt they were not performing, family and friends supported them and encouraged them to keep working hard and reaching their goals. Academically, support was attained from the social groups and peers with whom participants formed friendships, more so in university, as they mentioned that the peer groups they oriented themselves with focused predominantly on their studies.

Participants' emotional and academic support from their families and peers kept them motivated, especially in their first year of the ECPs. When students transitioned from High school to the ECPs, they felt alone and did not know anybody and thus making social interaction difficult. The enrolment and offsite provision of the ECPs tend to affect the development of students' self-concepts and, according to Martin, Goldwasser and Harris (2017), will likely affect how students perform academically.

This, however, was not the case for these participants. Where even though the initial feeling of not being enrolled in the mainstream courses did negatively affect students enrolled in the ECPs, evoking feelings of rejection and isolation, this feeling did not

last long as they adapted smoother due to the smaller size of the ECP campus, which allowed for easier social interaction with peers, while the slower pace of the programmes offered assisted in their academic adjustment and progress (Ogude et al., 2019; Rollnick, 2010).

The participants in this study eventually made friends on campus, and much like the study by Ogude et al. (2019), they developed a sense of belonging to the programme and could interact well with peers, lecturers and tutors. In these interactions, participants in this study urged future students to use the academic structures in place while collaborating with peers, particularly in instances where they might not understand the work. According to Fourie (2018), institutions must encourage a sense of belonging in higher education institutions, more so within the first year of enrolment, as this is likely to decrease drop-out rates and increase retention.

The willingness to help and positive attitude of academic staff allowed for participants to be able to ask for help where needed, which proved helpful as all the participants mentioned how it is essential for future students to ask for help from tutors, lecturers and peers in order for academic success to be attained. This finding aligns with the statements by Fourie (2018), Rollnick (2010) and Agosti and Bernat (2018) that the motivation of students aligns with approachable and dedicated lecturers, the encouragement of a sense of belonging through social engagement and upholding efficient student support systems which, in turn, encourage student mental and emotional well-being.

The student support structure of the ECPs played a significant role in the success and transition of the participants as they received personalised individual counselling whereby the student advisor went above and beyond in attending to participants' needs as students. The student support also assisted by equipping participants with soft skills and study skills. Due to the prompt response of the student support structure to students' psychological and academic needs, participants of the study went so far as to advocate for compulsory consultation with student support. More so for first-time entering students in order for early detection of any struggles that students may likely face and for them not to wait until it is too late as they in most instances did.

### **5.2.1.2 Exosystem and Macrosystem**

According to Donald et al. (2014), the Exosystem comprises the systems with which the person does not directly interact. However, they may have an impact on the person, such as parents' workplaces, the positive or negative interaction between siblings' friends and the effects on the family and the person and the interaction between the university and the student support system and how the university enforces systems to support the student using the various structures both within the university and outside such as the use of financial aid. On the other hand, the macro system involves not only the prevalent economic and social structures but also the societal norms, values, and governmental and municipal policies.

The interaction between the Exosystem and the macrosystems was intertwined as factors such as finances, policies and the microsystemic dynamics played a role in how the participants developed over time and thus affected their development of academic self-efficacy and the likelihood of student retention and success. Noting the historical background of South Africa, with Apartheid having lingering effects on the black majority, the participants lived predominantly in rural and township areas, where the schooling systems and neighbourhoods were under-resourced. This, according to Cornell and Kessi (2017) and World Bank Group (2018), is a factor caused by the delay in the transformation of the country from being an exclusive society, transitioning from apartheid to an inclusive society, which would have resulted in the equal participation of all racial groups in the economy.

As a result, it leaves the black majority in an unequal state, more so economically. The transition from lower class to the middle or upper class is increasingly lower for the black majority as the country's economic state remains challenging, which thus also affects the resources deployed in areas such as the education sector (Rollnick, 2010; World Bank Group, 2018). The participants in this study had parents or caregivers who, due to the post-apartheid state of the economy in the country, were either unemployed, worked and lost their employment or had trouble finding employment. As a result, participants were affected in their educational endeavours as these financial difficulties affected their transition into higher education and acted as an added stressor as participants worried about the state of their families while they were in university.

Though the study by White and Perrone-McGovern (2017) states that financial constraints affect student success negatively, the students in this study were motivated by their financial states to study and succeed to better provide for their families, communities and societies. It is evident through the data that participants from the middle to lower class made it their responsibility to provide for their families and therefore lift them out of their financial state. These families did not place such responsibility on the participants but were a responsibility that was assumed by the participants themselves, which was an unwritten cultural or societal norm.

Though the neighbourhoods they initially grew up in were counter-education, they remained driven to succeed, more so due to the social models and encouragement, they received from their microsystems. Through the enrolment of participants in the ECPs, which are government-granted programmes aimed at widening educational access to encouraging equity and economic transformation in the country (Rollnick, 2010), the participants were able to reach their academic goals despite under-resourced educational and financial constraints.

In the SCT, the agentic perspective is considered, which is one's ability to influence one's ability to govern oneself and the circumstances thereof (Bandura, 2001). The core features such as intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness and self-reflectiveness are embodied in the Exosystem and macrosystem, seeing as these systems would have, in light of the data, negatively influenced not only the development of the academic self-efficacy but the success of the triadic model of participants if studied in a vacuum. Applying the agentic perspective, the participants intended to not only get out of their unfavourable financial circumstances but also assist their families and give back to their communities and societies.

Their forethought was aimed at looking at the positive outcomes of their goals and directed their actions accordingly. This ensured that participants remained motivated and resilient in their studies. This influenced their self-reactiveness, which, despite their unfavourable circumstances and environments, were able to maintain their resilience, made use of their resources and succeeded academically. The last factor of the agentic perspective of the SCT is self-reflectiveness, which is observed in how participants were able to reflect on their actions and goals consistently to obtain academic success. When looking at the triadic model, Bandura (1989 & 2005) stated that the three factors influence one another depending on which is strongest; in this

instance, it seems that the personal factors were strongest in the participants as the environment as well as circumstances proved to have unfavourable elements.

Though the socio-economic circumstances of participants affected their academics negatively, specifically in Basic Education, the influence of the ECPs, student and financial support, and positive personal factors enabled participants to succeed. The study by Fourie (2018) states that there is little that institutions can do to assist in student retention aside from instilling a sense of belonging. However, incorporating student support and financial aid, more so in this study, assisted participants in success. The study by Ogude et al. (2021) opposes this notion that institutions are powerless when it comes to enhancing student success and student agency towards success. She shows how institutions could achieve this by developing a system to ensure student success through a data-driven approach.

### **5.2.2 Person and Behaviour Factors**

According to the SCT, humans are agents of their behaviour and change in their environments, which is their ability to direct their actions toward future outcomes, be able to apply appropriate actions and resources towards the achievement of goals, and the ability for one to reflect and evaluate the consequences of their thoughts and actions. Using an individual's cognitions as a mental process involves using one's sense of agency to reach specific goals (Bandura, 1989). In order to reach one's goals, one has to not only apply the sense of agency but also be self-regulated, which is aided by one's self-efficacy (Snowman & McCown, 2013).

One's self-efficacy is affected by four factors: Performance accomplishments, Verbal persuasion, Emotional/physiological arousal and Vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1989; Snowman & McCown, 2013). In an academic setting, it is imperative to gauge which factors aided participants in developing their academic self-efficacy amid challenging circumstances. In order for the development of academic self-efficacy to take place, the following factors, mostly when developed at a young age, are vital in ensuring the academic success of students; factors such as good academic achievement, positive learning environments and emotions, purposive goal setting, parental involvement, cognitive strengths, personality traits and lastly but not least, emotional intelligence.

In this study, participants portrayed internal qualities, which asserted that participants were self-regulated and self-aware as they were all able to reflect on the challenging living circumstances from which they came and dreamt beyond these circumstances while acknowledging their abilities, strengths and goals. Qualities such as emotional intelligence, compassion, optimism, resilience, independence, and goal orientation were prevalent in the interview results. Participants held high regard for their academics, more so their performances in high school leading into the ECPs, as they were conscious of their challenging backgrounds. However, they applied their cognitive resources to perform to the best of their abilities under challenging economic and social circumstances.

Participants in this study were dedicated to their studies and encouraged future students to apply study methods, remain focused, and study hard to succeed academically. More specifically, for disadvantaged black students, academic success was seen as a key out of poverty in the South African context (Cornell & Kessi, 2017; Langa, 2017; World Bank Group, 2018). Participants in this study mentioned that wanting to do more for themselves and their families financially was a significant motivator in their academic success. Making a significant contribution to the communities they came from served as a drive for them to succeed and contribute to society.

Participants mentioned how the pressures they faced from their socio-economic circumstances often led them to depression and frustration, which are emotions that do not correlate with the development of academic self-efficacy. However, their resilience, optimism, passion and goal orientation assisted them in following through with their goals of attaining academic success and financial independence. Though participants in this study did not qualify for their desired fields of study due to academic underperformance, hence enrolment in the ECPs, they maintained their resilience, drive and self-regulation to venture into their desired fields of study and graduate eventually.

In the performance factor of self-efficacy, one draws from previous performance in order for them to positively regulate towards success in academics. Participants in this study did not perform well, especially in their matriculation years; however, they drew from their past positive performances as well as vicarious experiences through their mentors, models, teachers, peers and family members who inspired their resilience

and optimism during educational, financial, interpersonal and infrastructural challenges. In light of the self-efficacy factors, the SCT's factor is influenced by the interaction with the environment that one is immersed in to elicit favourable human behaviour.

According to Bandura (2002) and Donald (2014), human behaviour is affected by experiences, be they vicarious or direct, as well as emotional and social factors. Interaction with personal factors and the key role models in our environments shapes behaviour which is the case with the participants in this study. Participants in this study were guided by their internal strengths, as well as interaction with crucial social models and support structures in order for them to achieve academic success, more so in the higher education space, thus equating to a favourable behaviour in which they were not pushed externally to do so. William and Rhodes (2016) state that behaviour is directly linked to one's self-efficacy, whereas a high self-efficacy leads to favourable behaviour, which has thus far proven valid for the participants in this study.

It is important to note that these participants scored exceptionally in their self-efficacy assessments, which aligns with the study by Talsma et al. (2019). The study by Talsma et al. (2019) states that academic self-efficacy is not a self-prophecy for positive academic achievements as results in that study stated that students who scored lower in the academic assessments had higher academic self-efficacy scores relative to their academically high scoring peers (Talsma et al., 2019). It further stated how self-aware and self-regulated students were likely to perform academically and lower their academic self-efficacy scores.

Participants in this study were self-aware and regulated, and unlike the study by Talsma et al. (2019), participants scored high in their self-efficacy scores and lowered in their pre-tertiary education scores. This, therefore, assumes that academic self-efficacy is not as strongly correlated with academic performance, particularly where cognitive strengths are concerned, but rather a high academic self-efficacy correlates with the effort, resilience and persistence one places in task completion (Bandura, 1995; Maddux & Gosselin, 2012). Participants could complete their basic education and, for most participants (owing to those who were still studying), their higher education studies amidst challenging circumstances. The results, therefore, suppose that strong academic self-efficacy leads to higher retention and completion of academic studies.

Though the four factors involved in the development of academic self-efficacy must be present in the developing child, socio-economic circumstances, more finances, negative emotional states and environmental influences harm academic performance, the development of academic self-efficacy in participants in this study did not fully have all four factors present in the development of academic self-efficacy. It is safe to assume that the participants relied on their academic self-efficacy and grit to persevere through their challenges.

According to (Almeida, 2016), grit is one's ability to exert sustained effort and interest toward accomplishing long-term goals. In light of the sociocultural context in which grit is developed, more so looking at one's exposure to relevant positive models, growth opportunities, academic and social support, as well as conducive learning environments, the diagram below, adapted from Almeida (2016) embodies the mindset required for the development of grit, which the participants in this study seemingly have as well:

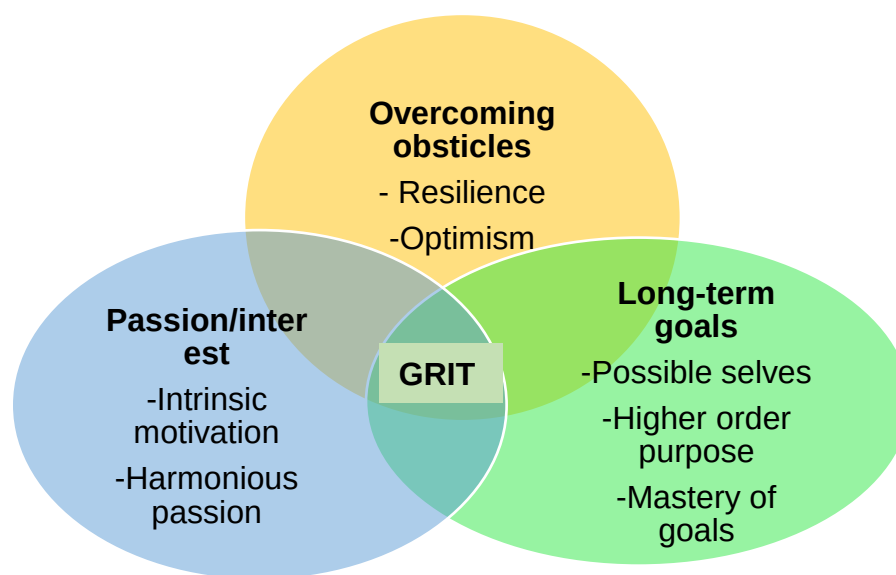


*Figure 5.4: Grit with overlapping academic mindsets related to the sociocultural context*

### 5.2.3 The value of student support

Student support services, particularly in the South African context, assist in bridging the socio-economic, racial and educational gaps in students who are deemed to be at risk of dropping out; whereby in post-Apartheid South Africa, the black majority tend to be considered more at risk (Fourie, 2018; Rollnick, 2010; World Bank Group, 2018).

