

**A qualitative study exploring factors that contribute to the academic resilience
of black African female university students living in townships.**

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Bachelor of Arts Honours in Psychology 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.

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Abstract:

Townships are characterised by factors that pose a challenge to the learning and development of students, however, some students are able to succeed regardless of these factors.

According to Pretorius, (2016), there is a lack of research-based knowledge on the factors that promote academic resilience of South African youths that live in these townships.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to qualitatively explore and gain insight into the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black female township university students from Durban townships. Semi-structured individual interviews were used to obtain the students' perspectives. This method was chosen because it allowed the participants an opportunity to give in-depth information about their experiences. The sample consisted of 3 female participants who were chosen using purposive sampling. The findings of the study indicated that protective factors across different contexts of the participants' lives contributed to their academic resilience. These factors included supportive relationships from family, lecturers and peers, individual traits, belief in God and prayer and the environment as a motivating factor. The findings of the study contribute towards the growing literature in the field of social psychology and knowledge on student's resilience from a South African youth perspective.

Keywords: academic resilience, resilience, township, Black/African

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Introduction

A qualitative study exploring factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships.

- Contextualisation

Many Black African youths in South Africa live in black-only townships developed during previous policies of the Group Areas Act of 1950 (Shole, 2017). These residential areas are characterised by poverty, parental absence, high teenage pregnancy, poor education and high levels of unemployment (Shole, 2017). Young people that live in these areas experience different risks factors that challenge their lives, which could also have an effect on how and when they achieve developmental milestones. Ungar (2015) as cited in Gwata, (2018), points out that adversity is an important aspect when identifying resilience in young people.

However, in these situations, certain students prove to be academically resilient. Often successful individuals from townships acknowledge the involvement of at least one significant person and/or other assets from the immediate environment (Mampane & Bouwer, 2011). Studies that have been conducted on resilience discovered that the process of being resilient is determined by an individual's context and shaped by their social process and resources available to them such as social interactions and environmental factors (Pretorius, 2016). Meaning that the social environment is important in the resilience process of an individual. This study is rooted in the social-ecological approach to resilience formulated by Dr Michael Ungar (2011). The approach explains resilience as a process that draws on the inputs of individuals and the social systems in which these individuals function (Pretorius, 2016). This theory allowed the researcher to be sensitive to individual and social-ecological contributions that may account for the resilience of participants. According to Pretorius, (2016), there is a gap in research focusing on the risks facing township-dwelling youths and their resilience in dealing with perceived risks. In light of this, this study aimed to explore the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships.

- Rationale

The township environment contains many risk factors that may become key barriers to academic success (Shole, 2017). These factors include poverty, parental absence and the context and environment of the education system (Pretorius, 2016). However, even in these situations, there are students who prove to be academically resilient. According to Pretorius,

(2016), there is a gap in research focusing on the risks facing township-dwelling youths and their resilience in dealing with perceived risks. In particular, there is a lack of studies that explain risk and resilience from the perspective of the youths themselves (Shole, 2017). This study differed in that, where most studies focus on adolescents, this study explored university students' perspectives on factors promoting their academic resilience. The study aimed to understand how learners living in townships, under adverse circumstances cope academically in universities. Therefore, this study is relevant as it contributes to the growing literature on resilience primarily focused on the South African population and it can be used to help students from a similar context who struggle academically.

- **Problem statement**

South African black townships are characterised by factors such as poverty, parental absence, high teenage pregnancy, poor education and high levels of unemployment (Ngubane, 2019). Such characteristics may become key barriers to learning, development and wellbeing (Shole, 2017). According to Pretorius, (2016), there is a lack of research-based knowledge on the factors that promote academic resilience of South African youths that live in these townships. As a result, not much can be done to help students who struggle academically and who are affected by these environmental factors. The main objective of this study was to identify factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students in response to adversity and challenges.

- **Purpose statement**

The purpose of this study was to qualitatively explore and gain insight into the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black female township university students from Durban.

Research question

What factors contribute to the academic resilience of black African female township university students?

- **Research objectives**

1. Identify factors that contribute to the academic resilience of South African Black female university students in response to adversity and challenges present in townships.

2. Identify protective factors (family, community and school) township youths attribute to their academic resilience and success.

Literature Review

This section presents a review of literature relevant to the current study. The literature is presented under several sub-headings which include literature on the concept of resilience broadly and risk as well as protective factors of resilience within townships. The chapter also presents the social-ecological approach to resilience formulated by Dr Michael Ungar (2011). It further looks at the conceptual understanding of some terms used in the study.

- Theoretical foundation

This study employed the social-ecological approach to resilience formulated by Dr Michael Ungar (2011). Ungar (2008) states that the study of resilience investigates how individual abilities, family and protective factors within the individual's ecology influence the vulnerable children and youth. He further stated that youths are considered to be resilient when supported actively by their sociocultural ecologies (Ungar, 2011). The theory was formulated from data compiled from 14 international communities that had experienced a range of risks, such as war, poverty, genocide, violence, marginalisation and drugs to name a few (Shean, 2015). The social-ecological approach explains resilience as a process that draws on the inputs of individuals and the social systems in which these individuals function (Pretorius, 2016). Meaning that in order to understand an individual one has to understand the complexity of person-environment interactions and these interactions can promote protective factors when faced with adversities.

Resilience is found in the interactional process between an individual and his or her environment (Ungar, 2011). In 2011, the theory was updated to include principles that assist in better understanding the social-ecological approach to resilience Ungar (2011) which are decentrality, complexity, atypicality and cultural relativity (Shean, 2015). The principle of decentrality takes the focus from the individual and places an emphasis on the environment (Shean, 2015). Ungar (2011) states that a focus on the individual does not confirm the involvement of the environment in the process of the resilience outcome and it is easy for the social ecology to ignore the responsibility to assist the individual. Therefore, by decentring the individual a social-ecological approach emphasises that social ecologies must contribute to

cultivating the resilience of vulnerable young people but it does not exclude what young people themselves contribute to adjusting well in adversity (Pretorius, 2016).

The second principle is complexity, states that resilience is not consistent as resilience varies across contexts and developmental stages (Shean, 2015). Atypicality is the next principle that implies that different people adjust differently to risks that may not be typical for mainstream society expects. The last principle is cultural relativity which states that resilience is a complex phenomenon influenced by cultural context (Pretorius, 2016). Therefore, individuals will use different ways of adjusting well to hardship depending on the cultural values and expectations they hold (Pretorius, 2016). When explaining resilience processes one has to account for the cultural values and expectations of the individual (Shean, 2015). The theory uses constructivism as the theory attempts to offer an in-depth understanding of resilience in youths and describes how each person subjectively experiences resilience (Shean, 2015).

