

A qualitative study to understand the lived experiences of young adults in intercultural romantic relationships, in Durban

Name: Jennifer Candey

Student Number: 17314722

Supervisor: Leigh de Wet

Module: Research Methodology

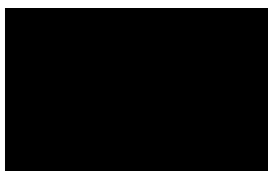
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Declaration:

I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Psychology Honours degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes



Abstract

South Africa is a culturally diverse country, with the number of people getting into intercultural relationships growing each day (Ntuli, 2012). Previous literature has shown a vast amount of knowledge of the experiences of these couples, however there is a lack of focus within the South African context. Without research focusing on the experiences of young adults in intercultural relationships in South Africa, many people are unaware of the experiences of these intercultural couples. The purpose of this research study is therefore to address this problem by conducting a qualitative study on two young couples in an intercultural relationship, in Durban. The couples took part in an online semistructured interview to discuss their experiences of being in an intercultural relationship. The reason for this method was to allow for a certain degree of openness during the interview. Findings show that the females became assimilated into the dominant culture of their partner and that the men, although having a more dominant culture, had become less strict in the practice of their own culture, and that the experience of gender roles within the relationship were found to be equal amongst both couples.

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Title

A qualitative study to understand the lived experiences of young adults in intercultural romantic relationships, in Durban.

Contextualisation

South Africa is known as the Rainbow Nation, a fitting title that captures the country's cultural and ethnic diversity (SA-V, 2020). The population of South Africa is one of the most complex and diverse in the world (SA-V, 2020). In light of this, romantic relationships between people of different cultures is a growing phenomenon throughout South Africa (SA-V, 2020). It is also a subject severely lacking in current research and data (Donovan, 2004). According to research by GeoNames (2020) Durban is South Africa's second largest city, however a review of current literature shows that there is limited research regarding the awareness of the lived experiences of intercultural couples in Durban. Additionally, the history of racial segregation in South Africa (apartheid) plays a role in the background of the intercultural relationships today (McKinney, 2007). As South Africa's racial separation enforced separate cultural development, individuals of different races talk and think about culture and race in a taboo way as a result of the resonances of the South Africa's past (McKinney, 2007). This literature review will include articles and papers published in academic journals as well as research findings. These sources will be discussed in depth thereby motivating for the relevance and need for this study. The themes which will be addressed in the literature review are communication, gender roles, family support, societal attitudes and cultural celebrations and traditions.

Rationale

A look at previous literature on intercultural relationships lacks focus on young adults in South Africa, let alone Durban. Research involving people in intercultural relationships has a large focus in other countries, therefore the findings from said research cannot be assumed to be applied to the multicultural context of Durban. South Africa has a troubled past where themes of racism, cultural differences, social criticism and family acceptance affect the experiences of these relationships (SA-V, 2020). Additionally, previous research has shown that the younger generations have comfortably negotiated around the cultural and racial differences as compared to older generations (Geldens et al., 2011). This research becomes relevant as it attempted to focus and understand what the lived experiences are of these young adults in Durban who are in intercultural relationships.

Problem Statement

South Africa is a culturally diverse country with the number of people getting into intercultural relationships growing each day (Ntuli, 2012). There is a large amount of research done on intercultural relationships around the world; however, in Durban there are many couples who are in an intercultural relationship. This becomes a problem as due to limited research on Durban intercultural relationships, people are unaware of the positive or negative experiences of these couples. This research addressed this problem through understanding the lived experiences of intercultural couples in Durban.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research was to qualitatively understand the lived experiences of young adults, ages 20 – 25, who are in intercultural romantic relationships, in Durban.

Research Questions and Objectives

Question: What are the lived experiences of young adults in Durban who are in an intercultural relationship?

Sub Question: Do societal experiences influence the internal experiences of young adults who are in intercultural relationships, in Durban?

Objectives:

- ☐ To explore the experiences of young adults in intercultural relationships, in Durban.
- ☐ To explore if societal experiences influence the internal experiences of young adults in intercultural relationships, in Durban.

Literature Review

There has been an abundance of literature on the experiences of romantic intercultural relationships, however there is a lack of this research in the South African, especially within the Durban area. A comprehensive understanding in this review was built based on the themes and patterns identified in previous literature sources.

As there are several significant concepts that are to be utilized in this research it is necessary to define the concepts used. When approaching a subject such as intercultural it is necessary to provide a definition of *culture*. A similar definition of culture has been used by previous literature, but for the purpose of this study it is the characteristics or behaviour of a particular group that involve language, religion, food, social habits and has a significant influence in the daily lives and behaviours of people (Cools, 2011).

A definition of *intercultural relationships* by Gaines and Brennan (2001, as cited in Cools, 2011), suggests intercultural relationships are close relationships which involve two individuals who differ in ethnicity or cultural background. To elaborate further, intercultural couples can be characterized as partners who may be from different countries, nationalities, ethnicities, and religions who may have different beliefs, assumptions, and values that are as a result of their socialisation which includes the upbringing, home language and education (Cools, 2011). This research project welcomes all forms of cultural difference in intercultural romantic relationships.

In South Africa there is a large focus on race, therefore this research simply cannot ignore this, thus a definition of *racism* is provided. Racism is the belief that one's own race is superior to others and that the physical differences amongst the races determine their cultural or individual achievements (Schmid, 1996). South Africa is greatly troubled by its past (Houston & Davids, 2020), therefore themes of racism were expected to appear in this research project. As apartheid has led to the racialisation of certain groups, it has also been imposed, embraced and internalised into the different cultures (Houston & Davids, 2020). During apartheid the access to opportunities were based on race, thus certain privileges and experiences were racially determined and influenced (Houston & Davids, 2020). These experiences of racial discrimination have resulted in the differences in the upbringing and practice of certain cultures as well as negative emotions of the other races (Houston & Davids, 2020). Despite race and culture being separate terms, they do rely on each other, as certain South African cultures often belong to certain races (Houston & Davids, 2020).