The study by Fourie highlights the importance of institutions encouraging a sense of belonging in students to counter student dropout rates. In contrast, the study by Roberts and Dunworths (2012) echoes the importance of a sense of belonging; the development of the said sense of belonging is structured by the student support structure of the institution. In the study by Ogude et al. (2019), student support stemmed from the student support structure in partnership with the academic and administrative staff of the institution (Ogude et al., 2021). This highlights the importance of the student support system as the participants in this study owed their academic successes to the student support system noting how they were treated with kindness and empathy while ensuring that each case was attended to with care and passion.

The attitude of staff, more so in the student support structure, fosters positive academic outcomes, as stated by (Rollnick, 2010). While Roberts and Dunworth (2012) highlighted how students were satisfied with the service they received from student support, they mentioned how they were discouraged by the spaced-out availability of appointments, which was not the case in this study. The participants were satisfied with the prompt appointments they received and the efficiency of the assistance from the structure. The assistance of staff members in helping participants with study skills, time management and career guidance, mainly based on their personalities, was an approach that participants held in high regard as they could navigate the rest of their university careers using these personalized skills and methods. This individualized approach to helping participants allowed them to feel accepted and seen, especially when coupled with assisting them with their psychological adjustments and external contributing factors.

Although Fourie (2018) argues that factors that influence student dropout rates are primarily influenced by external factors on which the institutions have little effect, the study contends that the accurate application of student support structures may assist in ensuring that the external factors are addressed in as much as those that are internal. The student support that participants experienced addressed the participants' ability to stay motivated and encouraged a sense of belonging and self-efficacy while attending to participants' external factors such as issues related to accommodation, career guidance and finances. According to participants, staff members in the student support structures were dedicated and went above and beyond to cater to their needs.

These included external factors such as finances and accommodation were addressed during the consultation as the student advisors would link participants with the relevant resources to ensure that they are informed about financial aid and possible accommodation avenues, as opposed to participants navigating through these areas on their own. Students must receive guidance where financial aid is concerned, as this is the main factor that pushes students towards dropping out (White & Perrone-McGovern, 2017).

Noting the socio-economic and psychological factors that challenged the participants in this study, ensuring that student support structures have a structured manner in which they interact with students' internal and external needs is vital. The study by White and Perrone (2017) suggests that the notion of first-generation students concerning academic self-efficacy is moving away from being at risk, unlike the issue of not only financial constraints but that of having significant role models and encouraging environments.

The participants in this study highlighted the importance of student support services, more so in the development of academic self-efficacy in the disadvantaged black majority of the students while in a focus group discussion. This discussion yielded important ideas that may be applied in research and practice. The participants highlighted the importance of the student support structures and the importance of ensuring first-time entering students are oriented in detail concerning how to use the student support system, particularly where learning how to ask for help is concerned.

### **5.3 PARTICIPANTS RECOMMENDATIONS**

The participants in this study referred to ideas about the development of the student support structures whereby they expressed, through ranking, the aspect of the support they received, as well as the possible improvements related to the student support structures. The student support services of the ECPs under study should maintain the emotional support provided to students, the time management and study skills programmes offered, the career advice and the positive attitude and treatment they provide to students in the programmes. These factors allowed for the progress and success of participants in the study who consulted with the student support structures.

In their vision statements, the participants envisioned an ECP and student support structure that holistically addressed challenges in an innovative and evidence-based approach, ensuring that stressors that may hinder students' progress would be addressed. They envisioned an academic learning environment that encouraged the development of students' social skills while attending to the socio-economic constraints that may hinder the disadvantaged students enrolled in the programmes. The participants highlighted the importance of peer mentoring. Students who graduated or will have proceeded into the mainstream would assist those newly enrolled in the programmes, coupled with rigorous advocacy for compulsory consultation with student support services for all newly enrolled students.

The participants highlighted the importance of the involvement of multiple institutional stakeholders in the development of student support services in catering the disadvantaged black students internally and externally. Stakeholders such as those in the table below need to be consulted and developed structurally to tend to students' socio-economic factors.

**Table 5.1: Possible Stakeholders**

| <b>Internal stakeholders (ECP and University)</b> | <b>External stakeholders (outside the university)</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Students Support                                  | Families                                              |
| Students themselves                               | Schools                                               |
| Head of Residences                                | Business and Government                               |
| Lectures                                          | Alumni                                                |
| The student governing bodies, e.g. The SRC        | Corporate donors                                      |
| Dean of Students                                  | Community leaders, e.g. counsellors                   |
| Student residence committees                      |                                                       |
| Faculty Deans                                     |                                                       |

The student support structures need support from the institutions and organizing and leaders in the communities in which the institutions are anchored to ensure that student residence, finances, and academic and mental well-being are supported to foster success in the disadvantaged students. As discussed earlier, the student functions in a system and the various systems need to interact to encourage a holistically positive outcome for the students. It is no doubt that students need to be

internally motivated to succeed. However, such motivation and development are encouraged by the people and intuitions surrounding and making the student. As such, internal and external resources such as those mentioned in this chapter are those that family, peers and the institution may foster.

## 5.4 Response to Research Questions

This chapter has thus far outlined the findings of the study. The below table indicates the research questions and themes uncovered. The proceeding discussion streamlines the link between this study's findings and research questions.

**Table 5.2: Emergent themes and sub-themes aligned with research questions**

| <b>RQ1: How did the students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds in the ECPs draw from their internal and external resources to develop academic self-efficacy?</b> |                                                                                                 |                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Secondary Research Questions</b>                                                                                                                                           | <b>Themes (4)</b>                                                                               | <b>Sub-themes</b>                                                           |
| <b>1.1. Which factors had an influence on the development of student academic self-efficacy to promote retention and success in higher education?</b>                         | <b>(1)</b> Self-awareness, grit and optimism/ resilience as factors influencing student success | Internal factors/ qualities                                                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                 | Steps and aids towards successful academic milestones                       |
|                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                 | Participant background and nature of adversities faced and overcame         |
| <b>1.2. How did socio-economic challenges affect the development and academic success of the University of Pretoria ECP students?</b>                                         | <b>(2)</b> Reciprocity between environment and academic success                                 | Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory on motivation of student success |
|                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>(3)</b> Advice to future ECP students                                                        | Communication, Grit, Dedication to studies, resilience                      |
| <b>1.3. What suggestions did participants have for a developmental change in the ECPs student support services or in the ECPs?</b>                                            | <b>(4)</b> The value of student support structures on student academic development              | What the UP Mamelodi Campus has done right and implications thereof         |
|                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                 | Areas of further development for the student support structure              |

#### **5.4.1 Research Question 1: How did the students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds in the ECPs draw from their internal and external resources to develop academic self-efficacy?**

In responding to the above research question, secondary research questions were developed. Each secondary research question aimed to uncover the impact of socio-economic challenges on the development of participants' academic self-efficacy. It was evident from the responses that socio-economic challenges did not impact participants as they received institutional support (financially, academically and mentally), social and academic support from peers and emotional and financial support from families. These support structures, aligned with cognitive strengths and intrinsic drive to succeed, served as an aid to participants in overcoming socio-economic strains. In contrast, in the absence of these structures, the cognitive abilities of students from disadvantaged backgrounds would likely yield adverse effects on student retention and success. Therefore, students must be supported to encourage the development of their intrinsic strengths and abilities to apply themselves and reach their academic goals.

##### **5.4.1.1. Research Question 1.1: Which factors influenced the development of student academic self-efficacy to promote retention and success in higher education?**

The above study refers to the SCT, which emphasises the role of the person's interaction with the environment affects behaviour and thus the development of academic self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 1989; Snowman & McCown, 2013). It is evident in the above study that the environment one develops in has minimal effect on the development of academic self-efficacy; however, the interaction with one's social circle may influence the development of factors such as personality, grit, resilience and self-regulation. Through emotional support and verbal persuasion, and interaction with models and relevant support structures in the academic, familial and social context, the development of academic self-efficacy is highly likely. The development of academic self-efficacy, however, needs to be coupled with cognitive capabilities, whereas one needs to have the internal drive, goal orientation, optimism for the future and motivation to achieve academically.

It is evident from the research that participants had the potential to succeed; however, they were constrained by environmental, financial, mental and emotional factors, and the presence of support structures and models allowed participants to persevere and achieve their academic merits. The presence of support structures aided the development of academic self-efficacy and encouraged participants to stay motivated and pursue and complete their academic endeavours.

#### **5.4.1.2. Research Question 1.2: How did socio-economic challenges affect the development and academic success of the University of Pretoria ECP students?**

Though the study by Langa (2017) refers to a lack of finances and socio-economic challenges that have an impact on students' academic success, the findings from this study suggest that although participants had support from student funding through NSFAS, they still had concerns about their families' financial status. This concern motivated participants to progress and succeed academically, as education was seen as their way out of financial strain. Though this negatively affected participants mentally, their families' support in their academic endeavours encouraged them to progress. The communities from which participants came may not have encouraged academic achievement; however, their familial, academic and social support buffered the environment's negative impact and built on their strengths and cognitive abilities.

The socio-economic factors that affect one may not have much of an impact, according to the findings, mostly when there is institutional, social and family support in all aspects of an individual's academic journey. It is to be noted that financial support from the institution positively contributed to participants' progress. Various participants mentioned that they were relieved and overjoyed at receiving funding and how this placed less strain on their families and their concerns about their well-being and their own. The institution's role in supporting participants financially and academically and by incorporating an effective student support faculty with a student-centred structure greatly assisted participants in interacting with their studies but also developed their confidence, self-efficacy and grit.

Participants highlighted the importance of interaction with lecturers and student support structures, especially where help may be required once stagnation occurs. They spoke highly of the positive effects consultation had on their academic journeys.

The ability to remain driven, hardworking and goal-oriented resonated through all participants, encouraging future students to ensure that they make use of their resources both internally and externally. The conclusion, therefore, is that through institutional support (financially, academically and psychologically), the socio-economic factors weigh lighter on participants who have a strong support system both academically and socially.

#### **5.4.1.3. Research Question 1.3: What suggestions did participants have for a developmental change in the ECPs' student support services or the ECPs?**

Participants in this study highlighted the effectiveness of the student support structure of the ECPs, stating that the faculty-student advisors assisted them greatly in outlining their goals academically, personally and where their career trajectories were concerned. The student support structures guided their academic well-being in the ECPs, which assisted them in overcoming challenges in all areas of life, including finances. Student support assisted them in gaining more clarity in terms of possible funders and ways to navigate their strengths and studies towards their careers. Though much praise was given to the students' support structures, participants highlighted the need for all students to be aware of such support as participants stated that they would have appreciated earlier intervention in their academic journeys as they were not fully enlightened on the effectiveness of consultation with student support structures.

They, therefore, call for visibility and mandating of the services and compulsory for all students. According to participants, the involvement of multiple stakeholders in student support should not be limited to the faculty-student advisor. Participants suggested that all university stakeholders should be invited such as lecturers, deans, student residents, and alumni. Donors, community leaders and businesses, schools and families of students and all surrounding university neighbourhoods are involved in the process of student support in order to best support all students. The study by Ogude et al. (2021) has taken a data-driven approach to student support in the ECPs involving all university stakeholders, which is yet to be reported about the system's effectiveness. This approach would greatly benefit all students enrolled in institutions of higher learning.

## **5.5 POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS**

The possible limitation of this study related to the qualitative research design and the small sample size of the participants may render it challenging to generalize the outcomes of this study to the broader population of disadvantaged black students enrolled in the ECPs (Creswell & Poth, 2018). However, this study aimed to gain an understanding and highlight the core challenges relating to students who come from said backgrounds and thus offer an exploration into matters pertaining to challenges highlighted by the students.