The approach explains resilience as a process that draws on the inputs of individuals and the social systems in which these individuals function (Pretorius, 2016). This study aimed to find supportive transactions between an individual and her environment that lead to them being resilient which is why this theory was relevant. This theory was chosen because of the themes that were found in the literature conducted in the current study, which are resilience enabling themes, such as having positive personal characteristics, protective parenting and in the community it's would refer to supportive factors or resources. The theory states that an individual becomes resilient when there are protective factors or resources in the environment that will assist the individual to overcome adversity, which are the factors the current study aims to identify. The theory is focused on youths, which made it relevant to the sample population of the current study as Ungar (2011), consistently includes young people to provide insight into the young person's functioning.

The current study explored the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships through the use of semi-structured interviews. Therefore, this theory allowed for a better understanding of the underpinnings that are constitutive of ones' resilience. The study attempted to demonstrate the influence of different factors on the resilience of students from interpreting interview transcripts that were used to collect data to derive on a credible conclusion on the claim made by Ungar (2011), where he speaks about how individuals have an interactional relationship with their external environment. Meaning that there has to be a partnership between the individual and their social

ecology, where the individual identifies, recognises and mobilises the resources in their ecology towards helpful engagement. According to a study by Ngubane, (2019), the environment impacts different aspects of people's lives, therefore, the theory taps into different aspects that can be influenced by risk factors.

- Literature

The purpose of this thematic literature review is to explore what literature says about the resilience of youths. This will be related to what has been identified as the research problem. A brief overview of the concept of resilience and problems related to research on resilience will be provided. Thereafter, the nature of resilience which includes the main elements that are involved in the resilience process, namely risk and protective factors, will be discussed basing everything on how the township context has the potential to be associated with risks and protective factors that influence the adversity and coping of students. The literature review will include studies about adolescents, as a limited number of studies have been done that focus on young adults aged in universities based on the current literature search.

Resilience

Resilience can be defined as being capable of achieving successful outcomes despite challenging or threatening circumstances, it needs to be understood as involving vulnerability (Kuyper, 2014). It involves behaviours and actions that can be learned and developed in any person (Rojas, 2015). Resilience is complex and may be defined differently in the contexts of individuals, family and cultures, which can cause certain limitations in the literature (Ngubane, 2019). An example could be that in South Africa academic success can be seen as a measure of resiliency, and in other societies, it might be viewed as a normal developmental task (Ngcobo, 2019). According to a literature review study conducted by Shean, (2015), there are several limitations in research on resilience. These include ambiguity in terminology, methodology and the absence of young people's voices (Shean, 2015). The ambiguity in terminology refers to the defining of terms such as risk factors and protective factors.

According to Kuyper, (2014), the nature of resilience includes a relationship between risk and protective factors. Risk factors are defined differently by various authors, Ungar (2011), states that risks must be chronic such as homelessness or abuse and they have to be supported or grounded in theory (Shean, 2015). Whereas other authors state that it should be statistical risks,

such as poverty, that should be included in the study of resilience (Shean, 2015). The issues of ambiguity in terminology also applies to protective factors, where some theorist look at strong positive relationships and others look at the context as well as the resources within that context (Shean,2015). In the current study, risk factors will refer to statistical risks such as poverty, crime and environmental issues. Protective factors will refer to both the positive relationships in the individual's life and it will look at the resources within their context that influence their resilience.

Resilience literature lacks the voices of young people due to many theorists relying on parent and teacher reports, or surveys of young people for information on the resilience of youths (Shean, 2015). This is supported by a study conducted by Pretorius, (2016), which stated that there is a gap in research focusing on the risks facing township-dwelling youths and their resilience in dealing with perceived risks. This is a limitation within resilience literature as the most important risk and protective factors will remain undiscovered. In research conducted by Ungar (2011), he consistently includes young people to provide insight into the young person's functioning, which is why the current study chose to use his theory of resilience. This limitation will be addressed in the current study as it focuses on a sample of young female students and uses a theory developed by Ungar (2011) focusing on the resilience of young people.

Challenges facing youths from townships.

There are various studies that speak to the risks faced by adolescents and their resilience in dealing with them. However, when searching for literature I could not find enough studies focusing on university students from townships and what factors contributed to their educational resilience, which can be seen as a gap in the study of resilience within township youths. This is problematic because resilience is considered to be a process of positive adjustment that is sensitive to contextual and cultural dynamics (Pretorius, 2016). Therefore, the current study aims to close this gap by focusing on the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships.

Living in townships comes with various disadvantages, as townships are characterised by violence, poverty, crime, unemployment and a high burden of communicable disease (Pretorius, 2016). This was supported by a study titled, "South African, urban youth narratives: resilience within the community", conducted by Mosavel, Ahmed, Ports, & Simon, (2015), which aimed to provide an understanding of the ways adolescents overcome adversity, using a

sample of fourteen high school girls and boys. Through focus groups, the study found that youths have daily struggles in their communities such as high rates of poverty, unemployment, drug use and poor education to name a few. The participants did not feel safe in the community and their homes due to a lack of police intervention and abundant violence and crime.

The study is limited due to the use of focus groups as a methodology, since participants may have mostly constructed general scenarios (Mosavel, Ahmed, Ports, & Simon, 2015), in the current study this will be addressed by using one-on-one semi-structured interviews to gain in-depth information and to allow participants to be comfortable to share their experiences. The findings of this study were supported by a study conducted by Shole, (2017), which will be fully discussed under protective factors, which found that the home environment provided risks to the students such as family conflicts and a lack of quiet place for studying. The school environment had risk factors such as a lack of additional academic support for struggling students (Shole, 2017). The participants stated that their community environment was characterised by disorganisation and crime which posed risk to their safety (Shole, 2017).

A study conducted by Mampane, (2014), titled "Factors contributing to the resilience of middle-adolescents in a South African township: Insights from a resilience questionnaire", conducted on 291 Grade 9 middle-adolescent learners from two black-only township secondary schools, identified resilient and non-resilient learners in a township school environment and it aimed to understand the role that schools play in creating a positive educational environment (Mampane M. R., 2014). The study found that less resilient learners in the study had less confidence in themselves and possessed an external locus of control. These students came from poor or abusive homes and had no support structures, which made them adopt coping strategies instead of striving for goal attainment (Mampane M. R., 2014). The environment these resilient and non-resilient students lived in were found to have different challenges and demands even though they were in the same environment in terms of location, their living conditions and support systems were experienced differently, which supports Ungar, (2011), the theory of resilience that is used in the current study, which states that people experience the same environment in different ways and resilience occurs when the environment a person is in can provide them with resources that allow them to overcome their adversities and be resilient (Ungar,2011).