Another significant concept is the *internal experiences* of these intercultural couples. This term is not easy to define, but for the purpose of this research the internal experiences include any lived experiences that happen between the two partners in the relationship during the time that they are together. For instance, these may include experiences of communication misunderstanding, gender role expectations or certain cultural traditions or celebrations (Donovan, 2004). These are some of the common experiences that happen between the partners in intercultural relationships (Donovan, 2004). As mentioned, some of these experiences may include expectations of one another, or even gender expectations which may cause tension in the relationship due to the different cultural expectations of the gender. To elaborate on *gender expectations*, these include expectations and beliefs that are applied to an individual of a specific sex and are often determined by the culture of the individual (Eisenclas, 2013). Gender roles are heavily

influenced by culture as the culture dictates the behaviour of the gender (Eisenchlas, 2013). For instance, in the traditional black South African culture it is expected that the women are to stay home and raise their children while the men go to work (Ntuli, 2012). These gender roles are often seen as stereotypical as they guide men and women on behaviour that is typical in a certain context or situation (Eisenchlas, 2013). As this research focused on heterosexual intercultural couples, tensions in gender expectation were expected to appear. The interviews with the couples aimed uncover if gender role differences caused any effect and how they negotiated around it.

The last significant concept, *social experiences*, included the culture of the families, family tensions and family perceptions of the relationship and if this had any direct influence on the intercultural relationship itself (Oommen, 2014). Social experiences also include friends and acquaintances that may have an influence on the intercultural relationship (Oommen, 2014).

These definitions are the ones that will be adopted throughout this research.

Communication in Intercultural Relationships

Communication is all around us (Ntuli, 2012). People are always communicating in a situation or setting, and as humans we use various verbal and nonverbal signals which allow us to communicate and interact with others (Ntuli, 2012). This is what links us to the world (Ntuli, 2012). Our cultural values and background influence our interaction with others, thus, when we encounter someone who not only uses a different language to us, but also has a different culture from our own, there may misunderstandings and tensions (Ntuli, 2012).

Ntuli (2012) highlights how aspects of intercultural communication and a lack of understanding of other peoples' culture and nonverbal behaviours can cause misunderstandings and conflict. Ntuli (2012) presents a scenario that reflects reality and portrays some of the actions from real life experiences within the South African context. The scenario presents Manqoba, who is a black man from the Zulu culture, and Michael, who is a white man from the American culture (Ntuli, 2012). Michael goes to Manqoba's house to visit and is greeted by Manqoba's mom (Ntuli, 2012). Manqoba's mom extends a hand to greet him but Michael attempts to embrace her (Ntuli, 2012). Manqoba's mom takes a step back immediately and tell Michael to come in and take a seat (Ntuli, 2012). Once Manqoba's mom calls Manqoba down to see his friend she says in Zulu that he is a very disrespectful man who wants to hug a married woman, and instead of sitting down

like she said, he is standing with his hands in his pockets in the lounge (Ntuli, 2012). It is in Michaels culture to greet with a hug, while it is the opposite for Manqoba's culture (Ntuli, 2012). Additionally, in Michael's culture, it would be seen as disrespectful to take a seat in the lounge as a guest in a house without the person who lives there being present, whereas in Manqoba's culture they may view Michael's behaviour as being uncomfortable and rude (Ntuli, 2012). This scenario demonstrates how misunderstandings can occur between people who are of different backgrounds and cultures within the South African context. Ntuli (2012) demonstrates typical realities in the South African context of intercultural communication however further research is needed, such as interviews with people of different cultures and their experiences of misunderstandings in communication.

While Ntuli (2012) lacks research and participants, Reiter and Gee (2008) make up for it in their study in Washington on open communication in intercultural relationships. Reiter and Gee (2008) explored open communication with cultural and religious differences and similarities, and partner support for culture and religion. The study produced findings that showed open communication as a maintenance behaviour that is central to the maintenance of intercultural relationships (Reiter & Gee, 2008). Although contradictory to their research Reiter and Gee (2008) also outlined other research that suggested that avoidance of communication may also be a maintenance strategy. Although Reiter and Gee's (2008) study can be considered reliable, findings cannot be assumed to be the same for a South African context as cultures in South Africa have different ways of practicing religion, as well as in the practice of their culture (Ntuli, 2012).

Wankah (2009) brings communication amongst different cultures back to a South African perspective in his study on barriers to intercultural communication in the Western Cape. Despite romantic intercultural relationships not being the focus of this study, findings showed similar results to Ntuli (2012) and Reiter and Gee (2008), in that communication between people of different cultures may lead to misunderstandings and conflict due to the multitude of meanings associated with certain cultural behaviour (Wankah, 2008). Communication misunderstanding is a common theme found in research, thus this is expected to be present in this research study as certain cultures have certain words to explain ideas as well as certain ways to express emotions or thoughts (Wankah, 2008). Wankah (2008) did however highlight how stereotypes and gender roles may end up misleading people, thus creating barriers to intercultural communication. This leads to gender roles in intercultural relationships.

Gender Roles in Intercultural Relationships

Research on communication in intercultural relationships has flourished around the world, however there is a lack in research in South Africa that goes deeper into the influence of gender roles in intercultural relationships. Another gap in research is the limited research on gender roles in young adults in intercultural relationships, there is a large focus on marriage. The following literature examines gender roles, it is however research on intercultural marriages.

Bustamante, Henriksen and Nelson (2011) conducted research in the America on the cultural related stressors in intercultural relationships. A common theme that was found in their research were gender role expectations. The gender role expectations often highlighted male-domination in the relationship (Bustamante et al., 2011). Donovan (2004) also found similar results in her research mentioning that the difference in male/female perspective caused friction at times in couples' relationships. A study done by Skowroński, Othman, Wen Siang, Wei Han, Jia Yang and Waszyńska (2014) elaborate on the same results saying that gender roles is one of the main sources of conflict in an intercultural relationship due to differing perceptions of gender roles and stereotypes each person's culture holds. It is quite a common occurrence where a person in an intercultural relationship lacks sufficient knowledge of the other partner's culture (Skowroński, et al., 2014). This lack of knowledge comes from the fact that cultures differ in the way that they think males and females should act (Skowroński, et al., 2014). A way that couples cope with these differences include negotiating and integrating the differences instead of denying or distorting them (Bustamante, 2011). Bustamante (2011) outlined that intercultural couples who explore and negotiate differences strengthened their relationship which lead to a greater mutual understanding. This research study will explore if the two couples also negotiated between the differences, and if so, what impact it had on the relationship.