The application of a focus group discussion, in addition to the individual interviews conducted, aims to ensure saturation in the data collected and thus solidifying the consistency of the challenges highlighted by participants and the resources applied in ensuring their academic success.

The representation of genders in the study may be limited and may not represent the true reflection of gender representation in higher education institutions. However, the response rate at which the female participants versus the male participants were representative of the male-female participation highlighted in the study by Rollnick (2010), whereby male learners were deemed less likely to participate in academic activities.

Though the South African higher education landscape comprises various racial groups who also may receive funding and may be deemed disadvantaged, the focus of the study looks into the majority of the segregated population, which are likely to be negatively affected by socio-economic challenges and thus require more resources from higher education institutions while enrolled.

Another limitation relates to applying the Appreciative Inquiry approach in the academic field as an approach to data collection. Though this is an approach used in organizational change and transformation, this approach in data collection is aimed at minimizing risk factors related to a negative association with past experiences, as well as the positive reflection and appreciative approach to problem-solving, thus allowing for ideas from participants in the improvement of student support services. Lastly, the sampling of the participants underwent various methods whereby the involvement of student support staff assisted in communication with potential participants through social media platforms to gain more participants.

Hence the issue of report bias may be reflected in the data where student support is concerned. It was, however, the criteria of the research that participants must have had a consultation with student support services and thus their responses, especially interacting with the student advising staff beyond university, reflects not only the student support staff services but also the personalized relationships that participants reported on collectively.

## **5.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY**

In the South African context, black students are faced with various contextual challenges, most of which are socio-economic, which likely contribute to the access, retention and success of students in the higher education sector. This study searched for solutions that could assist higher education student support structures. This would encourage said structures to attend to these socio-economic issues affecting student success and retention. Investigating internal and external resources that successful students applied for them to succeed would inform strategies for the development of student success during student consultations.

Applying the Appreciative Inquiry framework in data collection and interaction with participants allowed for an appreciative approach to the amendment of student support structures to positively cater the disadvantaged students, mainly in the ECPs, to ensure their academic success. The themes uncovered in this study contributed to understanding the main factors that encouraged student success and the incorporation of the student's voice to ensure that the student's voice guided the change process, as opposed to exclusionary institutional amendments which may assume students' needs.

## **5.7 IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE**

The current study uncovered how black students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, who were enrolled in the ECPs, managed to draw from their internal and external resources to develop their academic self-efficacy. In this study, it was evident that the support received from family members, peers and academic and support staff assisted them in developing academic self-efficacy. The presence of positive models and mentors assisted their development, despite the obstacles they may have faced.

Therefore, research on students who had dropped out may need to be further explored by looking into whether socioeconomic and racial challenges may have played a role in their academic status. They may also need to consider whether they had or had not used financial and student support systems in the institutions.

In practice, professionals and researchers might need to look into assisting those students who may not have the financial and family support that participants in this study had, specifically those from disadvantaged backgrounds. The student support structures and the institution may need to devise a parental support strategy to involve parents and family members in the student's academic endeavours. Student support structures may need to be intentional in addressing students' accommodation and socio-economic challenges in order to eliminate external stressors in their academic development in order for students to focus on their academic successes.

This may, in turn, encourage optimism and resilience in students' academics, thereafter ensuring student retention and success. Students who succeed in the programmes predominantly have cognitive potential and an intrinsic goal to succeed. However, if not nurtured, they may become demotivated, thereby dropping out of the programmes. It is therefore important that all students be encouraged to consult with student support services to assess which students may need more assistance; through actively encouraging students during orientation, coupled with prompt appointments, a positive, student-centred approach as well as the expansion of resources in the student support structures, the students at risk and those who may be potentially at risk without realizing it, may be retained in their studies.

Assistance with career guidance, time management and psychological assistance proved beneficial for the participants in this study. These skills may need to be incorporated into compulsory courses as these skills are seldom nurtured in basic education. Institutions need to foster a sense of belonging in students through social and academic activities that place the integration of the students at its core.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

This study explored the development of academic self-efficacy in disadvantaged black students from the ECPs. The findings indicated that Internal resources were primarily supported by internal traits and the presence of social models, and support from

elements in the microsystem. The study indicated that the environment in which the participants grew up was irrelevant if the appropriate social models and support systems were in place. These support systems were indicated as external resources such as family, peers, supportive teachers, academic and support staff and the tertiary institution. Through grit and academic self-efficacy, student retention and success were moderated, while the systems with which the student interacted were the mediating factors.

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## APPENDIX A: Ethical Clearance



RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE  
NUMBER:

CLEARANCE

EDU027/20

DEGREE AND PROJECT

MEd

Developing Academic Self-efficacy in  
Disadvantaged Black Students from the  
Extended Curriculum Programmes

INVESTIGATOR

Ms Nosipho Eudora Mthethwa

DEPARTMENT

Educational Psychology

APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY

10 July 2020

DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

11 August 2022

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE: Prof Funke Omidire

CC

Mr Simon Jiane  
Dr Michelle Finestone  
Prof N.A. Ogude

This Ethics Clearance Certificate should be read in conjunction with the Integrated Declaration Form (D08) which specifies details regarding:

- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
- Adverse experience or undue risk,
- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.

## APPENDIX B: Consent Forms

## **Dear University of Pretoria Alumni**

You are invited to volunteer for a positively charged research study. This is an opportunity to partake in uncovering the best experiences you had within the University of Pretoria's Extended Curriculum Programmes with a focus on appreciating what is, dreaming about what might be and collectively taking steps towards making that dream a reality through designing a destiny for your vision and dream. This is an approach called Appreciative Inquiry. In other words, I am interested in understanding what happens when you are at your academic best in order to use those experiences to bring about positive departmental transformation.

I am doing this research for my Master of Education Degree in Learning Support, Guidance and Counselling at the University of Pretoria. This document gives information about the study to help you decide if you would like to participate. Before you agree to take part in this study, you should fully understand what is involved. If you have any questions, which are not fully explained in this document, do not hesitate to ask me, the researcher. You should not agree to take part unless you are completely happy about the project and/or what we will be discussing during the interview and discussions.

The aim of this study is to explore the common factors which encourage the development of academic self-efficacy<sup>4</sup> in academically successful Black students from socio-economically challenging backgrounds who were enrolled in the University of Pretoria's Extended Curriculum Programmes. The application of the Appreciative Inquiry approach ensures that a focus on the positive aspects is maintained in order to reinforce the positive outcomes in the study.

By doing so, I wish to learn more about the types of individual and external circumstances which have an influence on the development of student academic self-efficacy. In doing so, I can identify how these circumstances promote student retention and success in higher education. I would also like to understand how socio-economic challenges affect the development and academic success of the University of Pretoria Extended Curriculum

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<sup>4</sup> Academic self-efficacy is defined as one's personal views of one's ability to organise and carry through set goals towards educational achievement (Bandura, 1995).

Programmes students. Lastly, I would like to elicit suggestions that you as participants have for transformative change in the Extended Curriculum Programmes' student support services. You will be co-creators in the process as the activities are inclusive of the design of a change process in order to make your suggestions into reality.

The research, interviews and discussions will be conducted in English. Due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have had to observe social distancing protocols and have included the option of online participation in the study. Should you agree to participate, note that the study will take place in three separate parts.

In the first part of the study, you will be asked to fill out a survey questionnaire in order to identify your level of self-efficacy as well as to identify whether you have access to, and your preference of online platforms. The self-efficacy questionnaire is to ensure that participants with a generally high level of self-efficacy are selected to partake in the study. Results will only be utilized by me and my supervisors. Your results will be available upon request. Please follow the link to take your New General Self-efficacy Questionnaire: <https://forms.gle/HKpvFFQmySJGWp857>

In the second part of the study, you will be asked to participate in an individual interview on this topic which will take about 90minutes. These interviews are set to take place in February and/or March 2021 in a place that is private and easy for you to reach or online.

The third part of the study will be a focus group discussion. A focus group is where a few people – usually about 8 to 10 – get together with the researcher to discuss a specific topic. The discussion will be arranged at a time that is convenient for you and will take place in either March or April 2021. The discussion can either take place at a common venue or online, depending on your preference as participants.

### **Interview questions and discussion topics**

It should be noted that AI is a process which does not aim to uncover negative nor traumatic experiences, but rather is a process which focuses on the positive in order to develop and enhance systems. During the individual interviews, you will be asked to positively reflect on your past achievements and experiences. Should you find that some questions and/or discussions are sensitive and you feel they are too personal or make you uncomfortable, you do not have to answer them. If you feel you need psychological support or counselling during or after the interview, I will be able to refer you to the Faculty Student Advisor.

We will not ask any questions about your individual personal experiences in the focus group discussions as this will be covered in the individual interviews unless you are comfortable sharing. Participation in the focus group discussion entails that participants are not to disclose information pertaining to the research, information and discussions held outside of the discussion room so as to protect group participants' confidentiality and privacy in the study.

Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary; however, any cost you may incur because of taking part in the study, such as food, transport and data costs will be paid back to you (reimbursed). Should you be a current student at the University of Pretoria, please note that no tuition time will be lost and there will be no implications for academic assessments.

### **Ethical Considerations**

With your permission, the interviews will be recorded on a recording device to ensure that no information is missed. In the advent of online interviews and focus group discussions, the proceedings will be recorded as and when they take place online. As a participant, you may choose to have a face-to-face online interaction or choose to switch off your camera as discussions take place. We will not record your name in the transcripts and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be linked to a fictitious code number or a pseudonym (another name) and we will refer to you in this way in the data, any publication, report or other research output.

All records from this study will be regarded as confidential. Interview transcripts and recordings will be available for member checking. Results will be published in academic journals or presented at conferences in such a way that it will not be possible for people to know that you were part of the study. A copy of the dissertation will be accessible upon request or through the University of Pretoria's Library Portal.

The records from your participation may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including members of the Faculty Research Ethics Committee. All of these people are required to keep your identity confidential. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

All hard copy information will be kept in a locked facility at the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria, for a minimum of 15 years and only the research team will have access to this information.

## CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

- I confirm that the person requesting my consent to take part in this study has told me about the nature and process, any risks or discomforts, and the benefits of the study.
- I have also received, read and understood the above-written information about the study.
- I have had adequate time to ask questions and I have no objections to participating in this study.
- I am aware that the information obtained in the study, including personal details, will be anonymously processed and presented in the reporting of results.
- I understand that I will not be penalised in any way should I wish to stop taking part in the study and my withdrawal will not affect my treatment and care.
- I am participating willingly.
- I have received a signed copy of this informed consent agreement.

Participant's name, surname & digital signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's name, surname & digital signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's name, surname & digital signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Co-supervisor's name, surname & digital signature

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## References

Bandura, A. (1995). *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Dear University of Pretoria Faculty Student Advisor**

You are invited to volunteer for a positively charged research study. This research study is focused on uncovering the best experiences the University of Pretoria Alumni had at the University of Pretoria's Extended Curriculum Programmes with a focus on appreciating what is, dreaming about what might be and collectively taking steps towards making that dream a reality through designing a destiny for your vision and dream. This is an approach called Appreciative Inquiry. In other words, I am interested in understanding what happens when participants are at their academic best in order to bring about positive Student Support departmental transformation.

I am doing this research for my Master of Education Degree in Learning Support, Guidance and Counselling at the University of Pretoria. This document gives information about the study to help you decide if you would like to participate. Before you agree to take part in this study, you should fully understand what is involved. If you have any questions, which are not fully explained in this document, do not hesitate to ask me, the researcher. You should not agree to take part unless you are completely happy about the project and/or what we will be discussing during the interview and discussions.

The aim of this study is to explore the common factors which encourage the development of academic self-efficacy<sup>5</sup> in academically successful Black students from socio-economically challenging backgrounds who were enrolled in the University of Pretoria's Extended Curriculum Programmes. The application of the Appreciative Inquiry approach ensures that a focus on the positive aspects is maintained in order to reinforce the positive outcomes in the study.

By doing so, I wish to learn more about the types of individual and external circumstances which have an influence on the development of student academic self-efficacy. In doing so, I can identify how these circumstances promote student retention and success in higher education. I would also like to understand how socio-economic challenges affect the development and academic success of the University of Pretoria Extended Curriculum Programmes students and lastly, take suggestions that you as participants have for transformative change in the Extended Curriculum Programmes' student

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<sup>5</sup> Academic self-efficacy is defined as one's personal views of one's ability to organise and carry through set goals towards educational achievement (Bandura, 1995)

support services. Participants will be co-creators in the process as the activities are inclusive of the design of a change process in order to make your suggestions into reality.