The study by Mampane, (2014), used small scale surveys to collect data, which could have been a disadvantage as it does not emphasise youths' voices in how resilience is understood

and that consequently the understanding of resilience is flawed, this limitation is addressed by using semi-structured interviews in the current study. The study also had a large sample size, which allowed the researcher to draw some tentative conclusions, however, it did not give them in-depth information regarding the factors that contribute to academic resilience. Which is why the current study will use a smaller sample size to ensure accuracy in the study and due to time constants.

Protective factors of youth living in South African townships

Protective factors are individual characteristics or environmental conditions that assist youths to form a resistance to any risk that they find themselves exposed to (Shole, 2017). Protective factors determine how a person responds to adversities in the environment. It is assumed that protective factors work collaboratively to facilitate resilience (Wills & Hofmeyr, 2018). A study conducted by Shole, (2017), titled “Educational resilience of township youth raised by grandparents” conducted on a sample of primary school female students aged 13 and 14 in the Mamelodi Township, found that the academic success of the participants was determined by the contribution of protective factors across different contexts of their lives. Using Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory, the researcher found that within the different systems protective factors such as family emotional support, peer support and influences proved to be extremely valuable to the participants.

Individual strengths within themselves also nurtured their resilience, such as internal locus of control, self-efficacy, goal-setting and the positive use of time (Shole, 2017). Ngcobo (2019), found that the environment in which people live in pushes them to work harder for themselves and allows them to appreciate what they have. This is supported by a study conducted by Wills and Hofmeyr (2018), titled, 'Academic resilience in challenging contexts: Evidence from the township and rural primary schools in South Africa', which discovered that most of the participants in the study who are academically resilient are goal setters and they believe they can achieve their goals. The protective factors identified in these studies could be referred to as internal protective factors since they focus on the individual's characteristics. Ngcobo, (2019), identified external protective factors as including family characteristics and social support. This was also found in a study conducted by Ngubane, (2019), titled, “Exploring Resilience among South African Female Masters Students: An Ecological Systems Perspective”.

Which found that family, school environment and broader community had an influence on the resilience of the students. However, the context could influence the individual both positively and negatively, meaning that the context can have a positive influence on the how the individual responds to adversity if they receive the necessary support from their various context such as family, school and broader community (Ngubane, 2019). The context could also influence the students negatively, the researcher stated that the students reported adversities associated with factors such as poverty and risk environments (Ngubane, 2019). This was supported by a study conducted by Pretorius, (2016), titled "Towards a deeper understanding of resilience: Resilient South African township-dwelling adolescents' understanding of positive adjustment to hardship", which found that parental figures can be both a protective and risk factor if parents put too much pressure on their children by expecting too much from them they were seen as a risk factor.

Whereas, Supportive mothers were seen as protective factors if they assisted youths through difficult times (Pretorius, 2016). These findings suggest that resilience is a social-ecological process which requires an interaction between the youths and their environment, this supports the theoretical foundation of the current study, which is the social-ecological approach to resilience formulated by Dr Michael Ungar (2011), which states that youths are considered to be resilient when supported actively by their sociocultural ecologies (Ungar, 2011). The study by Ngubane, (2019), further concluded that students also relied on their internal individual characteristics such as their locus of control and self-esteem to counteract risk factors. This study was conducted on seven South African female postgraduate students enrolled for a master's in Health Promotion at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Howard College, where participants stated that their positive retrospective interpretation of their past experiences allowed them to have a positive outlook, in that the challenges they faced made them more conscious of their personal strengths and internal ability to overcome adversities (Ngubane, 2019).

This study, however, had limitations in that the researcher recruited participants who she was previously acquainted with through the same master's course, which could have influenced how they responded to the interview (Ngubane, 2019). This limitation will be addressed by using participants that are in no way acquainted to the researcher in terms of field of study in order to get a broader view of the contributory factors influencing academic resilience. The sample used in this study, which is South African female postgraduate students, can be seen as a strength as the current study aims to focus on South African female university students. The

strengths of the two studies by Shole, (2017) and Ngubane, (2019) are that they used qualitative data collection methods such as semi-structured interviews, which help the research to be a part of the meaning-making process and also allowed the participants to ask for clarity on questions they did not understand, it further allows the researcher to ask more questions outside of those already prepared.

The current study aims to build on this strength as it will be using qualitative methods of data collection such as semi-structured interviews when conducting the research. The study by Shole, (2017) went as far including academic records in the selection of their participants to ensure that the participants were academically resilient, this can be seen as a strength, and documents such as academic records verify the participants' educational achievements and to validate information gathered from them which can be seen as a strength. Even though the stated strength will not be used in the current study, it is a great method of enhancing the credibility of the sample chosen. The studies by Ngubane, (2019) and Pretorius, (2016), were chosen because they used the same theory as the current study. The studies mentioned above conducted by Pretorius, (2016) and Shole, (2017), used adolescents which can be a limitation for the current study as it will be using a different sample, but it can also be seen as a strength as Gwata, (2018), stated that adolescents experiences have an impact on the transition into adulthood. This is consistent with a study by (Ngcobo, 2019), which found that characteristics of resilience gained during earlier years, such as in high school, are carried through to their university years. Meaning that when people experience adverse circumstances they use the experience to cope with subsequent adversity (Ngcobo, 2019).

Conclusion

The studies reviewed in the literature review suggest that resilience is influenced by both the individual and the factors in their environment. It also highlighted that protective factors are necessary in order for youths to cope with adversities. The literature further suggests that the context in which the experiences occur has to be considered in order to understand youths perceived experiences. Resilience is the process whereby risk factors interact with protective factors to help an individual cope with adversities. Based on this literature review there have been very few studies focusing on the resilience of youths in Universities as most studies used in this literature review used high school/adolescents as their sample.

- Conceptualisation

1. Resilience

Resilience can be defined as experiencing good outcomes in situations that pose a serious threat to adaptation or development (Shole, 2017). It represents qualities possessed by an individual that allows them to thrive in the face of adversity (Hornor, 2017). In the current study, it will be used to refer to individuals who have the ability to overcome adversity experienced in the social environment. Resilience refers to the ability to develop well in the context of high risk for developmental problems (Windle, 2010).