Family Support and Societal Attitudes on Intercultural Relationships

Family support is also a common theme that comes up in the literature. People often rely on the support they get from others to face the challenges of life and when they feel they have this support, stress is lifted and psychological well-being is enhanced (Oommen, 2014). Skowroński et al. (2014) uncovered that reason for lack of or hesitant family support was due to family's concern of cultural dilution, that the partner would lose his or her cultural roots. This lack of support is labeled as a barrier to intercultural relationships as it often led to conflict with family and often affected family ties (Skowroński, et al., 2014).

This family objection thus puts a great amount of strain on the relationship of the intercultural couple (Skowroński, et al., 2014). Bustamante et al. (2011) notes that family relationships where there is a lack of support were major stressors to the intercultural couple and that they often felt excluded from their spouses family. Donovan (2004) also notes that the specific culture of the partner is also a concern to family. Often certain cultures come with various stereotypes which affects other's perceptions of that culture (Donovan, 2004). Donovan's (2004) study presents similar findings where it is often said that family involvement is a relentless stressor in their relationships. Another experience of lack of family support is that often during family gatherings the intercultural partner was often excluded, particularly when the partner was not fluent in the native language of the family members to which they chose to converse (Bustamante et al., 2011). This exclusion often led the partner to feel as an "outsider" (Bustamante et al., 2011). In the South African context similar experiences are expected to be found as South Africa has multiple languages that are spoken and often families will expect the partner to learn the language of the other (Ntuli, 2012). Additionally, racism in South Africa's past may also have an influence on the level of family support in the relationship as there may be tension between the two races.

Societal attitudes and perceptions also influence the experiences of the intercultural relationship as the couples tends to be sensitive to the various adverse reactions people have in public (Skowroński, et al., 2014). Skowroński et al. (2014) state that couples tends to feel affected by those around them, and having family or friends who do not support their intercultural relationship may cause lower levels of satisfaction between the partners. Intercultural couples that experience negative glances from the public often have feelings of insecurity and discomfort which may eventually create feelings of doubt that could affect relationship satisfaction (Skowroński, et al., 2014). Once again, cultures in South Africa are often shared by a particular race, thus negative public experiences may be more prominent for South African couples.

Despite using international married couples as participants in these studies, family support and societal attitude is still a major factor and influence on young adults in intercultural relationships who are not married, therefore findings can not be completely ignored, there is still a great deal of relevance to this research project.

Cultural difference in Traditions and Celebrations

When it comes to celebrating a cultural holiday or even daily traditions the couples are noted to have experienced a certain level of tension. However, some couples are reported

to have found common ground between the cultures. Cools (2011) research on intercultural couples in Finland shows that there is an integration of each partners cultural traditions and celebrations. The couples stated that they often improvised, re-created or even changed certain traditions (Cools, 2011). Cools (2011) did however note that the couples experienced tension and conflict when celebrations or traditions were shared with family and friends as the partner (of another culture) often did not understand the culture and meaning behind the tradition, thus leading to the partner feeling excluded.

Bustamante et al. (2011) notes the same integration of culture amongst the intercultural couples in their research. They write that the couples often created a new set of values and frameworks that blended their specific cultural perspectives within their relationship (Bustamante et al., 2011). Many participants in Donovan's (2004) study also mentioned that the couples incorporated each other's culture into their relationship through conscious efforts to learn about the partner's culture and teach their partner about their own. This research study will explore whether the same merging of cultures is used, or whether acculturation occurs between the couple.

Marshall (2010) did a study on Chinese-Canadian couples and acculturation through questionnaires on 65 couples. Results from the study showed a pattern of women often assimilate into the dominant culture of their male partner (Marshall, 2010). Acculturation is often seen in migrants coming to a new country, thus not a significant factor in this study, however, this research will not totally ignore acculturation when interviewing couples as the cultural difference between partners may cause tension rather than racial difference (Houston & Davids, 2020).

As mentioned, there is an abundance of literature and research on intercultural couples around the world, however there is a lack of this research in the South African context. Findings from literature cannot be assumed to be the same for South Africa due to the influence of South Africa's racial past which plays an important role and sets a backdrop for the intercultural couples experience of the relationship (McKinney, 2007). Previous literature has examined how communication in the intercultural relationship may cause tension due to a language barrier or the multitude of meanings associated with certain phrases. Gender role expectations are a common cause of tension found in intercultural relationships as an individual's culture guides the behaviour of that individual. As each culture has different expected roles for a gender, tensions are expected to occur when certain roles conflict with another. Additionally, another common stressor in intercultural

relationships is the level of family support on the relationship. As intercultural relationships are influenced by South Africa's past racism, cultures often belong to a certain race which may cause a certain level of family tension (Houston & Davids, 2020) as well as the negative public perceptions. Past research has demonstrated that couples who celebrate certain traditions or celebrations differently often mediate the problem by creating a new celebration or even change or improvise to satisfy tension. This research project will explore whether the experiences noted above occur in the South African context as well, and if so, how the couples mediate through the problems.

Theoretical Framework

First proposed by Fritz Heider in 1946, *Balance theory* is a cognitive consistency theory which explains that people prefer certain elements in their cognitive systems to be balanced (APA, 2020). These systems, sometimes rereferred to as P-O-X triads, are P = person (self), O = other person, and X = a stimulus or event (APA, 2020). The balance of these systems are said to be psychologically pleasant, thus an uncomfortable feeling is caused when these systems are not balanced (APA, 2020). Balance theory assists this research as it is useful in understanding the experiences of the couples who are in intercultural relationships, and whether the difference in culture creates an uncomfortable psychological tension within an individual, as the difference in culture may create challenges in understanding meaning behind situations and cultural rituals and cultural expectations (APA, 2020). Each culture has guidelines for human behaviour as well as certain gender roles within that culture (Eisenclas, 2013). Therefore, each culture will have certain expectations for partners in romantic relationships (Eisenclas, 2013). As each culture has various expectations, psychological tension is expected when there is a conflict of cultural rituals, genders roles etc. (Cionea, Van Gilder, Hoelscher & Anagondahalli, 2018).