Should you agree to participate, access to student information who had consulted at the Mamelodi Campus student Support will be requested. Your input will be highly appreciated and beneficial in the identification of alumni who were enrolled between the years 2010 and 2017 who had received NSFAS Funding for Either their Extended Programmes studies or/and their mainstream studies. This is a selection process where the alumni identified will form part of the population who will receive an invitation to participate and fill out the below-mentioned questionnaire. I will record the questionnaire results whereby the analysis and validation thereof will be requested from you.

The study will take place in three separate parts:

In the first part of the study, participants will be asked to fill out a questionnaire in order to identify their level of self-efficacy. This is to ensure that participants with a generally high level of self-efficacy are selected to partake in the study. Results will only be utilized by me and my supervisors. The results will be available upon request. Please follow the link to take your New General Self-efficacy Questionnaire: <https://forms.gle/HKpvFFQmySJGWp857>

In the second part of the study, participants will be asked to participate in an individual interview on this topic which will take about 90minutes. These interviews are set to take place in March and April 2021 online due to Covid-19 restrictions.

The third part of the study will be a focus group discussion. A focus group is where a few people – usually about 8 to 10 – get together with the researcher to discuss a specific topic. The discussion will be arranged at a time that is convenient for participants and will take place online in April 2021.

### **Interview questions and discussion topics**

It should be noted that AI is a process which does not aim to uncover negative nor traumatic experiences, but rather is a process which focuses on the positive in order to develop and enhance systems. During the individual interviews, participants will be asked to positively reflect on their past achievements and experiences. Should they find that some questions and/or discussions are sensitive and they feel they are too personal or make them uncomfortable, they do not have to answer them. If they feel you need psychological support or counselling during or after the interview, I would like to refer them to you, the Faculty Student Advisor at the Mamelodi Campus where you will apply your professional discretion in resolving the matter.

We will not ask any questions about participants' individual personal experiences in the focus group discussions as this will be covered in the individual interviews unless they are comfortable sharing.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary no financial incentive will be provided.

We will not record your name anywhere. Your input will be linked to a fictitious code number or a pseudonym (another name) and we will refer to you in this way in the data, any publication, report or other research output.

All records from this study will be regarded as confidential. Interview transcripts will be available for member checking. Results will be published in academic journals or presented at conferences in such a way that it will not possible for people to know that you were part of the study. A copy if the dissertation will be accessible upon request or through the University of Pretoria's Library Portal.

The records from your participation may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including members of the Faculty Research Ethics Committee. All of these people are required to keep your identity confidential. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

All hard copy information will be kept in a locked facility at the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria, for a minimum of 10 years and only the research team will have access to this information.

### **CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY**

- I confirm that the person requesting my consent to take part in this study has told me about the nature and process, any risks or discomforts, and the benefits of the study.
- I have also received, read and understood the above-written information about the study.
- I have had adequate time to ask questions and I have no objections to participating in this study.
- I am aware that the information obtained in the study, including personal details, will be anonymously processed and presented in the reporting of results.

- I understand that I will not be penalised in any way should I wish to stop taking part in the study and my withdrawal will not affect my treatment and care.
- I am participating willingly.
- I have received a signed copy of this informed consent agreement.

|                                                 |       |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------|
| _____                                           | _____ |
| Participant's name & signature (Please print)   | Date  |
| _____                                           | _____ |
| Researcher's name & signature (Please print)    | Date  |
| _____                                           | _____ |
| Supervisor's Name & signature (Please print)    | Date  |
| _____                                           | _____ |
| Co-supervisor's Name & signature (Please print) | Date  |

## References

Bandura, A. (1995). *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## APPENDIX C: NGSE Questionnaire and Questionnaire Results

## New General Self- Efficacy

Created by organizational psychologist Gilad Chen and team (2001), the New General Self-Efficacy Scale is an 8-item measure that assesses how much people believe they can achieve their goals, despite difficulties. Please indicate, by selecting the items on the list, whether you strongly disagree; disagree; neither agree nor disagree; agree; strongly agree with the statements below.

**\*Required**

Email address\*

Your email address

Contact Number\*

Your answer

Would you like your results shared with you\*?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

1. I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I set for myself\*.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

# My Self-efficacy Report

## Self-efficacy and success

Self-efficacy is one's belief in one's competencies and abilities to deliver on set goals with levels of performance that influence events that affect one's life. It precedes how we one feels and thinks about one's self. There are four sources of self-efficacy identified as contributing factors towards the development of self-efficacy identified in the below illustration.



### Internal and External Sources Of Self-Efficacy

<https://positivepsychology.com/3-ways-build-self-efficacy/>

## Understanding your Report

The contents of this report is intended to help you better understand your level of self-efficacy. It is designed to help you objectively identify your self-efficacy in terms on the New General Self-efficacy scale (NGSE). This report will provide you with an overall percentile rating of your questionnaire responses as well as your questionnaire response score.

## Individual Interview Schedule

### Discovery Phase (Questions)

1. What do you value most about yourself? Mention as many as 10 qualities you can think of. **5min**
2. Think back to an important moment in your academic career where you achieved something great. In a brief story, highlight on the following: What were you feeling and what did you do right that contributed to this moment?
  - 2.1 What challenges did you face and how did your valued qualities help you overcome challenges? Who are the people that supported you through this phase and how?
  - 2.2 Mention aspects of your environment that played a role in motivating you to achieve academic excellence or success and how? **30min**
3. What core internal (eg. resilience, goal orientated) and external factors (eg. supportive family, teachers) motivated you to succeed academically?
  - 3.1 How did they make you believe you could achieve academic success? **15min**
4. Imagine you are speaking to an ECP student who has is facing similar circumstances that you faced, what advice would you give that student to believe in themselves and stay academically motivated? **15min**
5. What do you value most about the UP Mamelodi Student Support? **5min**
6. How, in your view, can the FSA in Mamelodi develop self-confidence, self-motivation and directed goal setting in disadvantaged black students? **10min**

## APPENDIX D: Quotations related to themes, sub-themes and categories

## Appendix D1- Theme 1 Sub-theme 1

| Theme 1: Self-awareness, grit and optimism/resilience as factors influencing student success |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sub-theme 1: Internal factors/ qualities                                                     |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Category                                                                                     | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Beliefs                                                                                      | Mandisa     | "I would say that I value my morals, I would say I am a person who sets morals for myself and everyone around me, you know, any kind of relationship should have morals."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                              | Khensani    | "What I value about myself is my faith and my intelligence"<br>"The most important thing is I believe in God, and I also believe in myself"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Emotional Intelligence                                                                       | Gwen        | "What I value is my uhm my EQ "<br>"my ability to be compassionate but at the time not letting myself be walked all over"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                              | Lebo        | "I also value the fact that I have like the understanding when it comes to different personalities"<br>"when I talk in most cases like, people relate but people trust me"<br>"I'll be able to understand, like I think everyone around me they enjoy my company because of, Mm I don't fight with people. Like I find reasons to why they acted the way they did, and if ever there is something I don't approve of they will know, they will know" |
| Compassion/ empathy                                                                          | Thembi      | "I'm kind hearted and it's not something you mention when they are looking for characteristics"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                                              | Terry       | "Sympathy, my caring, the way I look after people, my sympathy. Like, I have sympathy in almost everything. Anything that doesn't go well, it really touches me and all that stuff."<br>"Trying to give myself to anyone who's really in need of me"                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                                              | Lebo        | "I focus so much on the impact that I have on either my kids or the community in general"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                              | Gwen        | "My ability to be compassionate"<br>"A lot of people just want to be listened to and it's not about you agreeing with them it's about you giving them a chance to speak their opinion or speak or tell you a different way to do something so."                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                                              | Mandisa     | "My kindness towards people"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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| <b>Goal Oriented</b>        | Khensani | "After university and up until now like I've learnt to like believe in myself more in myself and for fighting to get what I've set for myself."                                                                                            |
|                             | Gwen     | "Whatever I put my mind to I can do and I can do it excellently, if I want to"                                                                                                                                                             |
|                             | Mandisa  | "I am a go getter,"                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|                             | Thembi   | "When I want something, it doesn't matter if I have to go from detour to get there. I will do what needs to be done."<br>"Achieving the goals, I set for myself"                                                                           |
| <b>Confidence</b>           | Gwen     | "I'm so much more confident I believe in myself way much more now"                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                             | Zolani   | "And what I love about Zolani is, he's a people's person"<br>"He always finds a way in whatever challenges he's faces."                                                                                                                    |
|                             | Khensani | "I also stand up for what I believe in and also stand up for myself in any possible way or situation"                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Optimism/ resilience</b> | Thembi   | "In the end I always overcome whatever challenges that come my way"<br>"I always thrive."<br>"First thing I value about myself is the fact that I'm resilient"                                                                             |
|                             | Gwen     | "I never give up, especially if I want something, uhm if I don't want something I can be like no its fine, but if I really want something I'll be like I will get towards it and I will somehow get it."                                   |
|                             | Khensani | "there were a lot of thing that could have led me to giving up but because I told myself that I need to get this degree, I need to do something for myself, I need to do something in my name"                                             |
|                             | Zolani   | "He always finds a way in whatever challenges he's faces."                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                             | Mandisa  | "I don't give up"                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Intelligence</b>         | Khensani | "What I value about myself is my faith and my intelligence"                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                             | Mandisa  | "Other things I value about myself is the knowledge that I have"<br>"Always open to learn new things every time when I look back, I realise that I always start something that is completely out of my comfort zone and I'll strive on it" |
|                             | Gwen     | "Adapting to a situation and actually being like how do I best utilise this for myself in order to actually succeed"                                                                                                                       |

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|  |       | "I don't believe that I know everything so it's nice when you get another person opinion even if you end up not agreeing"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|  | Terry | <p>"Take whatever information that you got and try to put it into practice or try to find a solution or new way that you can use that information to solve the challenges"</p> <p>"I like to, to, to like, yah, to explore stuff, to look for new invention, and new, like, anything that can be able to come and resolve challenges that we face as a world, but particularly South Africa."</p> |

## Appendix D2- Theme 1 Sub-theme 2

| <b>Theme1: Self-awareness, grit and optimism as factors influencing student success</b><br><b>Sub-theme 2: Steps and aids towards successful academic milestones</b> |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| Category                                                                                                                                                             | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Achievement</b>                                                                                                                                                   | Mandisa     | "I would say its where I got accepted into Golden Key"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Zolani      | "When I received a letter that I've completed my studies"                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Lebo        | "When when I was given a golden key thingy, honorary"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Thembi      | "My biggest academic achievements was actually getting into medicine"                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Gwen        | "The moment that comes to mind is making it into Honours"                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Khensani    | "It was obtaining my honours degree"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Terry       | "I think it's the acceptance in medicine. Yah it was the one, nothing else"                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>The feeling/<br/>emotions</b>                                                                                                                                     | Thembi      | "I was beyond excited. I was emotional. I couldn't help but say: 'I've seen God's existence manifest itself in my life'"<br>"A lot of "what if's" just got cancelled at that moment"                                                                                                    |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Mandisa     | "I couldn't believe that is it actually me, 'do I qualify for such things?' Like some students have been working and working to get this and I got it"<br>"That was the best moment in my life, I was like 'WHAT IS THIS?' Like you know how people would talk highly about Golden key" |
|                                                                                                                                                                      | Gwen        | "I felt proud, I felt like I'd made my mom proud was an important thing for me because she's big on education esp. being a teacher"<br>"I felt worthy, I felt like I had, I'm important"                                                                                                |

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|          | "I remember that being like shoo, all of this work was worth it, I felt everything was worth it all of everything I've been through all that I've done was all worth it one of the most amazing times in my life just making it into Honours" |
| Khensani | I'm not sure if I can put it to words but I was so happy<br>"I remember when they called my name I walked on the stage and I said confidently I did very well for this and I deserve this thing"                                              |
| Terry    | "I'm so happy and excited, I'm like wow. Thank God like, he made a way, where there might... where it seems like there might not be a way"                                                                                                    |
| Zolani   | "So every time I achieve something, it feels like, okay I'm done with this part, what's next?"<br>"I was excited for about 10 to 15 minutes, and from there then, another thing kicked in ukuthi, okay now this chapter you're done with it"  |
| Lebo     | "It was exciting, hey they did a ceremony for us and It felt so so good"                                                                                                                                                                      |