2. Academic resilience

In the current study, the words academic resilience will be used to refer to the capacity to overcome any adversity caused by social conditions in the environment the students live in such as poverty and health issues that have the possibility to hinder the students' academic development or success (Shole, 2017).

3. Township

The term is used to refer to a previously underdeveloped urban residential area that was used by the apartheid government to segregate races and is were reserved for Blacks, Coloureds and Indians under the Native Act of 1923 and the Group Areas Act of 1950 (Shole, 2017). Townships are characterised by densely populated areas, high unemployment, poverty and residents are mostly of a low socioeconomic status (Shole, 2017) (Mampane M. R., 2014). In this study, it will be used to refer to previously disadvantaged black-only residential areas that are believed to be of a low economic status with a lot of social conditions that could hinder academic success (Mampane M. R., 2014).

4. University students

A University is defined as a place that offers a combination of theoretically oriented university degrees and vocationally oriented diplomas and degrees (Pretorius & Blaauw, 2014). Therefore, University students refer to anyone in the process of obtaining higher education at a college or university. In theory, university students are young, dynamic and rank among the well-educated population of the society (Pretorius & Blaauw, 2014). In the current study, university students will refer to people registered and undertaking a degree at a university or college.

5. Black/ African

The dominant means of describing similarity and difference in the South African context is through the use of the racial constructs such as ‘black’ and ‘white’ (Jawitz, 2012). The term ‘black people’ was historically used to refer to people who in apartheid were excluded from the political process, namely, those previously classified as Coloured, Indian or African (Jawitz, 2012). In this research, the term will refer to female university students born in South African residing in townships whose mother tongue is an African Nguni language, such as IsiZulu or IsiXhosa.

Research Design and Methodology

This section provides a descriptive explanation of the research methodology. It begins with the research paradigm followed by the research design. The section further includes a description of the population and sampling methods used to find the participants. The data collection and analysis are discussed include the methods implemented in the current research study.

Research Paradigm

Constructivist paradigm suggests that knowledge and understanding are constructed through experiencing and reflecting on experiences (Adom, Yeboah, & Ankrah, 2016). The axiology of the constructivist paradigm is described as balanced meaning that the outcome of the research will reflect the values of the researcher, trying to present a balanced report of the findings (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The ontological features underlying the constructivist paradigm are that multiple beliefs exist and individual reality are created through interactions with others and the environment by ascribing meaning to various aspects within their social environment (Mampane M. R., 2014). These realities can be explored and used to create meaning (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The constructivist paradigm uses a qualitative research approach, as it seeks to understand a phenomenon under study from the experiences of the participants (Adom, Yeboah, & Ankrah, 2016).

The paradigm utilises interviews, observation, document review and visual data analysis for data collection (Adom, Yeboah, & Ankrah, 2016). The researcher uses open-ended questioners to gain the subjective experiences of the participants. This paradigm was chosen because the

participants understanding about what contributes to their academic resilience will be constructed by them and these will be specific factors for each participant. Their perceptions can result in many individual specific factors which can be interpreted differently in different contexts, which would give us multiple realities. The constructivist paradigm is most relevant to this research as it relates to the aim of the research, which is to explore the resilience contributory factors of township university female students.

● Research design

This study is qualitative in nature, meaning that it is interested in the depth of human experience (du Plooy-Cilliers, Bezuidenhout, & Davis, 2014). A qualitative method provides answers to questions about the selected participants, what their lives are like and how they see the world with respect to how they overcome difficulty and achieve academic success. Qualitative data makes an important contribution to the understanding of the construct of resilience. The aim of this research was to qualitatively explore and gain insight into the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black female township university students from Durban. Data was collected in an interactive design using interviews since this allowed the participants an opportunity to give in-depth information.

The time dimension of this study is cross-sectional, because it was conducted at a single point in time. A phenomenological design was utilised, it is applicable since the data was collected from participants who have experience and have an understanding of factors that contribute to their resilience, and this allowed the researcher to formulate an understanding of the participants experience from their perspective.

This study is based on deductive theorising, where the researcher moves from exploring broad and general aspects of the theory to applying them to a specific topic under investigation (du Plooy-Cilliers, Bezuidenhout, & Davis, 2014). For instance, the current study was rooted in the social-ecological approach to resilience formulated by Dr Michael Ungar (2011), which states that resilience is a process that draws on the inputs of individuals and the social systems in which these individuals function (Pretorius, 2016). The current study aimed to find out what contributes to the academic resilience of township youths using the social-ecological approach to resilience.

Population

The nature of the population of the current study was human participants and the target population was township dwelling youths registered as students in a university or college who

are academics. The accessible population refers to the section of the population that we can include in the study (du Plooy-Cilliers, Bezuidenhout, & Davis, 2014), which for this study was Black African university female students living in Durban townships who are between the ages of 18 to 25 years and are academically resilient. Participants were selected because they possessed characteristics that could make them sources of rich information that was needed for the study. The population was chosen because they were fit for the description of township dwelling youths and could, therefore, help answer the questions of the study. The age range was chosen in order to narrow down the definition of youths to people between the ages 18 to 25. The choice of using university students was based on the literature that suggested that a lot of research focused on adolescent and very little was done on youths from a South African perspective (Ngubane, 2019).

Sampling

The unit of analysis of the current study was all 3 participants' responses that were collected during semi-structured interviews. In a qualitative study, it is not possible to ask every university female student to be a part of the study, therefore, the study used a non-probability sampling method. This method was chosen because the researcher could not determine who the entire population of the study was (du Plooy-Cilliers, Bezuidenhout, & Davis, 2014). Within non-probability sampling, the research used purposive sampling. The purposive sampling method was chosen because of time constraints, a smaller sample group allowed the researcher to be able to source the sample, contact and collect data from them. It was also chosen because the researcher was targeting a specific population, which was resilient township dwelling youths (Ngcobo, 2019). The research sample was thought through and guided by the research aims and objectives.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher purposively approached people who fit the parameters of the sample population as a recruitment method. These participants were contacted via social media and requested to be a part of the study. One of the disadvantages of using purposive sampling is that it may cause bias since like-minded people or friends can be chosen by the researcher (du Plooy-Cilliers, Bezuidenhout, & Davis, 2014). An advantage is that the chosen sample fits the parameters of the population, which makes them the best choice for answering the research question (du Plooy-Cilliers, Bezuidenhout, & Davis, 2014). There was a small sample because it was impractical to collect data on the whole population considering the time that was available to the researcher and the accuracy for the study, therefore the sample consisted of 3 participants. The sample size was also chosen due to the

qualitative methodology of the study and the use of interviews which provide a lot of data for analysis, which would have been time-consuming with a bigger sample size.