Methodology

Paradigm

The Interpretivist paradigm assisted this study in guiding how research was conducted and how the results were interpreted. Interpretivism is influenced by Phenomenology and attempts to interpret and gain understanding of individuals' actions which it then describes from the point of view of the individual (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). This research study adopted this paradigm as the researcher in this study had the task of interpreting and

understanding the subjective experiences of the couples who are in intercultural romantic relationships.

Interpretivists are guided by three research traditions; epistemology (how knowledge is gathered), ontology (study of reality) and axiology (study of values) (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). This research study followed the epistemological view of Interpretivism which states that facts are fluid and subjective as they depend on the subjective interpretation of the individual (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). The ontological position of interpretivism maintains that reality is a social construct dependent on the meanings the individual ascribes to their subjective experiences (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). The aim of this study was to understand the subjective realities and experiences of young intercultural couples therefore the interpretivist view of ontology is fitting. The axiological view of interpretivism understands that values are subjective and unique since individuals will ascribe meaning to values based on their own subjective experiences (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). In this research, the values of intercultural couples are unique, as they are subjective and created by the experiences that shape their values.

Research Design

Due to this research focusing on the qualities of subjective human experiences and the meanings associated with it (Nieuwenhuis, 2020), this research took on a *qualitative* approach. Qualitative research aims to understand people's beliefs, attitudes and experiences, therefore, by using this approach this research was able to understand the subjective experiences of these couples as proposed in the purpose statement (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). Due to time constraints a *cross-sectional design* was used. As this research aims to understand the current experiences of the couples, rather than over a period of time, a cross-sectional design is appropriate (du Plooy-Cilliers & Cronje, 2014). Idiographic approaches to research focus on the individual and emphasise their unique subjective experiences (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014), therefore an *idiographic approach* was followed as the aim of this research is to understand the individuals subjective experiences.

Population

As this research study attempts to understand the lived experiences of young adults in intercultural relationships who reside in Durban, the target population was young adults between the ages of 20- 25, who were in intercultural romantic relationships and who are current residents of Durban. A target population is the total group of individuals where the sample is drawn from (Lavrakas, 2008).

Sampling

As this research study attempted to understand the experiences of the intercultural couples, the unit of analysis, which is the entity or unit that this study analysed (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014), is that of intercultural couples. As it is nearly impossible to access the entire population of intercultural couples in Durban, *nonprobability* with *purposive* sampling was used (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). Nonprobability sampling is a form of sampling whereby the odds of an individual of the population being selected to form part of the sample cannot be calculated (du Plooy-Cilliers & Cronje, 2014). Purposive sampling relies on the judgement of the researcher to select who forms part of the sample (du Plooy-Cilliers & Cronje, 2014). The two couples who formed the sample fell in line with the population parameters, this was the requirement that the couples must be in an intercultural relationship, be between the ages of 20 – 25 and reside in Durban. As such, the researcher purposely selected which couples were to form part of the sample in this research study. Additionally, as this research study was limited in time, the researchers sampling method of choice was time-effective as the researcher knew the couples prior to the research study.

As mentioned, this research study aimed to gather a deeper understanding of the experiences of the intercultural couples in Durban and not to generalise the findings from the report, thus the size of the population sample was limited to two heterosexual couples, a total of four participants. Furthermore to justify the sample size, the researcher needed sufficient time to contact and source the sample as well as gather and analyse the data, thus the method of purposive sampling was used to save time (Pascoe, 2014).

Data Collection Methods

This research study attempted to understand the experiences of its participants; thus, it was qualitative in nature (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). In order to align with the qualitative framework for data collection the data collection tool was semistructured interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). However, due to the COVID19 lockdown and restrictions enforced in South Africa, face-to-face interviews were not permitted. Thus, the researcher made the decision to conduct the interviews with the intercultural couples over the online platform Skype. The researcher decided to stay with the decision of using interviews as the data collection method as the interviews allowed for greater interaction between the participants and the researcher which ultimately allowed for a deeper understanding of the subjective experiences of the couples as the interview still maintained as a semistructured format

(Nieuwenhuis, 2020). The interview consisted of the same questions that were originally intended for the face-to-face interviews.

Before the interviews commenced, ethical clearance was received. Once the researcher was made aware of the limitation to conduct face-to-face interviews the researcher informed the proposed participants that the interview was to take place over Skype and if the participants were comfortable to do so online. Once the researcher received confirmation from the participants and the consent forms the dates for the online interviews were organised. It is to be mentioned that the researcher experienced trouble with the scheduling of the second couple. The online interviews contained both partners which allowed for a more conversational tone as well as granted the participants the opportunity to provide more detail comfortably.

The interview began by thanking the couples for their participation and moved on to setting the tone and making the couple feel comfortable by getting them to speak about how they met each other.

As the data collection tool falls under qualitative research, the interview contained eight open ended questions designed to allow for a degree of structure and direction during the interview, all while encouraging a little more thought and elaboration from the couple (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). For instance, question two asked “What sort of cultural differences have you experienced in your relationship?”, (see annexure D) this question allowed the participants to elaborate on their experiences which made it easier for the researcher to identify prominent themes in the couples experiences. Furthermore, this question followed the Interpretivist paradigm as it attempted to gather information from the participants point of view as well as being guided by the epistemological framework under interpretivism which maintains that the answers given by the participants were fluid and subjective (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). This subjectivity of experiences follows the qualitative nature of this research study (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014).

A follow up question was added on to Question two asking how the couples dealt with the cultural differences that they experienced in their relationship. This follow up question probed responses from the participants to elaborate on their experiences which made it easier for the researcher to identify themes in the couple’s experiences (Nieuwenhuis, 2020).

The online interviews gave rise to certain pros and cons. For instance, as online interviews did not require the participants to leave their home it allowed the participants to perform

the interview in the comfort of their own home which enabled the participants to speak more comfortably and reveal more information. Another pro is that by doing the interviews online the participants were protected against contracting the COVID19 virus, thus ensuring their health and safety.

A con that the researcher experienced while doing the online interviews was the scheduling of the interview of the second couple. Due to various reasons given by the couple the researcher was pushed to reschedule the interview several times. This served as a con to the researcher as it delayed the process of transcribing and coding the data.