## Appendix D3- Theme 1 Sub-theme 2

| Theme1: Self-awareness, grit and optimism as factors influencing student success |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| Sub-theme 2: Steps and aids towards successful academic milestones               |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>What was done right</b>                                                       | Mandisa | <p>"I went and asked a lecturer "I don't understand this, what do you mean?" or I would look for a student that I could see that that one, that one understands this thing and I do not understand it so let me go talk to the student exchange number, make an appointment to meet at the library or wherever we can meet, like a study environment where we can study"</p> <p>"I feel inside me saying that you going to fail girl you do not understand you know. So, I made sure I understood what was being taught at that moment, if I didn't know what they were talking about I would go and ask"</p> <p>"I know there were times I didn't feel like studying but uhm with the help of people like my friends who were there with me we studied"</p> |
|                                                                                  | Gwen    | <p>"I was like let me talk to tutors now so I go to tutors, I'm like I need help. I talk to my class mate I'm like how do you look at this, how do you think about this especially people who do well"</p> <p>"I ended up going to that centre where I think they have those psychologists they have the learning people..... I went there even and I was like I need help. I went to the career centre"</p> <p>"I worked very hard I was like I'm going to somehow make it into that Honours degree. I'm going to be one of those 30 people and literally I'm going to make it"</p>                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                  | Terry   | <p>"Luckily in varsity it's a lot of us, so, I'm one person who can't really ask questions in a crowd area and all that stuff so, I will ask the question when I am alone, when I consult the lecturer and all the stuff"</p> <p>"I am able to keep a healthy lifestyle also, that helped me succeed in achieving my goal"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                                                  | Zolani  | <p>"The fact that there was always a student around. You will always ask and say Guys look I'm struggling with this; can you just assist me and that will come very handy"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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|                | Lebo     | "I had few people, like our backgrounds are almost similar but, on the train, I think we were there for each other, we motivated each other to do well and we would run together to the train station on certain dates"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                | Thembi   | <p>"Lectures, I was there. Tutorials, I was there. Practicals, I was there. And I went to see *inaudible* as well to help me with study methods so that I study as effectively as I can... I went to my friend who fixates on detail. She will sit for an hour and unpack a topic and I'm just like "no man here is the big picture, let's move on"</p> <p>"We used to study together and another thing I challenged myself was, whenever someone didn't understand something, I would volunteer like I would explain it to you and I will always go back to explain it with the details"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Support</b> | Khensani | <p>"I was very proud that I was able to put the research project together and it made sense because my supervisor was proud, my honours coordinator and lecturer were very proud"</p> <p>"I felt so proud that I was able to bring my family together to come and celebrate ne]me. Honestly speaking, obtaining my honours degree was something that I am very proud of"</p> <p>"I had a relative who worked on campus.... he would make sure that he passes by my place at the time that I am leaving my place and he would give me a lift and he would ask how are thigs going and I would tell him I feel like giving up, especially with my research... he would be like you have the ability to move on and make it, just keep doing it. If you need help I am here"</p> |
|                | Thembi   | "And I went to see *inaudible* as well to help me with study methods so that I study as effectively as I can"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                | Lebo     | "I went there with my mom and my older sister, so they were there to support and after that my sister wanted to go back to school"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## Appendix D 4- Theme 1 Sub-theme 3

| <b>Theme1: Self-awareness, grit and optimism as factors influencing student success</b><br><b>Sub-theme 3: Participant background and nature of adversities faced and overcame</b> |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| Category                                                                                                                                                                           | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Participant Background</b>                                                                                                                                                      | Zolani      | <p>"I was born in the Eastern Cape. In the rural village.... I got to experience how it's like to live in the rural and how it's feels when you go to school.... then I moved to the township. Life was quite different from there. But, then in the townships, I went to a primary, it's still in the townships too... Then I went to, for secondary, I went to a township secondary which is, yah no, it was a nice school for me"</p> <p>"The school didn't have the resources, that's number one, it's in the townships. The crime in the school, it's quite high. I think now things have changed. The teachers sometimes, you find that they don't attend classes"</p> <p>"There was no motivation from the community, uhm, two, most of the time you are being encouraged to actually not go to school. You are encouraged to just maybe finish your school at grade nine and then go and do, uhm major courses, and then you become, you work in the mine"</p> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Terry       | <p>"I am from a Township from Bronkhorstspuit. That's where I did my grade 6 to my Matric.... that high school it never produced any of the students which will say were going to varsity and all that stuff, like they hardly had those people"</p> <p>"I grew up in the area whereby my mindset was like 'The aim is to just finish school and after finishing school, find someone have children and that's it. Go and find a job and then that's it'"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Gwen        | <p>"We stayed in town when until I was like three years old in Mafikeng.... but then we move to another town in Limpopo and after then my dad got a job in Cape Town"</p> <p>"When I was around 8 the year after my parents got divorced or 9 I was"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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|        | <p>"We didn't have much money and through the divorce my mom lost everything cause my dad took everything, he got houses, cars, money he got everything so my mom only got me because she fought for me for custody so she got custody of me everything else my dad took, so basically my mom had to start from scratch"</p> <p>"Luckily one of my I call her my sister well she's my cousins... which I basically take as a sister and she was in a primary school .... in the Clairmont suburbs where we were school and the whole thing it was like if you've got family in the school you get a discount, again it was a semi-private school in the suburbs that type of thing"</p> <p>"I went to high school what I got was a bursary because of the church I went to so I got a sixty percent bursary and that is the only way they could afford my school fees for the private school"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Thembi | <p>"It's like a township but I also grew up in the rural areas, growing up with my grandparents. Where there was no water, electricity and we literally had to go to the river to get water and go to the forest to go get water. And it was deep rural KZN "</p> <p>"When I started at the school it was one of the best schools in the area.... When I started it was predominantly an Indian school. When it was built it was an Indian school and overtime there were more black students coming into the school. The education quality was good, I won't lie"</p> <p>"When my dad lost his job. It was a brief conversation I had with my parents where they were telling me that things won't be the same anymore. It didn't register at the beginning and I was like I didn't understand what they were saying. We moved from a 3-bedroom house to a 1 room. Not one bedroom but 1 room where it was the kitchen, the bedroom in one room and when we moved there, I knew things just got different"</p> <p>"Briefly elaborating on high school, it was an amazing school. It was an academic and leadership academy so they focussed a lot on academics and leadership. And I the leadership focus of the academy helped me develop into the woman I am today, the confidence, the communication skills, the open mindedness, the global minded person that I am.... It was a school of excellence and it was a scholarship, so, yeah"</p> |

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| Mandisa  | <p>"From a very young age I stayed in aim a township and then my dad got an opportunity to work in a bigger mine here mo. North West, so we moved from Gauteng to here North West, and when I got there it was a suburb vibe community"</p> <p>"I would say that I was privileged you know because we could afford a lot of things, back then when I was in primary, like they took me to uhm private school..... so it was still a private school until grade twelve"</p> <p>"I was in grade ten, that's where things started to be shaky financially at home you see..... from there it has been a shaky road financially at home because that period where we got disturbed my father couldn't recover from the job that he had and he couldn't afford the things that he used to have, so, it humbled us"</p> |
| Lebo     | <p>"Its 2 different communities, it was in (a township in Pretoria)"</p> <p>"Overall, I think everyone there we couldn't dream big because of the situation that was around us. And then the reason I'm also saying that is once we moved into the RDP the mentality changes there. We were squatting like squatter camps, you don't have space to even plant, but when you go to your own space you start doing things like oh okay we can also have burglar guards like why didn't we have this there, okay it's a house a roof. Its only there that we started to think bigger, but the schools there we didn't have infrastructure.... I remember I used to sit in a 3-legged chair, like, I remember I sat on that chair for the whole year"</p>                                                             |
| Khensani | <p>"Khensani is a girl from Limpopo"</p> <p>"I was coming from a township school which was considered one of those poor township schools"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## Appendix D5- Theme 1 Sub-theme 3

| <b>Theme1: Self-awareness, grit and optimism as factors influencing student success</b><br><b>Sub-theme 3: Participant background and nature of adversities faced and overcame</b> |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| Category                                                                                                                                                                           | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Challenges</b>                                                                                                                                                                  | Zolani      | "The biggest challenges, I think it's what every black child is facing. It's the financial exclusion and accommodation"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Thembi      | <p>"Biggest challenge is for the first time in my life in tertiary, in my school life I failed. It was 2018. I failed a blog, anatomy, which I had to repeat in 2019. It was the first time failing in my entire life"</p> <p>"The most painful thing for me was I couldn't ask for help. At some point I didn't see, at the beginning I couldn't see I was drowning. I saw I was struggling but I didn't see how bad it was"</p> <p>"I think I was borderline depressed as well and I felt like I was working but I wasn't working effectively"</p> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Terry       | "My first challenge actually it was the finances cause of like yeah I graduate. I finished my matric and then one thing for me, it was coming to UP and doing BSC"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Lebo        | <p>"The fact that we didn't have money, I had to use metro rail, every day, like every day and it was far, like it was far from my place to the train station yoh, it was yoh, I don't want to think about it"</p> <p>"The most problem that I encountered was, I did not fit in.... people that are in varsity it's like they knew that they were ready, and with me I think there we were only two from my school who came to UP that year, from my school, I did not know anyone"</p>                                                             |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Gwen        | <p>"I won nearly all the awards but the teachers said it was because another student left..... "</p> <p>"When I was in the school where I was getting bullied"</p> <p>"I obviously know that those teachers were bullying me I wasn't doing as well in those subjects"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

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|                                          |          | "I went and stayed with my aunt and uncle uh m so that's when I felt like I lost my support..... I was emotionally abused in that house without realising it was emotional abuse uhm because they were like even if I told her like an achievement she'd be like ahh it would never be like a well done or okay that's good"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                          | Khensani | <p>"Though I had parents who were working but I was not the only child at home. So, whatever they are working and getting they have to cover for me and my siblings and I had a brother who was in varsity as well, like there was a time when I had to run around with NSFAS"</p> <p>"When I got to main campus it was difficult for me where the pace I was used to in Mamelodi was I think twice or three times harder than what I was used to"</p> <p>"I didn't know anyone on campus and also the language barrier, I'm Tsonga, most people are Pedi, Tshwana, Zulu. I ended up having to be a quiet person.... I didn't know anyone on campus"</p> |
| <b>Emotional and Psychological state</b> | Gwen     | <p>"I need for me I think there is an internal need to be affirmed, there is an internal need to be recognised"</p> <p>"I started suffering from depression uhm, even that year I had a suicidal attempt, uhm so now that year was a very tough year in grade 9"</p> <p>"I remember just, uhm so she basically I was emotionally abused in that house without realising it was emotional abuse"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                          | Khensani | "I can say I was depressed but not like the other people explain cause my depression was different because I had this thing at the back of my mind like I have to make it, I have to push even though I failed"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                          | Thembi   | "I was putting all the I could put. which was practically nothing because I was exhausted. I think I was borderline depressed as well and I felt like I was working but I wasn't working effectively"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

## Appendix D6- Theme 1 Sub-theme 3

| <b>Theme1: Self-awareness, grit and optimism as factors influencing student success</b><br><b>Sub-theme 3: Participant background and nature of adversities faced and overcame</b> |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| <b>Push to succeed</b>                                                                                                                                                             | Gwen     | <p>"Like I need for me I think there is an internal need to be affirmed, there is an internal need to be recognised. Uhm and so for me I'm like in order to do that I must be the one to work my hardest cause also another thing is no one owes me anything but I owe it to myself to try my best"</p> <p>"I have that complex where I don't like it that people do things for me"</p> <p>"My biggest-biggest motivation was to get my family out of the struggle they have. Even now I'm working so hard in order to have my family be comfortable because you know every month I can't have them all struggling with money"</p> <p>"My biggest-biggest motivation was to get my family out of the struggle they have I want to leave this world having made some kind of impact uhm so for me those are my internal motivators"</p> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Khensani | "But I thank God that ended up getting NSFAS for studying and I was able to complete my studies"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Mandisa  | "My teachers motivated me... that I'm going to do well because I was the top ten student who was doing well in class, especially in economics and business"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Aiding values</b>                                                                                                                                                               | Khensani | <p>"I was depressed but not like the other people explain cause my depression was different because I had this thing at the back of my mind like I have to make it, I have to push even though I failed"</p> <p>"My belief in myself, because I told myself that that next year I am reducing these modules and passing the module that I failed"</p> <p>"Always saying encouraging words to myself"</p> <p>"I try to work through my challenges. When I need to talk I find a person to talk to. If I need academic help I find people who can help me academically"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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| Thembi | "When I got my result that I failed it then it sunk that oh my goodness this just happened.... I went to all my lecturers and I told them I am going to be repeating anatomy, I don't know what happened last year, I can't even tell you what I know and what I don't know. They advised me to start preparing in advance before the classes started and I said I will do that"                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Gwen   | "I was like taking it from high school even that I want to succeed I, I don't have a I almost felt like I don't have a choice to do well I don't have a choice but to pass, I don't have a choice you know. So, I need to finish everything and I need to do it well"<br>"I must be the one to work my hardest cause also another thing is no one owes me anything but I owe it to myself to try my best because at least I can say I tried my best"<br>"So, I have that complex where I don't like it that people do things for me, I like to be the one who did for myself"   |
| Terry  | "I didn't have resources and all that stuff, let me see, like let me use the resources that I have to keep moving and all that stuff. And I continued doing what I was doing in my high school, I studied ahead, being ahead of time doing the work and trying to ask the questions where I don't really understand"<br>"I'm that one person after writing almost every test I'll come sit down take that paper and reflect before the results even come out, take that paper, look at how did I do and try to check if there is any mistake that I made, did I miss any topic" |
| Lebo   | "I didn't pretend to be someone I am not, people knew my situation, and they knew that"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