Data collection methods

The data collection method used was one-on-one interviews, which was conducted in a conversational manner, which helped to put the participants at ease and created an optimal interviewing environment. The interviews were conducted via Skype due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this was done after obtaining consent from the participants through the use of a consent form that was sent to the participants (appendix E), after agreeing to be a part of the study. During the interviews the researcher recorded these semi-structured interviews with the participant's consent using a recording feature on Skype, the participants also had to give consent to being recorded using appendix F. One advantage of a one-on-one interview was that it afforded the participants an opportunity to give in-depth information about their lived experiences (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014). A disadvantage of using an in-depth interview was that it was time-consuming, in terms of transcribing the interviews as questions required detailed explanation. Each participant had a time allocation, this weakness was overcome by allocating a maximum of 45 minutes to each participant.

Semi-structured questionnaire interviews were used as a method of data collection as it allowed the research to be exploratory. The research questions that were used were open-ended which allowed the participant to give varied opinions and responses that were not influenced by the researcher's predetermined cues (du Plooy-Cilliers, Bezuidenhout, & Davis, 2014). The questions were developed in a way that was able to evoke answers that provided detailed explanations and descriptions of the phenomenon. The questions that were asked are referred to on appendixes C. An example of a question that was asked is "Through what means have you dealt with the challenges that you have faced?", this question helped answer the research question, in terms of how the participant dealt with adversities which contributes their resilience. Another question that also helped is "Are there any particular persons or things that help you to be successful in school? ", this question gave information on the factors that contributed to their academic resilience.

The questions helped explore the contributory factors of academic resilience in township dwelling youths. The participants were asked these questions during the interview and the researcher also had a chance to ask for clarity or further questions since the method of data

collection was semi-structured interviews. The interview was recorded, with the participant's consent. The time frame of the interview was 45 minutes to an hour maximum per participant.

Application of data collection methods

Conducting the interviews

Interviews were conducted on separate dates which were agreed upon by each participant. Before the interviews started, the researcher read the information sheet (Appendix D) together with the consent form (Appendix E and F) to each participant and explained its content in a way that was understandable to the participants. The participants were further given an opportunity to ask questions once the researcher was done with the reading and explaining of the information sheet and the consent form. After the procedures and aims of the research were explained to the participants, they agreed to participate. The participants who agreed to be participants in the study were asked to sign the consent form and were asked if they agreed to have their names used or wanted to be anonymous. The participants were also told that they could withdraw at any time during the interviews.

A semi-structured interview schedule with open-ended questions (appendix C) was used during the interviews. The questions were created in a way that would elicit the perspectives and opinions of the participants about the factors that contribute to their academic resilience. The method used of semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to gain in-depth information and also ask further questions when needed that were not necessarily in the schedule. Each interview was recorded using Skype, with the consent of the participants given through the signing of a voice recording consent form (appendix E), this was done to ensure accuracy when transcribing the data later for interpretation.

Data analysis method

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data obtained in this study. Thematic analysis is defined by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79), as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data”. This type of analysis was used in order to identify themes that assisted the researcher to interpret the experiences and perceptions of the participants and how they construct and understand the construct of resilience, as well as, which factors contributed to their academic resilience. The method was chosen because it helps organise and describe the data gathered in detail, this was important since interviews imbed themes and concepts that are discovered only through thematic analysis (Braun &

Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis further provides interpretations of the different perspectives of the research topic (Ngubane, 2019).

Braun and Clark (2006), stated when analysing personal, social and cultural experiences, thematic content analysis is an appropriate method of analysis for the content gathered from semi-structured interview. The thematic analysis allows the researcher to identify, analyse and report on patterns and themes that emerged from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Rossman and Rallis (2003), as cited in Gwata (2018), the method used for data analysis is dependent on the research design used, with phenomenological studies usually using thematic analysis. This research design was used in the current study, which, therefore, makes this type of analysis relevant to this study.

A strength of using Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is that the method is flexible, and it is not theoretically bounded to any pre-existing theoretical framework, thereby allowing the researcher to determine themes in different ways (Shole, 2017). Some of the weaknesses of the method are that it does not warn against some pitfalls of thematic analysis, which include making claims that are not supported by data and also using the research questions as themes rather than properly engaging with the data (Shole, 2017).

[Application of data analysis method](#)

Braun and Clarke (2006) state that analysing data is not a linear process, however, it can be described as a recursive process, that moves back and forth throughout the phases. This analysing process was guided by the steps provided by Braun and Clark (2006).

Step one: familiarising yourself with your data

In the first step, the data was transcribed verbatim from all the audio recordings of the interviews with each participant, the researcher then checked the transcripts against the audio recordings for accuracy. Braun and Clarke (2006) as cited in Ngubane, (2019) states that it is important for the researcher to familiarise themselves with the data by immersing themselves in the data after it was collected to gain the breadth and depth of the content, even if they might be familiar with it since they collected it. Therefore, the researcher familiarised themselves with the data by reading and re-reading it, thoroughly to gain an understanding of the factors that contribute to the participant's resilience.

Step two: generating initial codes

The transcripts were then re-read with the intention of coding them in step two, the data was re-read with the intention of identifying important features that will assist in answering the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These statements were then highlighted, and a table with rows and columns was drawn up using Microsoft word and all the highlighted concepts for each question were inserted. This is where the researcher produced initial codes and organised them into meaningful groups. This was done by grouping and re-grouping the concepts into broader themes by focusing on the emerging patterns and the language utilised by the participants.

Step three: searching for themes

In step three, potential themes were generated from the coded data, this assisted in analysing the codes in detail and differentiating one from the other to combine and create overall themes found in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This was done by using a mind-map sort the different codes into themes. The researcher then assessed the possible relationships between codes and themes. According to Shole, (2017), theme identification is a diligent process which requires openness to change, therefore, data that does not belong anywhere will not be discarded. The researcher ended up with themes, sub-themes, as well as extracts from the data that was coded in relation to the themes.

Step four: reviewing themes

This phase involved two levels of reviewing and refining of themes, the first is where the researcher checked if the extracted codes of each theme formed a consistent pattern (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Which led to the decision of keeping themes that were relevant in answering the research question and those that did not were discarded. re-read your entire data set for two purposes. The second levels were where the researcher re-read the data to determine if the themes work in relation to the data collected and in order to establish if there was any additional data that was missed in earlier coding stages.

Step five: defining and naming themes

In stage five, which is defining and naming of themes, the researcher developed and detailed the analysis of each theme. The themes were then named in a way that was informative and a reader could get an idea of what the theme is about easily.