Data Analysis Methods

This research study aimed to gather a deeper understanding of the experiences of intercultural couples in Durban, therefore, a complex amount of data was gathered from the interviews. As Thematic Analysis is a flexible and useful research tool which provides a rich and detailed understanding of complex data, this research study utilized Braun and Clarke's (2006) article on Thematic Analysis. This method was used as a guideline for this research study and is a six-step process that assisted with identifying, analysing and reporting on the data that was collected from the interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

As mentioned, scheduling of the second interview for the second couple proved to be a bit of a challenge for the researcher, thus the researcher was delayed when it came to analysing the second interview data.

Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, the first step involved the researcher familiarising themselves with the data. Whilst the data was being collected during the interviews the researcher used a pen and wrote down initial themes and ideas that stood out while the interviews were being conducted. These themes and ideas were noted down on a piece of paper that was printed prior to the interviews. This paper contained the interview questions, and the researcher wrote down the themes and ideas below the question that was being asked at that time.

As step one requires the researcher to be fully engaged and immersed in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006), the researcher had re-listened to the recording of the interviews several times as well as re-read the transcribed data from the interviews to familiarise themselves with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Initial themes and codes as well as meanings have been written down on a piece of paper separate from the transcribed interviews (verbatim) on Microsoft Word as a way for the researcher to keep on track with the ideas and preliminary codes. Major themes in the experiences of the intercultural couples that have

been identified by the researcher have been marked as important and had been highlighted on this paper. This step has outlined how the researcher has familiarised themselves with the interview data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Braun and Clarke's (2006) step two of thematic analysis involved generating initial codes. As such, the researcher had familiarised themselves with the data and has since identified preliminary codes that appear to be meaningful and interesting and align to the research questions of this research study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This was done manually whereby the researcher coded the data by making use of a two-column table format on Microsoft Word. The transcribed data was put in the first column, whereby the codes were put in the second column. The segments of the text that the codes were pulled from had been underlined in the first column. The initial codes that stood out to the researcher which were written on the printed question paper assisted in forming part of the coding in the second column.

The third step of thematic analysis involved searching for the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During this step, the researcher began the interpretive analysis of the collected codes, whereby the codes with similar themes and ideas of the couple's experiences were joined together in a group or overarching theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These codes aligned with the research questions of this research study which involved understanding the experiences of intercultural couples in Durban and whether society influenced the internal experiences of the intercultural couples.

The codes that did not fit coherently were split into subthemes and some were discarded. The researcher printed the table and then cut out the underlined transcribed data along with the codes. Then, the codes that shared the same themes were put into theme piles (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher then created an initial thematic map of the various themes as a visual representation to make it easier for the researcher to identify the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Once the thematic map was created the researcher narrowed down the themes even further (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Certain themes that were similar to a main theme were joined to that main theme as a sub-theme. Some themes were also discarded. The researcher also created a theme titled "miscellaneous" temporarily for themes that seemed to not have a place under the current themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The next step of Braun and Clarke's (2006) analysis involved the reviewing of the themes. During this step, the researcher conducted a deeper review of the identified themes by

further refining and discarding some themes. A certain number of themes were discarded by the researcher as there was little evidence to support the theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and some themes emerged into one theme due to being similar. The researcher identified clear themes over two phases. The first phase as Braun and Clarke (2006) outline involves the researcher checking the themes in relation to the coded extracts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher completed this phase by making sure the themes formed a coherent pattern and then moved onto the second phase. During the second phase the researcher assessed the validity of the themes by comparing them to the overall data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, the researcher further developed the thematic map and assessed whether it accurately reflected the meanings of the data set.

The fifth step required the researcher to name and define the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During this step, the researcher created a final thematic map of the themes which included a refinement of the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher provided the various themes with certain names/titles and created clear working definitions which captured the essence of the content of the various themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This ensured that the themes fitted and related to this research study's questions and objectives.

In order for the researcher to test whether step five was done correctly, the researcher used the test that was highlighted in Braun and Clarke's (2006) article. The test involved describing the content of a theme in one or two sentences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As such, the researcher completed this step by going through each theme and defining the content of the theme in two sentences. However, there was a back and forth process of two of the themes as the researcher had to go back and refine the two. The researcher then worked through the names of the themes that were used in the final analysis. At this point the researcher had noticed a unified story among the experiences of both intercultural couples.

Step six of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis involved the report. The researcher completed this step. This step is found in the findings section of this research report.

Trustworthiness

Nieuwenhuis (2020) states that the key to validity in research lies in openness and transparency in the nature of the procedures of the research, thus this research provided a clear trail of decisions and interpretations that were made in the process of this research

report. Additionally, to further ensure validity of this research, the instruments and processes that were used for data collection are readily available to allow for inspection (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). The clear and transparent trail of the process demonstrated the reasonableness of the analysis which assisted with ensuring integrity and trustworthiness (Nieuwenhuis, 2020).

Guba (1981, as cited in Nieuwenhuis, 2020) proposes four criteria which assist with trustworthiness. Three of these criteria were met as one served as a limitation in this study. The first, Credibility, was met by creating an early familiarity with the research participants as well as incorporating member checks (Nieuwenhuis, 2020).

Dependability has been shown in this research's design and its implementation, as well as in the outlined detail of data gathering (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). The researcher further showed dependability by keeping a journal throughout the research process to document any revisions to the research design or any observations the researcher made (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). Furthermore, the analysis process of this research project was documented to allow another person to see the decisions made, the process of analysis and how the arrival of decisions were made (Nieuwenhuis, 2020).

Confirmability has been ensured by implementing strategies to reduce researcher bias (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). The trail documented by the researcher assisted in reducing the researcher bias as it documents the analysis, decisions and how interpretations were made (Nieuwenhuis, 2020).

As mentioned, one of these criteria outlined a limitation to this research study.

Transferability of this research is a difficulty due to the limited number of participants.

However, as this research was to gain a deeper understanding into the experiences of intercultural couples, generalisation or transferability is not a necessity. This limitation will be further described in the limitations section.

Findings and Discussion of Findings

Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six step thematic analysis, the researcher analysed the data that was collected through the semistructured interviews. Thematic analysis identifies meaning and themes across data to answer the research questions and objectives, thus, following the six steps of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, three themes were found in the data. These themes are the compromising of cultures and the female's assimilation, males and the practice of their culture, and gender roles.