## Appendix D7- Theme 1 Sub-theme 3

| <b>Theme1: Self-awareness, grit and optimism as factors influencing student success</b><br><b>Sub-theme 3: Participant background and nature of adversities faced and overcame</b> |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Category                                                                                                                                                                           | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Support received</b>                                                                                                                                                            | Thembi      | <p>"I would pop by my lecturer's office to make my face familiar. But I really engaged with the lecturers and engaged with the work. This time I said I will engage with the work, I will track my progress"</p> <p>"I started seeing a psychologist that year. I was like whatever I was going through last year I cannot go through again and I had to also figure out what personally was happening with me during that time"</p>                                                                                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Zolani      | <p>"I think the biggest challenges, I think it's what every black child is facing. It's the financial exclusion and accommodation. Well, for me, there were... it's better because I had a backup in terms of that I had a bursary for that"</p> <p>"(Administrators) from my bursary, they were very supportive, and my parents there were supportive in terms of transporting me to, because there was this time where I didn't get accommodation I think for a month. So, my dad used to drive me every day to school"</p> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Gwen        | <p>"My family were a big influence in supporting me especially my mom and my aunt Uhm they wanted the best for me obviously so everything I did they'd would be like No you can do it"</p> <p>"So, she was my best friend (from school) so both of us and we never had a competition we just both did very well in everything and we do everything together like real best friends"</p> <p>"Then I had some teachers that did support me"</p>                                                                                 |

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|  |          | <p>"Two teachers they were supportive.... my Biology teacher and .... my English teacher. So, like even like .... he wrote me recommendations letter for all of these bursaries in schools and all of that ..... so I remember those two teachers were my biggest uhm almost, they were my biggest supporters they were my biggest cheerleaders in my school"</p> <p>"I remember one of the first people I met was (Psychologist).... she told me that I'm an extrovert so I get my energy from people how I get my energy is about being in the library even if people aren't talking as long as there are people around it's how I get my energy"</p> |
|  | Mandisa  | <p>"I would say, also my friend, I had a few friends close to me, I didn't have a squad of friends, I only had like five friends. And two were closest with me and one I would literally go study with you know"</p> <p>"I know I'm saying this a lot ne, but my sister was with me through the process, any challenges that I faced, she was there with me"</p> <p>"Grade one to twelve it was definitely my teachers, uhm my teachers motivated me that I'm going to do well"</p> <p>"So, my mom was still alive back then"</p>                                                                                                                       |
|  | Terry    | <p>"So, my support structure okay, I will say the most one is my parents and my family as a whole they will make sure that I have everything that I needed to continue like, to continue studying in my academics life, and to continue moving"</p> <p>"Mamelodi support structure, the like of (Psychologists in student advising) and the lecturers also, they were so welcoming in making you... in assisting you in making you to study more, and study further and studying harder"</p> <p>"I got a sponsor from my community, the company from my community was willing to offer me money"</p>                                                    |
|  | Khensani | <p>"I thank God that ended up getting NSFAS for studying and I was able to complete my studies"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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|  |      | <p>"I found that I failed. And I remember calling my mom in front of the library main campus crying, and my mom was like no do you still have classes? I was like I don't know, I was even confused. She was like you are a mess just go back to your place and when you get there please call me, I was like okay."</p> <p>"I had a lot of support from my uncle who stays in Pretoria as well, so he tried like pushing me like okay let's do this. Come over let me help you"</p> |
|  | Lebo | <p>"I didn't want to live in poverty, that then and seeing my uncle doing things for us during my matric there was 1 teacher, I think that one was God sent. He was different compared to the rest of the teachers"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

## Appendix D8- Theme 2 Sub-theme 1

| Theme 2: Reciprocity between environment and academic success                            |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| Sub-theme 1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory on motivation of student success |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Category                                                                                 | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Internal motivators                                                                      | Gwen        | <p>"I want to leave this world having made some kind of impact uhm so for me those are my internal motivators"</p> <p>"For me internal it ties back to my values where I'm like resilient"</p> <p>"I feel like you had to be good at something if you didn't have money in that school so the thing is if you're not one of the rich kids you're not, you not able to do these things at least you're good in academics"</p> <p>"I think it's a gift for just picking things up quiet quickly, if I understand it I'll never forget it so for me at school I was just working because I was so determined to do so well, I remember I was an all-rounder and everyone was like 'oh my word'"</p> |
|                                                                                          | Terry       | <p>"I was one that person who was like more passionate like, in trying to be ahead all of the time, because I'm one person who learn by trying to study ahead"</p> <p>"From there I am like wow! okay this is a guarantee the whole campus is not the only one that does medicine only but all of us it is a guarantee, like I am in and all that stuff, my nerves started to calm down because I knew I was in"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                                          | Thembi      | "Internally I'm a very competitive human being. I always want to achieve more than I have achieved. I always do the best for myself. That is the biggest internal motivating factor for me"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                                          | Lebo        | <p>"When you go to your own space you start doing things like oh okay we can also have burglar guards like why didn't we have this there, okay it's a house a roof. Its only there that we started to think bigger"</p> <p>"I didn't want to live in poverty"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                          | Khensani    | "I grew up being a child that knew that academically I am able maybe because of the support but I knew that I am able and that I can do this thing"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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|  | Zolani  | "What motivated me academically, was the fact that I was, one, I wanted to be a professional, and two, I wanted to make a difference in South Africa, and not just for myself"<br>I wanted to take the education I've learned, and come and apply it in my community.                                 |
|  | Mandisa | "Internally I would say I wanted better things for myself and my life, and I looked back and I thought gore uhm, if I don't do this for myself, no one will be able to look after me in the future. My mom, is, has passed away, my siblings are now living their own lives looking after themselves" |

## Appendix D9- Theme 2 Sub-theme 1

| Theme 2: Reciprocity between environment and academic success                            |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| Sub-theme 1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory on motivation of student success |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Category                                                                                 | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| External motivators                                                                      | Gwen        | <p>"I'll never forget her saying there is no such things as a friend in varsity, there's no such things as a friend in terms of, you are here for yourself, and do not determine what you're going to do and how you operate because of friends, because friends can easily leave you in the dust"</p> <p>"I honestly cannot tell you how but they managed to pay our school fees and I remember there was one time when they didn't but they somehow found a plan"</p> <p>"I think it's a gift for just picking things up quiet quickly, if I understand it I'll never forget it so for me at school I was just working because I was so determined to do so well, I remember I was an all-rounder and everyone was like 'oh my word'"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                                          | Thembi      | <p>"My family, my dad and my mum were big on education. They literally preached to me that school is your way out of here and they were very encouraging with school work"</p> <p>"My dad said you're still young. You will repeat, they didn't kick you out right. I was like no, so I was like okay, go back to school, repeat it, get the rest of the year and get rest. So, when I get back it was like a huge load had just been lifted and that support that they gave me actually motivated me. It went a long way. I am not sure whether it was the motivation or it was the pressure being lifted"</p> <p>"When I found myself in that environment. This place was built of planks.... Now we had to sleep on the floor with one blanket. It was the 3 of us and I didn't want to be there. That was one thing I knew for sure, I didn't want to be there and I sort of made an executive decision that I will work harder at school and it was the only thing I had and it was the only thing that was guaranteed to get me out of there"</p> |
|                                                                                          | Lebo        | <p>"We had that 1 teacher who was different from the rest, because the other teachers only give half, they are there but they are completion is themselves, they don't see things from</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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|  |          | <p>another perspective. So, when that guy came, I remember he told us who wants to know a secret you must stay don't leave after school"</p> <p>"When you go to your own space you start doing things like oh okay we can also have burglar guards like why didn't we have this there, okay it's a house a roof. Its only there that we started to think bigger"</p> <p>"Even with my kids, they study hard, and they have their own goal, because they know, and he also likes the fact that ah mama, you went to varsity, what did you do, how was it there, because he is preparing"</p>                                                                   |
|  | Mandisa  | <p>"My sister, externally I would say gore, whatever I needed she would uh give me money and I buy it for myself you see"</p> <p>"I don't know if it falls internally or externally before my mom passed away, she literally asked me and begged me gore, "My child whatever you do please go to school and study". And from then those words kept playing in my mind saying gore this is what my mom wanted from me and I'm not going to let her down"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|  | Khensani | <p>"Family was there for me and they are still there for me"</p> <p>"Having this kind of support made me worry less because I know if there is anything that I need then these people are there for me and if there is anything that I am lacking these people are there for me. I can I had people who I could shift my burden"</p> <p>"I was not the only child at home<br/>So whatever they are working and getting they have to cover for me and my siblings and I had a brother who was in varsity as well, like there was a time when I had to run around with NSFAS because my brother and I were in varsity and they couldn't pay for both of us"</p> |
|  | Terry    | <p>"I'll say my close family, my mum, and my late dad and my younger brother they played a big role because my mom, my dad only had my matric and mum only had a diploma. And one thing that they wanted from us is that they want us to graduate and to be something in life, and anything that I wanted despite not having enough money"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

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|  |  | <p>"I was supposed to go for medical tests, and go fix my documentation. But the student advisor, I was taken to her because I was so stressed, I was so worried, all those stuffs, and she kept telling me that, "no, I can see you doing well, you will be fine"</p> <p>"With my brother, and then we would encourage each other to move and to study further, and read anything, like to read any book or any information that you find and that's one thing that kept us moving"</p> |
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## Appendix D10- Theme 2 Sub-theme 1

| Theme 2: Reciprocity between environment and academic success                            |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| Sub-theme 1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory on motivation of student success |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Category                                                                                 | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Community motivators                                                                     | Lebo        | <p>"I think everyone there we couldn't dream big because of the situation that was around us. And then the reason I'm also saying that is once we moved into the RDP the mentality changes there. We were squatting like squatter camps, you don't have space to even plant, but when you go to your own space you start doing things like oh okay we can also have burglar guards"</p> <p>"Let me say I got stolen twice in my lifetime..... the 1st time, I think that was worse, I still have the images in my head I was very young, I think 4 or 5, the guy almost raped me..... And then it happened again, the same technic that come I want to send to buy me something, and it happened. That is why I am saying that community saw that okay this household you can send those kids because they listen, I think we were the most disciplined kids"</p> |
|                                                                                          | Terry       | <p>"Where I come from initially also, I grew up in an area whereby facilities and service delivery weren't really on par, because of I grew up in the area whereby the doctors were scarce.... I got injured, called the ambulance, ambulance didn't come. Take a car like it was where, like, what motivated me a lot is was situation that happened to me while I was still young"</p> <p>"One thing that pushed me to say in this country we have scarce of doctors, we have limited doctors and that's one field which I want to go to and to study medicine and nothing else that was my aim medicine and nothing else"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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|                                       | Zolani   | <p>"Think I this was early..., even when I was doing grade twelve, my realisation was that if you go to areas in the rural areas, they want to work but they don't know what to do, because opportunities are not there, but they are saying, that: "we would love to work", but they don't know what to do. So, with that in mind, I told myself that, why can't I just create?"</p> <p>"I wanted to take the education I've learned, and come and apply it in my community"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                       | Khensani | <p>"Being given platforms whenever I am home, sometimes when I am home I like gathering young girls to speak to them to open up. In most cases where I come from, parents are working and they stay with their grandmothers and they need someone to talk to talk to. So, I make that platform to talk. So, I would sometimes be given those opportunities for when I come back and people they want me to talk to them.... its fuel for me to do more"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Method and cause of motivation</b> | Gwen     | <p>"I'll never forget her saying there is no such things as a friend in varsity, there's no such things as a friend in terms of, you are here for yourself, and do not determine what you're going to do and how you operate because of friends, because friends can easily leave you in the dust"</p> <p>"My mom and my aunt Uhm they wanted the best for me obviously so everything I did they'd would be like No you can do it. They never said No Give UP that was not in their vocabulary it just works harder or find a way to do it uhm so for me that was a bit supportive"</p> <p>"The biggest, biggest thing is my mom. To this day I would never forget it and it's so true, she said to us you have to be twice as good to in order to get half as much as the people you're going to school with"</p> <p>"I think it's a gift for just picking things up quiet quickly, if I understand it I'll never forget it so for me at school I was just working because I was so determined to do so well, I remember I was an all-rounder and everyone was like 'oh my word'"</p> |
|                                       | Thembi   | <p>"My family, my dad and my mum were big on education. They literally preached to me that school is your way out of here and they were very encouraging with school work. It was one of those things: "have you done your homework, do you have homework?". Even though sometimes they can't help but the questions were always be there"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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|          | "My dad said you're still young. You will repeat, they didn't kick you out right. I was like no, so I was like okay, go back to school, repeat it, get the rest of the year and get rest. So, when I get back it was like a huge load had just been lifted and that support that they gave me actually motivated me. It went a long way. I am not sure whether it was the motivation or it was the pressure being lifted" |
| Lebo     | "And then externally I think the fact that I had seen that there are better things out there out of my reach. And I knew that there is nothing stopping me but myself"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Mandisa  | "My sister, I would say that, uhm she would call me every day, I'd say she would call me five times a day, just to check up on me to see if I am okay if I have eaten, how to ask me how was school, what am I doing that time and she would ask me how are you planning to study for exams, do you need anything for your exams you see"                                                                                 |
| Khensani | "Having this kind of support made me worry less because I know if there is anything that I need then these people are there for me and if there is anything that I am lacking these people are there for me. I can I had people who I could shift my burden"                                                                                                                                                              |
| Terry    | "I was supposed to go for medical tests, and go fix my documentation. But (the student advisor), I was taken to her because I was so stressed, I was so worried, all those stuffs, and she kept telling me that, "no, I can see you doing well, you will be fine"<br><br>"My uncle came through also, made sure that I get the books"                                                                                     |