Step six: producing the report

The last step was to write up the report, where extracts which capture the point intended to demonstrate and provided adequate proof of themes within the data were chosen and were apart of the analytic narrative. The researcher chose extracts that captured the point intended by the research study, in order to demonstrate and provide adequate proof of themes within the data.

- **Trustworthiness**

The current study explored the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships. Its trustworthiness is dependent on the use of credible methods and sources of information which will result in the dependability, confirmability and transferability of the study.

Credibility

Credibility refers to the accuracy data given by the participants is interpreted by the researcher (du Plooy-Cilliers, Bezuidenhout, & Davis, 2014). It also refers to how believable the study findings are to the reader and how congruent they are to reality (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). The current study ensured credibility by giving a thick description of the phenomenon being studied, which is the resilience of youths from townships and the kind of factors that hinder or enhance their resilience towards adversities faced in townships. This was achieved by using qualitative research methods, that allowed the participants to give rich descriptions of their perceptions and understanding of their experiences. The participants were further allowed to check the transcripts and listen to the recording of the interviews to make sure that information has been captured accurately. Another way that the researcher ensured that the findings are believable is by emphasising to every participant that their participation is voluntary and they can withdraw from the study at any time.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the quality of the process of integration taking place between data collection method, data analysis and the generated theory (du Plooy-Cilliers, Bezuidenhout, & Davis, 2014). The dependability is used to addresses the issue of reliability, which enable other future projects to repeat the work (Ngubane, 2019). This study ensured dependability by providing detailed descriptions of how the data was collected as well as the reason for the steps taken in the execution of the study.

Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the objectivity of the research, where the finding is shaped by the participants with minimum researcher bias (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). This was ensured by fully describing the research process of how the results, conclusions and interpretations were obtained, to allow others to scrutinise the data and hopefully reach similar conclusions. The interviews were recorded to ensure that the finding of the study were based on the information given by the participants. After the transcribing of data, the researcher listened to the recordings for accuracy in interpretation.

Transferability

Transferability refers to whether the findings can be applied to similar situations and provide similar results (du Plooy-Cilliers, Bezuidenhout, & Davis, 2014). This was increased by providing detailed descriptions of the type of participants used in the study and the methodology and step followed for the study to be transferrable.

Findings and Interpretation of Findings

This section presents and interprets the findings of the study from the semi-structured interviews conducted. The findings are presented as per the themes discovered from the thematic data analysis. The study further supports each theme by extracting information or quotes from the data to give credibility to the emergent themes. The section concludes with how the research questions and problem was answered and provides limitation and recommendations for future research.

Participants

Nto-Enhle (age 19), grew up in Kwa Mashu Township in Durban. She comes from a female-headed household. She is the second born of two siblings. She has a very difficult relationship with her siblings. She is currently studying towards a higher certificate in digital music production and composition at Boston City Campus.

Silondiwe Shezi (age 24), from Umlazi Township in Durban. She was raised by a single mother and has one brother. She is currently studying towards a Bachelor of Arts in psychology at the University of South Africa and also works part-time.

Ntokozo Nkosi (age 23), from Umlazi township in Durban. She lives with both her parents and is currently studying towards a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and communication science, at the IIE Varsity College.

Presentation and interpretation of findings

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data obtained in this study. It was used to identify the themes which would assist the researcher to interpret the perceptions of the participants. A total of four themes emerged and below is the presentation of the themes generated from the data presented by the participants.

Themes	Sub-themes
1. supportive relationships contribute to academic success	1. support from family members 2. emotional and experiential support from the lecturer 3. support and help from friends and school mates
2. individual traits contribute to academic resilience	1. goal-setting 2. positive use of time 3. self-drive 4. being self-aware
3. belief in God and prayer	
4. environment as a motivating factor	

1.1. Supportive relationships contribute to academic success

1.1.1 Support from family members

According to the findings, family support contributes to the academic resilience of the participants. This includes words of encouragement, willingness to pay for school fees and emotional support from the family or parents. The following responses support the conclusion.

Ntokozo: “....giving me words of encouragement...”

Nto-Enhle. “....knowing and seeing that she's willing to pay for my school fees is the most positive part for me because it shows that she cares even though she doesn't say it to me...”

Slondiwe: “.....She prays for me, she is financially and emotionally present....”

Participants indicated that support from their family helped them with school and some personal difficulties. They also mentioned support in the form of finances for their university studies

In terms of supportive relations as a factor that contributes to academic resilience, participants experienced supportive relations from family, peers and lectures. The support from the family came in the form of words of encouragement, emotional support and financial assistance, the findings support the literature conducted, as a study by Pretorius, (2016), stated that supportive parents assisted youths in difficult times. The support can be seen as being critical for the students to function well in school, which also would help them with being confident in their studies, which would, in turn, would make them prone to succeeding in school. These factors contribute to the participants being able to cope with the academic stresses and their studies. The data collected supports the findings of a study done by Shole (2017), stating that family support contributes to the academic resilience of the participants. This includes words of encouragement, willingness to pay for school fees and emotional support from the family or parents.

1.1.2. Support from school

The participants were asked about people or things that helped them to be successful in school. The answers included lecturers, friends and classmates. One of the participants stated that having a lecturer who supports her emotionally and in terms of experiences helps her feel like her goals are achievable, which motivates her to work hard.

Slondiwe: “....And my lecturer always spoke about her life experiences and what she went through made me realise that it is possible to achieve this degree no matter the challenges.”

From the data gathered it is evident that the participants valued the support and help of the peers and classmates. One of the participants stated that having friends made her academics better and having someone to explain the work in their language was also beneficial as it provided the participant with an environment in which they learned how to share and help each other, which may have contributed to their resilience.

Nto-Enhle. "No, apart from classmates no one really helps out academically.... But you mostly have to do the thing yourself because ultimately you are on your own."

Ntokozo: “a school mate, helped me out and made this year better for me....”

Help from peers and lecturers came in the form of assistance with school work and general support. Lecturers showed their support through sharing life experience and words of encouragement. Positive relationships are important to help students achieve and continue to achieve academic resilience (Ngubane, 2020). These findings are consistent with the data collected in the literature review stating that within the different systems protective factors such as family emotional support, peer support and influences proved to be extremely valuable to the participants (Shole, 2017). According to Shole (2017), resilience research consistently points to the importance of positive and supportive teacher-learner relationships as a key protective factor. Family and friends who provided support, a sense of hope and belonging were mentioned by participants as crucial to their resilience. This is consistent with the literature which views protective factors as resources available that buffers the individual's reaction to the stressful conditions (Ngcobo, 2019).