This section will discuss the various themes and show credibility through the use of appropriate quotes, as well as linking the themes to the literature and theory.

Participants A and B are a couple that have been together for seven years. Participant A will hereafter be known as Sophia, and participant B as Luke. Sophia is a young woman in her late 20's that was born in Zimbabwe, and Luke is a young man in his late 20's who has been brought up with the German culture. Participant's C and D will hereafter be known as Mrs Khan and Mr Khan. Mr and Mrs Khan have been married under a year and have been together for over three years. Mrs Khan was a Christian but has since converted to Islam due to Mr Khan being Muslim.

[Theme 1: The Compromising of Cultures and the Females Assimilation](#)

This theme outlines how the couples have negotiated, compromised and how the females have assimilated into their male partner's dominant culture. An analysis of the data has shown that the first couple (Sophia and Luke) have been more equal in terms of how they compromised when faced with certain cultural traditions. Literature has shown that intercultural couples often experience tension and conflict when celebrations or traditions were shared with family of another culture as the partner of the different culture did not understand the culture and meaning behind tradition (Cools, 2011). Although Sophia and Luke experienced this tension, they were able to overcome this tension. Overcoming this tension was done through Sophia learning to speak German. Reason being that the language spoken at family gatherings was German.

"A lot of the time the guys will just speak German without even considering that there's English people in the room", Luke explains.

This made Sophia feel uncomfortable and anxious as she explains that often she would have to wait for someone to translate for her, which would then make her feel frustrated and uncomfortable.

"I've married into a German family so it's also on me to learn German", mentions Sophia.

Compromise between Sophia and Luke was achieved through Sophia learning the language of her partner. Additionally, this has also shown how Sophia has assimilated into her partner's culture. Although learning a new language to make attending the family gatherings easier and more comfortable for herself, Sophia has assimilated into Luke's male culture.

Additionally, linking this theme back to theory. Balance theory can be brought into this theme. As balance theory suggests that people prefer elements in their cognitive systems to be balanced, and when they are the individual feels psychologically pleasant, and if not there is an uncomfortable feeling and tension (APA, 2020). This can be seen through the experience of the language at Luke's family gatherings. In the beginning Sophia felt anxiety and frustration:

"It's a little bit awkward for Sophia when there's family gatherings sometimes", says Luke.

"Yeah", Sophia agrees.

However, in order to overcome this psychologically unpleasant feeling Sophia decided to actively learn German so that she could understand the conversations during the gatherings, thus reducing her anxiety and frustration and creating psychological balance.

The first couple appeared to be quite equal when negotiating around their relationship, however the second couple appeared to be more unequal. As mentioned, Mrs Khan had to convert to Islam, the religion of her male partner. This assimilation outlines how the second couple was less equal when compromising and negotiating around practice of culture and their relationship. Although Mrs Khan was supportive and did not experience much anxiety or pressure when making the choice to convert, there appears to be no negotiation on whether Mrs Khan was able to consider staying a Christian.

Mrs Khan is supportive of Mr Khans religion and even before officially converting to Islam, she was supportive of his traditions. For instance, although difficult at first for Mrs Khan, she actively participated in the fasts during Ramadan alongside Mr Khan.

"Now its easy, a little bit", stated Mrs Khan.

Although Mrs Khan was not obligated to actively fast during Ramadan, she still showed her support to Mr Khan by participating in the fasts. This demonstrates how Mrs Khan has assimilated into the dominant culture of her male partner, showing that the second couples experience, although absent of pressure, outlined that the female assimilated into the culture of her male partner.

Compromise has also been shown in the first couples' relationship when approaching family traditions. In the German culture the children open their Christmas presents on Christmas Eve, whereas in Sophia's culture the children open their presents on Christmas day.

"It took a little bit of time getting used to and some compromise", says Sophia.

"Some things that still have to come up, that came up the other day, are just like how we are gonna raise our children and how we gonna do things. Like in the Lutheran way you baptise your child as a baby, whereas in our belief, which is now Luke's belief as well, the child will choose for themselves when they want to be baptised".

The above shows how Luke has compromised, and the couple reached an agreement whereby their child will choose for themselves when they would like to be baptised.

Sophia mentions that she and Luke are "quite similar", so they don't often experience conflict. So instead of conflict the two find it quite easy to compromise.

Compromise is also evident in the second couple's relationship.

"If we do have a difference in opinion, we obviously hear each other out and then the most logical option is the way to go", says Mr Khan.

"We're not staunch on who's set values and beliefs is this, and who gets to have more privilege. We understood from the beginning of our relationship that we both come from different backgrounds and in order to work we have to merge it", says Mrs Khan.

The Khans' relationship has also shown that although less equal as compared to Sophia's and Luke's relationship in terms of what culture is practiced, the Khans' still compromise and willingly listen to each other when faced with conflicting views.

Theme 2: Males and the Practice of their Culture

This theme speaks to the males in the relationship and the practice of their culture.

Findings show that the males appear to be less strict when practicing their culture. To support this statement, Luke who has been brought up in a strictly traditional German household whereby every family member must play a musical instrument like the trombone and attend choir, Luke instead plays the guitar, a more modern instrument and does not attend choir.

Sophia: *"He's been more exposed to the modern way of life."*

A possible reason for Luke playing a more modern instrument and not attending choir practice as his culture recommends and has attended for many generations, could be the process of Cultural Homogenization. A search of literature to support this has pointed to this process which outlines that there is a shift toward a common global culture (Kaasa &

Minkov, 2020). In this sense, a more Westernised culture that is present South African society. As individuals are conditioned and influenced by their culture, and culture as being affected by society, South African society may be responsible for influencing a more evolved practice of Luke's culture (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

Luke: *"I was born and raised here."*

The experience and growing up in South Africa suggest that Luke has been conditioned a certain way which may suggest why Luke is not as strict when it comes to practicing his culture or attending choir practice.

"We're both really modernised", said Mrs Khan.

This was said in response to the researcher asking about gender roles in their relationship. It is often found in strict traditional Muslim homes that it is the male's role to support the family (financially) and the female's role to do the housework (Britton, 2018).

"That doesn't apply with us", she goes on to say.