## Appendix D11- Theme 3 Sub-theme 1

| Theme 3: Advice to future ECP students                              |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| Sub-theme 1: Communication, Grit, Dedication to studies, resilience |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Category                                                            | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Communication                                                       | Terry       | "Identify those challenges.... (The student advisor) is one person who will be able to help you with this and this and this, and if you have this challenge, then you can go to this person, this person will be able to help you"<br><br>"If you face this challenge, you just need to go look for help in an area where you think is appropriate area to go and if you have a problem whereby you thinking more of the finances then you can go to the financial people to go and ask for advice about"                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                                     | Zolani      | "Collaboration with other students is the best"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                     | Mandisa     | "Go to your finance offices or department.... they have a lot of knowledge about bursaries just that they do not say anything because students they don't come to them and ask questions"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                                     | Khensani    | "If you feel like you need help consider getting help and don't wait until you are at the breaking point where you start to speak up. Speak up as soon as you can so that you can get the help that you need"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                     | Gwen        | "My biggest thing for someone who is struggling academically is it's not over until it's over you just need to find ways like to help yourself, so you're not the only one struggling as well. You find people who can help you cause when you can't help yourself, when you doing it by yourself its difficult once you have a support structure once you have someone helping you that's when you're able to do it.... no one can go in this life alone uhm it's difficult to go through life alone and succeed by yourself you'll always find someone if they successful they be like I want to thank this person it's because everybody needs someone to help them" |

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|                                         | Thembi   | "The first thing, and I think it is the first and the most important thing, ask for help.... my wellbeing hugely impacted my academics and my academics impacted my wellbeing, it was vice-versa. So, ask for help in the particular areas you need... Coz that's where my downfall was. Not asking for help and looking at myself go down without even screaming for help you know" |
|                                         | Lebo     | "I think it helps to talk, say things out loud because sometimes you find that you are struggling and you are not even aware where exactly, what's causing the struggle so talking and also believing in yourself, because at the end of the day, I think it's all up to you, so I would advise that person to use, to make use of the student support"                              |
|                                         |          | "Okay I think the first one is making use of those services, student help or student support"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Focus, dedication and resilience</b> | Zolani   | "Remove the mindset that this is an extended programme and, two, make sure that you strive for excellence"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                         | Mandisa  | "My number one rule is do not give up even if you feel tired, if you feel like anything is against you, do not give up on yourself because you do not know if you are close to that breakthrough"<br>"Believe that you are capable of doing anything that you set your mind to do"                                                                                                   |
|                                         | Khensani | "I know that there is a reason why you were placed in Mamelodi, try to figure it out and why you were brought to Mamelodi and fight to get to the end and fight to get to that degree that you left home saying you are going to obtain"<br>"Just put God first and everything will fall into place"                                                                                 |
|                                         | Gwen     | "Failing teaches you to succeed..... doesn't mean you that you're unable to do what you want to do it just mean that they will see and recognise that you just need the help to make you succeed"                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Study</b>                            | Zolani   | "Make sure that you achieve everything you study everything in time. Don't say because this semester test two months, far away, and then you say, Okay, I have enough time to rest. I don't think we're at university to rest; we are at university to study"                                                                                                                        |
|                                         | Mandisa  | "The only way to pass is to make sure that you study. Study to understand not study to cram because a lot of students they study to cram when it is exam time they crumble because you need to start from zero"                                                                                                                                                                      |

## Appendix D12- Theme 4 Sub-theme 1

| <b>Theme 4: The value of student support structures on student academic development</b><br><b>Sub-theme 1: What the UP Mamelodi Campus has done right and implications thereof</b> |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| Category                                                                                                                                                                           | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Provide a sense of belonging</b>                                                                                                                                                | Khensani    | "It even gave me a platform to make friends who are still my friends even today"<br>"Such a platform they make it in a way that you don't feel like you are talking to a shrink or something like that. They make you open up and speak"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Zolani      | "I think that Mamelodi, it was my peers. So, I think all of us, even with, uhm, this friend of mine uhm, we always strive to say we want to do well and we want to excel, and we had our challenges"<br>"The student advisor treats you like you, her child, and you are struggling in school, and whatever your key knows how to put this"                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Gwen        | "Like it wasn't about how different you are from other people. It's about how you going to succeed and be the person you need to be here"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Provide dedicated student-centred support</b>                                                                                                                                   | Terry       | "One thing that they did and made sure that that every person should get help, like they knew where to find help for any challenges that you had and helped us to help us to succeed and to achieve a lot in academics"<br>"Mamelodi campus you get all the support that you need like they talk to you, they speak to you like they just sit down and look at the overall performance of students and try to say; here there's a problem we see this problem if you have a challenge in this, try, please try to come out and able to go to a person who can help you" |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Khensani    | "I was a person who didn't really think I needed someone to talk to but with such a platform they make it in a way that you don't feel like you are talking to a shrink or something like that. They make you open up and speak"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

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|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         | <p>"At least have someone to talk to and at least have support like if you are facing anything and maybe you need academic advice so what I value the most is just the given platform that the university has given to the students"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Lebo    | <p>"I didn't understand why I'm failing that thing so I used those services and they helped a lot cause the lady there she was very helpful, and she would advise us to like use certain things or try new things"</p> <p>"There is one guy, that I know, who made use of the service, and I think it worked, its actually two of them, it worked so much that they ended up, remember most people who go there, science, I think its science, it has nothing to do with science, that they had to change their careers and focus on that, you get that they had to change completely cause I think with the support, it's like they help you to identify yourself you know"</p> |
| Mandisa | <p>"I felt it was one on one, it was not rushed. ko main campus they rush you because they have a list of students at Mamelodi it was one on one and was not rushed"</p> <p>"I went to (The student advisor) and asked her, I do not honestly know if I really should do this, or I shouldn't do it. And I don't know how she does this but she has her own way of talking to you and at the end of the day you would be like you know this is what I should be doing, not focusing on other things. And she would explain it"</p>                                                                                                                                               |
| Zolani  | <p>"I've spoken to the student advisor, and she wants to give me some methods of studying. And she. She actually gave me direction in terms of what I need to go in terms of career"</p> <p>"I'll look at it in terms of one specific student advisor, she.... doesn't just take you and said she takes care. She's going to support you and give you the methods of studying that everyone that she recommends to but she's I'm struggling with this, so she sits down with you and then she listens to you what exactly you want, and she actually how to put this"</p>                                                                                                        |

|  |        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |        | "The student advisor treats you like you, her child, and you are struggling in school, and whatever your key knows how to put this"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|  | Thembi | "She studied me as an individual and told me how I am supposed to study.... Like there is so much she's invested in and I truly value her work. She goes above and beyond for her students"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|  | Gwen   | <p>"I remember funny enough Ida was the one who encouraged me to change my degree.... I remember there so uncertain and being like I don't know if I can, I think we did a test... and her being like no, you can do it and rather go for something that suites you more and what makes you happier, because where I was with the Maths and stuff wasn't really making me fulfil it wasn't doing much for me and she recognised that"</p> <p>"What I really appreciated about them is you get like you get the sense you get the feeling uhm that they are there to really help you uhm so for me like it's not just a job to them it's a calling, it's a passion about them so I really appreciated that.... like in a motherly way and when I think about it it's like oh she cares, that is how you feel. Also, they drop anything and drop everything in order to help you"</p> |

## Appendix D13- Theme 4 Sub-theme 1

| <b>Theme 4: The value of student support structures on student academic development</b><br><b>Sub-theme 1: What the UP Mamelodi Campus has done right and implications thereof</b> |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| Category                                                                                                                                                                           | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Provide skills for smooth transition</b>                                                                                                                                        | Terry       | <p>"Those people who started in Mamelodi I feel like as soon you transit and you come to any campus in the university, like as you soon as you move there..... you already get to know okay, if I have this problem I need to go to the student support system and because you already have that knowledge..... if I have this problem I need to go to this and look for that in that area"</p> <p>"It helped me to be prepared for the busyness or like it helped me to prepare for other campuses where they just throw you under the bus with nothing with no knowledge of what to do and where to go if you need anything, I think yah, that's one thing about Mamelodi did"</p> <p>"I'll say that the support structure is work well, it's not like other campuses whereby they just throw you under the bus"</p> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                    | Khensani    | <p>"It also taught me that as the year went on coz the first semester I was a bit scare to interact with lecturers, it gave me that platform to interact with them to go and ask and consult if I don't understand something. BY the time I when to main campus I would go to the lecturer or tutor. Mamelodi was a very good transitioning for me"</p> <p>"I am very grateful actually to have been given the opportunity to go to Mamelodi campus. Especially having that transitioning platform from a very poor township school to a pre-university before the hectic main campus"</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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|  |         | "I am very grateful because I feel like I do have the ability and the passion and drive but I felt like had I moved from high school and straight into main campus I don't think I would have been able to pass my first year the way I did. I remember in I passed all my modules in Mamelodi whilst other people were carrying things" |
|  | Mandisa | "I went to talk to the psychologist, booked appointments and she would tell me what I need to do 1,2, 3 1, 2, 3 and it helped me a lot because I felt like if I didn't go to that psychologist I'd still be struggling even now. You know, so yeah I did use the student support there"                                                  |
|  | Zolani  | "I've spoken to the student advisor and she wants to give me some methods of studying..... she actually gave me direction in terms of what I need to go in terms of career"                                                                                                                                                              |
|  | Gwen    | "Her being like no, you can do it and rather go for something that suites you more and what makes you happier, because where I was with the Maths and stuff wasn't really making me fulfil it wasn't doing much for me and she recognised that"                                                                                          |

## Appendix D14- Theme 4 Sub-theme 2

| Theme: The value of student support structures on student academic development<br>Sub-theme 2: Areas of further development for the student support structure |             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| Category                                                                                                                                                      | Participant | Quotation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Development Ideas                                                                                                                                             | Lebo        | "Let's make it compulsory (Student Support), to everyone, to everyone. because now I don't know, some of us have issues without even knowing that they were there, because like now when was talking to you, I just noticed that yoh, maybe I should sit down with dad because I have unresolved issues"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                               | Zolani      | <p>"I think the first thing that we need to address in terms of parenting to support this person is an improvement but I think the problem is not the school. But there's certain things that needs to change into consider the gap between teacher and school"</p> <p>"Probably what we need to identify is it financially, accommodation, or food or what. If it is not one of those, then probably they need someone who is like me who can say look, I think you need to try and sit down and use the student support a lot and listen and try to use those methods before it's too late"</p> <p>"Another thing is that they come to school to tax, with no structure of study. So, when you're back in high school you are told that, work hard, but you're not being told that. Okay, you need to study this amount of time. This number of hours, and then you need to sleep this number of hours. So, we would embrace cross knighting"</p> <p>"And what probably you can do that can improve is to make sure that every student is aware of you guys, because I feel some of them they don't do well because they're not aware, or even if they do, they just go and say, we, we better, we did well in high school without these things"</p> |

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|  | Thembi | "The student advisor. That woman. I think if you ask any student from Mamelodi about one person, it's her. She, I think for me, she sorts of trained me how to study, she equipped me on all the skills I needed for my academics"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|  | Gwen   | <p>"They tend to do a lot of group, like motivational speeches, how do you do goal setting, how do you do this and I know it's difficult because it's just two people uhm. But it almost, I think it would be great thing if it was individualised so for instance when we arrive at first it is individualised each person goes into the student advisor's office"</p> <p>"Getting someone who has a similar background come into, coming into the space and communicate with everyone who comes from a, like the people who come from disadvantaged backgrounds because I found a lot so for instance in one of the students who come from really disadvantaged backgrounds they speak different languages, or English is tough for them"</p> |