2.2 Individual traits contribute to academic resilience

One of the participants pointed towards having a positive mindset as a factor that contributes to resilience.

Ntokozo: "...I now have this positive mindset towards my degree completion and now I am starting to surround myself with good people, people who influence me in a positive way..."

Individuals with an internal locus of control are more self-motivated and believe they have control over their behaviour and its consequences. References to an internal locus of control were evident when participants indicated that they are in control of their success. They attributed their success to their actions.

Slondiwe: "...But I got up and realised that it was only the first term and I studied hard to improve my marks which resulted in distinctions..."

The participants in this study made productive use of their time and took advantage of opportunities and resources available to them.

Nto-Enhle: "I did more work.... I used to stay behind at school and do more work so I could miss school on some days because of financial struggles".

The participants' perspectives that they have a significant degree of control over their studies' outcomes, serve as encouragement for them to set goals and take remedial actions. They also take ownership of their success.

Individual traits also contributed to their academic resilience by nurturing their strengths, this included traits such as internal locus of control, which was observed when participants reported that they were self-driven and had a positive mindset, which allowed them to regulate their behaviour in a way that helped them be academically successful. According to a study by Shole (2017), the participant's internal locus of control was demonstrated through the analysis of their decision-making skills, which in this study was shown when P2 stated that, "I did more work.... I used to stay behind at school and do more work".

The ability to set and work towards the goal and the ability to use their time in a productive manner can also be identified as a trait that contributes to resilience, referring to the quote above the participants stated that they often had to stay behind to do more work in order for her to miss certain days due to financial issues. Through the data collected one could conclude that the participants were focused and did everything they deemed necessary to achieve academic success. According to a study by Shole, (2017), individual strengths within the participants in the study nurtured their resilience, such as internal locus of control, self-efficacy, goal-setting and the positive use of time.

2.3. Belief in God and prayer

Another theme that was discovered was the belief in God and prayer as a factor that contributes to the resilience of university students. One of the participants stated that prayer helped her overcome most of her challenges in life and school.

Slondiwe: "God definitely helped me overcome these challenges, because I am both religious and spiritual."

Participants also relied on religious beliefs as a factor that contributes to how they respond to adversity, one of the participants noted that when she faced a difficult situation prayer always helped her get through it. This theme was supported by results from a study conducted by Ngubane, (2019), which found that participants identified religious beliefs as a factor that contributes significantly to how they respond to adversity as well as how religion plays a role in their coping. Religious beliefs in this context refer to both the spiritual aspects of one's religion as well as to the church body within the community (Ngubane, 2019).

2.4. Environment as a motivating factor

The fourth theme that emerged from the data was that the participants saw their social environment as a motivating factor, the environment made them work hard in order to be able to escape the township environment. In this regard Slondiwe shared:

“...I use that to be conscious about where I want to be and don’t want to be, so my drive comes from where come from, so how I plan to achieve those goals is driven by where I don’t want to be.”

Nto-Enhle also had a similar experience as presented below:

“The fear that you might end up resorting to crime I think would motivate a person to want to work hard and be able to move to a better place.”

Ntokozo felt that the reason for wanting to study further was because of wanting to move out of the township.

“...Seeing people that you grow up with and they get into drugs and that makes a person want to grow up and find a way to get out of the township...”

Developing this motivational factor can be seen as a reason why the participants would attempt to always overcome challenges that they face in their lives, including those related to academics in university. The environment is also used as a motivating factor for achieving academic success as participants wanted to move out of the township and had to be academically resilient in order to do that successfully. This also corresponds with a study conducted by Ngcobo (2019), which stated that the environment in which people live in pushes them to work harder for themselves and allows them to appreciate what they have. The township environment served as a reason for them to persist in overcoming other challenges they have faced later on in their lives, including those they came across in the university

Conclusion

In conclusion, the factors that contribute to a university township dwelling African black female are the presence of support systems in terms of family, friends, lecturers and classmates. They further are influenced by their own positive traits, such as the ability to set goals and work

towards them. Participants also made reference to the belief in God and how that has helped them get through a lot of the challenges they have faced.

How the research question was answered.

The main question of the research study was, “What factors contribute to the academic resilience of black African female township university students?” .The findings of this study revealed that the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of the participants are: supportive relationships, this includes family, lecturers and peers, individual traits, belief in God and prayer and environment as a motivating factor.

According to the social-ecological approach to resilience formulated by Dr Michael Ungar (2011), youths are considered to be resilient when supported actively by their sociocultural ecologies (Ungar, 2011). The findings of the study support this theoretical foundation, the findings indicate that in order for a person to be resilient there has to be an interaction between them and the different components of their environments, such as family, school, peers and church. The themes that appear from the data can be seen as resilience enabling themes, such as having supportive relationships and positive personality traits. Which is consistent with the theoretical foundation as it states that individuals become resilient when there are protective factors in their environment that assist the individuals to overcome adversity (Ungar, 2011), these include belief in God and support from family and school.

Research Success and Possible Future Research

The research was a success in that it answered the research questions and identified factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students in response to adversity and challenges. By looking into the challenges that the participants of the study faced in their environment that pose a problem to their academics and how they got through them. This allowed the researcher to gain a holistic understanding of the factors that contribute to academic resilience of township dwelling youths in Durban.

This research was successful in contributing towards closing the gap identified by Pretorius, (2016), regarding studies focused on township dwelling youths and what contributes towards their resilience. The study further successfully contributed towards the growing literature in the field of social psychology and knowledge on student’s resilience from a South African youth perspective and it further could be used to assist schools or specifically university in creating

interventions for students from similar context who are not as academically resilient or who struggle academically. The study was also successful in benefiting the participants as it gave them a chance to gain insight into their own experiences and allowed them to acknowledge their growth and strengths, thus improving their psychological wellbeing.

There is scope for future research. Future studies could examine academic resilience among male Township youths would also collect valuable information that would add to the understanding of the factors involved in developing resilience across genders as the current study only focused on female students.

- **Ethical considerations**

- **Participants:**

Informed consent

Consent was obtained from the students through the following procedure: the information sheet and consent form for participation and audio recording. These were sent, read and discussed with the participants before the study was conducted. The participants were also given an opportunity to ask questions if they had any concerns or inquiries regarding the research. The participants were also given an opportunity to accept or decline participation based on their understanding of all the procedures and information regarding the study. Written consent stating what is expected from the participants, their approval for voice recording and their option of withdrawal, was signed by all participants before the interviews.