Although converting to her husband's strict religion, Mrs Khan has outlined that certain stereotypical gender roles that are often found in Muslim families, are not present in their relationship. This outlines that although Mrs Khan has converted to her male partners strict culture, she has not experienced any anxiety or pressure from her partner when it comes to practicing his culture.

This theme shows how the couples have experienced culture in their relationship. This theme has shown that the males, although containing the more dominant culture, are more relaxed when it comes to practicing their culture within their relationship and how the two couples have experienced their intercultural relationship.

Theme 3: Gender Roles

An analysis of this theme found that both couples did not experience any difficulties in relation to gender roles in their relationship. Both couples reported to not have any allocated roles for each other, thus there were no gender role difficulties as it was equal between the two partners.

"We pretty much share the responsibility. This is both our home and we both live here. And we both make the mess", mentions Sophia.

When Luke is out most of the day working and Sophia is at home, Sophia mentions that she will take on the cleaning. Sophia reports that they have no set role or “chores” for each other, and instead take turns doing certain duties.

Sophia did mention that in the older generation of Luke’s family there are very clear and set gender roles for the husband and wife. However, Sophia and Luke stated that there were no clear gender roles in the relationship despite Luke’s traditional upbringing maintaining that women do the housework and men “sit and watch tv”. Instead the couple mentioned that they are quite equal in their roles.

“It’s pretty much even. If I’m busy Luke will cook dinner. It just shifts to whoever has time”, Sophia says.

The same is seen in the Khans’ relationship. Mrs Khan mentions that the duties are split amongst them showing it is quite equal in their relationship with regards to the gender roles.

“Like you know stereotypical gender roles? That doesn’t apply with us”, she says.

‘If I’m not feeling well for example, he’ll see I’m not feeling well and be like okay, go sit on the chair and I’ll make up the bed. Or you know... like what would you want to eat kind of thing’.

An analysis of both of the couple’s interviews with regards to the theme of gender roles within the relationship has shown that both couples have experienced no difficulties due to gender roles and it is equal between the couples.

Conclusion

As the experiences of intercultural couples living in Durban is a topic that is lacking in information, this research has attempted to gain a deeper understanding into the experiences of young intercultural couples in the Durban area. There are three themes that are present in both couple’s relationships. These themes are the compromising of cultures and the female’s assimilation, males and the practice of their culture, and gender roles.

Findings have shown that in the relationship between Sophia and Luke, they are equal when it comes to compromise and negotiating around their cultural traditions and practices. Whereas in the Khans’ relationship, although slightly unequal due to Mrs Khan having no choice in converting to Islam, the couple have also communicated and reached

compromise when facing conflicting opinions. Thus, both couples experienced situations where conflict was possible, however through communication were able to reach compromise.

Findings have also shown that the males in both relationships were less strict when practicing their culture and cultural traditions. A search of literature to support this has pointed to a process which outlines that there is a shift toward a common global culture (Kaasa & Minkov, 2020). In this sense, a more Westernised culture that is present South African society. As individuals are conditioned and influenced by their culture, and culture as being affected by society, South African society may be responsible for influencing a more evolved practice of culture (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

The final theme shows that within the two couple's intercultural relationship, neither couples experienced stereotypical or set gender roles for each partner. Findings have shown that in both the couple's relationship the roles and duties were equal among the partners.

How was the research question answered:

As the research problem and the research purpose outlined what the research question was, the main question asked what are the lived experiences of young adults in Durban who are in an intercultural relationship? The answer to this question is that both couples experienced the male partners being more relaxed when practicing their culture, the women assimilated into the culture of their male partner and that there were no gender roles in the relationship, the couples were equal.

The sub question asked if societal influences influenced the internal experiences of young adults who are in intercultural relationships in Durban. Although this was not discussed in the findings as it was not a prominent theme, the answer to this question is no. The couples did not elaborate.

Objectives of this research report were to explore the experiences of young adults in intercultural relationships, and to explore if societal experiences influence the internal experiences of young adults in intercultural relationships. These objectives have been answered as the three themes have discussed the experiences of the intercultural couples. Additionally, societal influences did not have any influence on the internal experiences of the couples.

Implications of findings

The implications of the findings of this study will contribute to the body of psychological knowledge on the experiences of intercultural couples in society. As there is a lack of research on the experiences of intercultural couples in Durban as well as the influence South Africa's racial history has on people, experiences cannot be assumed to be the same for all, this justifies the need for more research on the experiences of couples in the South African Durban context. Thus, the findings of this study will serve as a beginning framework for other researchers who are interested in exploring the experiences of intercultural couples in Durban further. By conducting research on the experiences on intercultural couples in Durban, people are now able to become aware of the positive or negative experiences of these couples.

Ethical Implications

Ethical clearance was gained before interviewing begun (see annexure E). All participants of this research study were required to fill out consent forms (see annexure B) which provided a detailed description of this research study. Participants were formally informed in a way that they fully understood the nature and aims of this research (see annexure A). When collecting data from the participants, their physical and psychological comfort were a priority to the researcher. No participants were psychologically harmed. The identities of the participants will only be known to the researcher and will be protected. Participants information will remain confidential and will not be known to anyone else. The interview recording is stored on a password protected USB drive and will be kept for five years in a safe. Anonymity is guaranteed as no real names have been mentioned in this report.

The research upheld the ethical code throughout the process of this research report. There has been no falsifying of information or avoidance of boring or difficult aspects. There has been no distorting of results or a misuse of information.

As confidentiality may remain a potential issue due to using technology, the participants have been reassured that their names have not been used, and that their identities are only known to the researcher. As mentioned, the password protected USB will be kept in a safe for five years.

Limitations

Time Constraints: Due to time constraints given by the IIE Varsity college that this research must be completed within one year, this research proposal is limited in time which affects the amount of time that is needed to access a certain amount of information. This limitation can be overcome in future studies through the allocation of more time.

Number of participants: The number of participants in this study is limited. Even though the goal of this research is not to generalise, a larger number of participants is needed to gather a sufficient amount of information regarding the common experiences of intercultural couples in Durban. This research did however navigate around this by having the interview with both partners at the same time. This allowed the participants to build on each other's ideas. This allowed the participants to bring up more information than it would to interview one partner at a time.