## APPENDIX E: Coding Sample

| Coding Sample- Category: Support Received |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                     |           |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| ID                                        | Quotation Content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Codes                               | Reference |
| 3:29                                      | I had a lot of support from my uncle who stays in Pretoria as well, so he tried like pushing me like okay let's do this. Come over let me help you. I went over but I could see that he was also struggling because the biology he thought I am struggling with is not the Biology that he is used to that he did maybe 20 years ago or something like that. | Supportive uncle                    | 21 - 21   |
| 3:32                                      | I found that I failed. And I remember calling my mom in front of the library main campus crying, and my mom was like no do you still have classes? I was like I don't know, I was even confused. She was like you are a mess just go back to your place and when you get there please call me, I was like okay.                                              | Supportive mother                   | 22 - 22   |
| 3:37                                      | So, it was either one gets NSFAS or one has to stay at home. But I thank God that ended up getting NSFAS for studying and I was able to complete my studies                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Receipt of NSFAS > Continue studies | 23 - 23   |
| 4:19                                      | my family were a big influence in supporting me especially my mom and my aunt Uhm they wanted the best for me obviously so everything I did they'd would be like No you can do it.                                                                                                                                                                           | Supportive family                   | 38 - 38   |
| 4:20                                      | my mom and my aunt Uhm they wanted the best for me obviously so everything I did they'd would be like No you can do it. They never said No Give UP that was not in their vocabulary it just works harder or find a way to do it uhm so for me that was a bit supportive.                                                                                     | Family Motivation                   | 38 - 38   |
| 4:21                                      | Then I had some teachers that did support me                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Supportive teachers                 | 38 - 38   |
| 4:24                                      | Aah so for me ya exactly everything was like the context, the way I wrote, everything was amazing she said and I'll never forget that because it was the first time I ever got validated by a teacher cause even in grade 7 I remember I won nearly all the awards but the teacher                                                                           | Teacher validation                  | 38 - 38   |
| 4:26                                      | So Thami was my best friend so both of us and we never had a competition we just both did very well in everything and we do everything together like real best friends.                                                                                                                                                                                      | Academically achieving friends      | 39 - 39   |
| 4:31                                      | So, then I went and stayed with my aunt and uncle uh m so that's when I felt like I lost my support uhm cause my mom wasn't around my aunt wasn't around and I'm staying with just my aunt and uncle.                                                                                                                                                        | Loss of support<br>Supportive aunt  | 41 - 41   |

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| 4:33 | But I could only get that from my mom but at the time my mom wasn't there so it was over the phone it's not the same. You know my mom I know would've given me a hug and my mom is the type of person she would've gotten excited.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Supportive mother                                                                         | 42 - 42 |
| 4:35 | So, I didn't know people in my school I didn't really have friends but in grade 10 uhm which is now the year later and I'm still staying with my aunt and uncle. I started making friends I started knowing people in school I started being recognised. Cause also I was a top student I was like very good in school subjects so obviously the teachers all knew me and uhm, they supported me there as well                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Change environment+ performance in school + validation and support = academic performance | 44 - 44 |
| 4:36 | Uhm two teachers they were supportive, she was Mrs A my Biology teacher and Mr. B who was my English teacher. So, like even like Mr. B he wrote me recommendations letter for all of these bursaries in schools and all of that. I remember those two teachers were my biggest uhm almost, they were my biggest supporters they were my biggest cheerleaders in my school.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Supportive teachers                                                                       | 44 - 44 |
| 4:44 | Uhm and then externally uhm a lot of the times it's been like, like people I don't expect and when its people I don't expect it almost makes it uhm more like I want to succeed, because like for instance uhm like the Mr. B I was talking about our English teacher. I remember he was new when were in grade 11 or 10 uhm he came the first like, I remember the first day because I use to sit near the front a lot because I don't know I just like sitting near the front it was never in the front but the second row from the front that's is where I like sitting in my classes. And I remember Mr. B when he came he gave the same feeling as my History teacher so for instance when I'd submit the History teacher where I was , when I'd submit like an essay or when I'd submit like an oral he always was like this is how you do it and for me that external validation from him always made me want to do better, uhm so for instance he would be like did you see how creative she was , did you see how this is how you did it this . Gwen did this, this and this. And that's how you were meant to do it uhm so for me I was always validated uhm in the class especially uhm often .... | Supportive teachers                                                                       | 47 - 48 |
| 4:45 | when I'd submit like an essay or when I'd submit like an oral he always was like this is how you do it and for me that external validation from him always made me want to do better, uhm so for instance he would be like did you see how creative she was, did you see how this is how you did it this. Gwen did this, this and this. And that's how you were                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Teacher validation                                                                        | 48 - 48 |

|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                               |         |
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|      | meant to do it uhm so for me I was always validated uhm in the class especially uhm often                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                               |         |
| 4:49 | I remember one of the first people I met was the FSA and then I remember the first thing she did was when we went in is uhm I don't know if we had to sign a form or something. <sup>[P]</sup> <sup>[SEP]</sup> What she was looking at is how we turn the page, uhm like did we write straight or like horizontally and in don't remember the reason or why I think maybe ask her why but there was something when you wrote like this and I remember because I write like that, I prefer writing like this rather than straight. I just remember the test, it wasn't a test but uhm I feel like it was a test after it I don't remember but I think it had to do whether you're an extrovert or introvert. And she was the person who taught me that Uhm it's not actually about how you are with people, but it's about your energy where do you get your energy. And she told me that I'm an extrovert so I get my energy from people how I get my energy is about being in the library even if people aren't talking as long as there are people around it's how I get my energy. Exactly and not like an introvert where its inside and you get your energy by being by yourself and working like that Uhm, so ya when she, she basically like helped me. And then also like uhm who's this psychologist, uhm I can't remember her name which is bad because she like helped me so much. | Consult with psychologist> learned about self | 50 - 51 |
| 5:9  | I know I'm saying this a lot ne, but my sister was with me through the process, any challenges that I faced, she was there with me,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Supportive sister                             | 74 - 74 |
| 5:10 | I would say, also my friend, I had a few friends close to me, I didn't have a squad of friends, I only had like five friends. And two were closest with me and one I would literally go study with you know. <sup>[P]</sup> <sup>[SEP]</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Academically achieving friends                | 74 - 74 |
| 5:13 | Oh yah okay, grade one to twelve it was definitely my teachers , uhm my teachers motivated me uh gore I'm going to do well because I was the top ten student who was doing well in class, especially in economics and business, I was in, uh okay Economics and business I was in the top five, and then for the whole, the rest of the school I was in the top ten, so they saw the potential in me, at that time I didn't see it you know, they saw the potential in me, they saw the leadership skills in me and they would say gore, "you know you're such a brave child, you're such a clever, you are smart child" so they motivated me to go to university because they saw that I am clever, I'm smart, I can take uhm university.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Supportive teachers                           | 54 - 54 |

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|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 5:17 | So my mom was still alive back then, so she was just a house mom because back then in the days you know, women didn't have those kinds of opportunities to go work and get an education so she couldn't do anything but to stay home and raise us. So, she was still raising us at home, my dad was still job hunting I was still dependent on my siblings you see, uhm, to fund us and give us money for you know, necessity things, you see. So, from grade ten until twelve.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Mother<br>Supportive mother                                                                                    | 17 - 18   |
| 5:30 | Oh yah okay, grade one to twelve it was definitely my teachers , uhm my teachers motivated me uh gore I'm going to do well because I was the top ten student who was doing well in class, especially in economics and business, I was in, uh okay Economics and business I was in the top five, and then for the whole, the rest of the school I was in the top ten, so they saw the potential in me, at that time I didn't see it you know, they saw the potential in me, they saw the leadership skills in me and they would say gore, "you know you're such a brave child, you're such a clever, you are smart child" so they motivated me to go to university because they saw that I am clever, I'm smart, I can take uhm university. | Teacher motivation therefore<br>good academic performance<br>thus motivation to succeed.<br>Teacher validation | 54 - 54   |
| 6:22 | During the course of the block I didn't overcome it. Only when I got my result that I failed it then it sunk that oh my goodness this just happened. I cried then I came back 2019 January and I was supposed to start the block in March so I went to all my lecturers and I told them I am going to be repeating anatomy, I don't know what happened last year, I can't even tell you what I know and what I don't know. They advised me to start preparing in advance before the classes started and I said I will do that.                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Consult with lecturers<br>Courage                                                                              | 38 - 38   |
| 6:24 | I started seeing a psychologist that year. I was like whatever I was going through last year I cannot go through again and I had to also figure out what personally was happening with me during that time                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Consult with Psychologist                                                                                      | 38 - 38   |
| 6:25 | I would pop by my lecturer's office to make my face familiar. But I really engaged with the lecturers and engaged with the work. This time I said I will engage with the work, I will track my progress.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Consult with lecturers                                                                                         | 38 - 38   |
| 7:15 | and that time my uncle came through also, made sure that I get the books.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Supportive uncle                                                                                               | 115 - 115 |
| 7:16 | , I got a sponsor from my community, the company from my community was willing to offer me money, but it wasn't enough to cover my tuitions, they like; "we can only give you this amount of money for you to continue with your studies",                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Community organisation<br>sponsorship                                                                          | 115 - 115 |

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|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 7:20 | So, my support structure okay, I will say the most one is my parents and my family as a whole they will make sure that I have everything that I needed to continue like, to continue studying in my academic's life, and to continue moving.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Supportive family                                                                                        | 125 - 125 |
| 7:21 | the Mamelodi support structure, the like of Ada Meyer, the like of Evelyn and the lecturers also, they were so welcoming in making you... in assisting you in making you to study more, and study further and studying harder so the FSA and the lecturers in Mamelodi also played a role                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Consult with lecturers<br>Consult with Psychologist<br>Mamelodi Support Structure                        | 125 - 125 |
| 7:32 | I think it was only when I was doing my Grade 8 and now only one, two, three, they are coming out and all that stuff. And then the teachers what they would basically do, is they would create a competitive environment when they see a potential in a student from Grade 8 and then because of that they will try to push you to do high and all those things, coz normally every year, they will release the top 10 and all those things, and they will try to fight, yah, its every year and every term. <sup>[P]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub> And they will try to motivate each one of us, to say, " you see where you are now, you can still do high" and all those things, and that's one thing that was keeping us moving and all those stuff, to saying "this group, like the group ahead of us, it can't be, like we can do better than that and that's one thing it was keeping us moving in every year when we are learning in my school it eh, was a school of a competition, to say this group, 5 of the students graduates.., finished with distinctions so we can do better I can do this person got 7 distinctions I can try to do more hard in order to get those 7 distinctions also. <sup>[P]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub> | Teacher motivation therefore good academic performance thus motivation to succeed.<br>Teacher validation | 69 - 70   |
| 8:10 | I think the biggest challenges, I think it's what every black child is facing. It's the financial exclusion and accommodation. Well, for me, there were... it's better because I had a backup in terms of that I had a bursary for that.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Bursary                                                                                                  | 60 - 60   |
| 8:13 | Administrators from my bursary, they were very supportive, and my parents there were supportive in terms of transporting me to, because there was this time where I didn't get accommodation I think for a month. <sup>[P]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub> So, my dad used to drive me every day to work,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Bursary staff                                                                                            | 65 - 66   |
| 8:14 | and my parents there were supportive in terms of transporting me to, because there was this time where I didn't get accommodation I think for a month. <sup>[P]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub> So, my dad used to drive me every day to work, <sup>[P]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub> I mean not to work, to school. So, I think that was one another major support that's something that I will never forget. I always tease him about it. <sup>[P]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Supportive parents                                                                                       | 65 - 67   |

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| 9:10 | Okay, I didn't want to live in poverty, that then and seeing my uncle doing things for us because I know that in a way that he doesn't continue buying my mom food in that way and he has giving us the basics, like the foundations to say now you can also stand on your own.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Supportive uncle                                                                                                              | 50 - 50 |
| 9:19 | Like another thing, during my matric there was 1 teacher, I think that one was God sent. He was different compared to the rest of the teachers. That guy told us about buying shares. He told us you can buy shares at the post office. Back then I didn't have money, but it was something I thought of. If I had done that then I think I would be far. So, we had that 1 teacher who was different from the rest, because the other teachers only give half, they are there but they are completion is themselves, they don't see things from another perspective. So, when that guy came, I remember he told us who wants to know a secret you must stay don't leave after school. So, we stayed until 5, that time I don't know how to use the laptop and never even seen a laptop. And he is like okay this is the secret I was talking about and then he showed us a video of "The Secret" I think there is a book as well | Feeling Supported<br>Teacher motivation therefore good academic performance thus motivation to succeed.<br>Teacher validation | 26 - 26 |