Foreign sources: Previous literature done on intercultural couple's experiences was largely supplied by research from other countries. Research on South African intercultural couples is lacking which affects the information gathering process of this research study. To overcome this problem this research incorporated semi structured interviews which allowed the participants to guide the interview, thus bringing up their own unique experiences to the South African context.

COVID 19 pandemic: Due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic the method of data collection was affected. As there are regulations and restrictions of movement, conducting the interviews in person was not permitted. To combat this, the researcher had spoken to the participants and established an agreement to do online video call interviews through a video call platform.

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Annexure A: Explanatory Information Sheet



EXPLANATORY INFORMATION SHEET

To whom it may concern,

My name is Jennifer Leigh Candey and I am a student at the IIE's Varsity College. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Leigh de Wet about the experiences of intercultural couples in Durban. Due to the limited amount of information on the experiences of Durban intercultural couples, I hope that this research will enhance our understanding and add to the body of psychological knowledge surrounding the experiences of intercultural couples in Durban.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because your experiences are unique to this field of study and your input will greatly benefit this research. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to conduct a face to face interview with you and your partner whereby you can answer some questions I have regarding your experiences as an intercultural couple.

You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your experiences as an individual in an intercultural relationship. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

- Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary;
- If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;
- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision

Will my identity be protected?

I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Varsity College, will have access to your interview information. I would

like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my Honours in Psychology. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

– Jennifer Candey



The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

– Leigh de Wet



Annexure B: Consent Form

**Consent form for participants**

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Jennifer Leigh Candey about the experiences of intercultural couples in Durban.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

- I agree to be interviewed for this research.
- My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
- My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
- I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
- I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

Signature

Date

Annexure C: Consent for Audio Recording

**CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING****Consent form for participants**

I, _____, agree to allow Jennifer Leigh Candey to audio record my interviews as part of the research about the experiences of intercultural couples in Durban.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

- My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
- The recordings will be stored in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer.
- Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings.

Signature.....

Date.....

Annexure D: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about how you two met and got involved with each other.
2. What sort of cultural differences have you experienced in your relationship? (Follow up with “how have you two dealt with them?”)
3. What have been your experiences regarding communication between you and your partner?
4. What instances have you experienced challenges in communication with each other? (Follow up with “how did you deal with these?”)
5. How did your families react to your relationship?
6. What sort of experiences has your relationship had with the public? (Follow up with asking if it had an affect on the relationship).
7. Have you two experienced any challenges with regards to gender roles? If so, how did you navigate this challenge?
8. Are there any other experiences you two would like to bring up?

Annexure E: Ethical Clearance Letter



29 July 2020

Student name: Jennifer Candey
Student number: 17314722
Campus: Varsity College, Westville



Re: Approval of Psychology Honours Proposal and Ethics Clearance



HONOURS ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.



Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.



In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.

ADVTECH HOUSE

Inanda Greens
 54 Wierda Rd West
 Wierda Valley 2196
 P.O. Box 2369
 Randburg 2125



Directors: RJ Douglas (UK), JDR Oesch*, MD Aitken*, FJ Coughlan* (*Non-executive)

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2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.



Supervisor
Leigh De Wet



Campus Postgraduate Coordinator
Dr Samantha Thomas

ADTECH HOUSE

Inanda Greens
54 Wierda Rd West
Wierda Valley 2196
P.O. Box 2369
Randburg 2125



Directors: RJ Douglas (UK), JDR Oesch*, MD Aitken*, FJ Coughlan* (*Non-executive)

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Appendix F: Final Research Report Summary Document

TITLE: A qualitative study to understand the lived experiences of young adults in intercultural relationships

Research Purpose	Research Question	Research Rationale	Authors/ Sources	Literature & Concepts	Paradigm	Approach	Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Anticipated Findings	References
To qualitatively understand the lived experiences of young adults, ages 20 – 25, who are in intercultural romantic relationships, in Durban.	What are the lived experiences of young adults in Durban who are in an intercultural relationship? <i>Sub Question:</i> Do societal experiences influence the internal experiences of young adults who are in intercultural relationships, in Durban?	Research on intercultural couples in Durban, South Africa is lacking. South Africa's racial past may influence the experiences of these couples. Research is relevant as it focuses on the experiences of intercultural relationships in Durban.	Cools, C Donovan, S Eisenschlas, S Ntuli, C Oommen, D Skowroński et al Wankah, F	Communication Gender Roles Family Support Societal Attitudes Differences in traditions and celebrations	Paradigm Interpretivism Epistemology Create understanding around the experiences of college students in intercultural relationships in Durban. Ontology Reality is a social construction; in this research the experiences are unique and formed through individual experiences and interaction with others.	Qualitative Population Parameters 2 couples. 4 people in total. Who are in heterosexual intercultural relationships residing in Durban.	Semi-structured Interviews with the couples. One couple at a time Open ended questions	Informed consent Physical & psychological comfort Protection of identity Confidentiality Researcher bias Misuse of information Protection of data Location of data	Challenges in communication, gender roles, family support, societal perceptions and the practice of traditional celebrations.	Cools, C Donovan, S Eisenschlas, S Ntuli, C Oommen, D Skowroński et al Wankah, F Du Plooy, C Houston, G Marshall, T Nieuwenhuis, J McKinney, C Schmid, W Paquette et al.
Research Problem	Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Sampling	Data Analysis Methods	Limitations	Anticipated Contribution	
Limited amount of research on intercultural couples in Durban, South Africa	To explore the experiences of young adults in intercultural relationships, in Durban. To explore if societal experiences influence the internal experiences of young adults in intercultural relationships, in Durban	Culture Intercultural romantic relationships Racism Internal experiences Gender expectations Societal experiences	<u>Balance theory</u> : certain structures in an individual's life are balanced, if they are not then there is an uncomfortable feeling <u>Ecological systems Theory</u> : How internal & external processes interact to determine the experiences of the intercultural couple		Axiology This research values the unique realities of its participants. This research should be open to the subjective experiences of its participants.	Non-probability Purposive sampling	Unit of Analysis Themes and patterns found in data Data Analysis Method(s) Qualitative thematic analysis	Time constraints Number of participants Transferability Foreign Sources COVID19 pandemic	Contribute to the psychological body of knowledge on intercultural couples. Provides beginning framework for other researchers interested in conducting research on intercultural couples in intercultural relationships in Durban	