Confidentiality

Participant's identity was protected and not revealed to any unauthorised user. Participants who wished to remain anonymous were given pseudonyms. The consent forms were securely stored in a separate folder in the researcher laptop from the other data so that the participants cannot be linked to the interviews. The people who had access to the data are the researcher's supervisor and the researcher, the data will be kept for five years and after this time the data will be destroyed if no longer needed for the purposes of this research study. The identity of all participants was preserved throughout the research process.

Avoiding harm

To make sure that the research is not emotionally or physically harmful, the researcher first had to gain ethical clearance from Varsity College's ethics committee. This was done to ensure

that the research being conducted is of low risk. During the interviews, the participants were treated with respect and dignity and were not exposed to any psychological or physical harm.

Voluntary participation

The participants were informed that taking part in this study is voluntary and they could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. The information sheet also informed them that they will not be compensated for their participation in the study. This was also communicated verbally during the recruitment of the participants.

• Researcher:

Data transcription

The researcher transcribed exactly what the participants said in their interviews which allowed the researcher to avoid falsifying or distorting information. The information generated from this research study was used for the purposes of the current research only to prevent misuse of information.

Technology

The interviews were conducted using Skype, which is end-to-end encrypted and the recordings were saved using strong passwords in the researcher's laptop.

Limitations

Some of the limitations that can be identified in the current study are the use of a small sample of female student's means that the results cannot be generalizable to the broader population, the results of the research will be a representation of the perspectives of a specific group within a particular context, the use of female participants also means that the results cannot be applied to males from the same context. However, the qualitative design was chosen with the intention of exploring the experiences of the students and because it will provide in-depth and rich data, therefore the generalising the finding is not a serious limitation. Another limitation is that the study is conducted at a single point in time, which provides a once-off understanding of how a specific group of female's youths from a certain township experience risks and resilience and the study cannot anticipate if there will change over the longer period in time.

The study was also limited by time constraints as the research project was done over a period of one year and data could only be collected on a single day, which could have limited the time participants had to think over the questions, thus limiting the data collected. With the Covid-

19 pandemic there were added limitations in the way data was collected, and since the researcher had to adhere to the social distancing rules the interviews were conducted over Skype, which brought challenges of data, but the researcher assumed that since the participants are students they will have data as they would be attending online classes as per the regulations of the lockdown. The researcher also tried their best to limit the interview time to a maximum hour time limit to not use up too much data. Another limitation is that the researcher is a student and does not have enough research experience meaning that they could be anxious and nervous during the data collection process, which could affect the quality and depth of data collected.

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Annexures

Appendix A: • Ethics clearance letter



29 July 2020

Student name: Bongeka Sibisi
Student number: 17597831
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
 34 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
Lucinda Johns



Campus Postgraduate Coordinator
Dr Samantha Thomas

ADVTECH HOUSE

Inanda Greens
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Appendix B: Honours Ethics Checklist



Honours Ethics Checklist

Student name: Bongeka Anele Minentsha Sibisi

Title of the research: A qualitative study exploring factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships.

	Yes	No	Comment: Supervisor
I am not using human subjects: i.e. I use visual artefacts or visual observation etc.	yes		
I intend to use human subjects • I understand that I will not conduct research with human subjects under the age of 18 and other vulnerable groups. • I understand I can only proceed once I receive an ethical clearance letter, and my supervisor has approved my interview or focus group questions, questionnaire or coding categories etc.			
Interviews/Focus groups An example of the written consent form I intend to use is attached.	yes		
I will record the interview/focus groups and the sample of the letter where I ask for permission to do so is attached	yes		
I plan to use an interview or focus group schedule: The example of my research instrument is attached.		no	
I plan to use a questionnaire: The example of my research instrument is attached.	yes		
I plan to use a gate-keepers letter: The example of my letter is attached		no	
I plan to do research on an IIE site/with IIE students/staff/artefacts and I filled in the application for permission to do so. The application is attached. I understand I can only proceed once I receive IIE Approval for this.		no	

Signe [REDACTED]

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Demographic questions

1. Name
2. Age
3. University/college name
4. Qualification
5. Name of the township

Questions

1. What do you understand by the concept “resilience”?
2. What qualities would a resilient person have? Would you say you have such qualities?
3. Tell me about your goals and dreams that are related to academics? How do you think resilience will play a role in achieving these goals?
4. What challenges have you faced that have had an impact on your academic?
5. Through what means have you dealt with the challenges that you have faced?
6. Are there any particular persons or things that help you to be successful in school?
 - 6a. how, if at all, is your relationship with your guardian positively influencing your academic success in school?
7. What would you say your social environment has imparted (positively or negatively) in the person that you are today?
8. Is there any school friend or community member/s who are contributing to your academic success in school? If so how?

9. Are there any community organizational/institutions/services (religious institutions, recreational facilities, youth organizations, child care services, etc.) that help or helped influence your academic success? If so how?

10. Is there anything else you would like to add? Any questions?

Thank you for participating in this study

Appendix D: Explanatory information sheet



EXPLANATORY INFORMATION SHEET

Explanatory Information Sheet

To whom it may concern,

My name is Bongeka Anele Minentsha Sibisi, I am a student at IIE Varsity College, Westville Campus. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Lucinda Johns about factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of what contributes to the academic resilience of township dwelling youths.

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 as you fit the characteristics of the population of the study, which is a female university student living in a township who is academically resilient. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to conduct a 45 minute to an hour

interview over Skype to gain an understanding of what has contributed to your academic resilience. During the interview, you will be asked questions that will help the researcher gain an in-depth understanding of these factors.

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 the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships. 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 interview, but only my supervisor and I will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at IIE 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. Once the research process is over your information will be stored for a maximum of six years in a safe under a lock and key to which only my supervisor and I have access to.

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 Bachelor of Arts Honours in Psychology degree. 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:

Name: Bongeka Anele Minentsha Sibisi

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Name: Lucinda Johns

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Appendix E: Consent Form



CONSENT FORM

Consent form for participants

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Bongeka Anele Minentsha Sibisi about the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships.

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
- I consent to having my own data/ Wi-Fi connection for the Skype interview

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, interviews will be conducted using the online platform of Skype. Please note that the confidentiality of using online platforms such as Skype is limited. This is due to the use of international servers by the owners of the company, as well as inherent security flaws in the systems. However, the following precautions will be taken to ensure as much confidentiality as possible:

- Recordings of the interview will be downloaded onto a flash-drive/external hard drive for storage, and this flash-drive/external hard drive will be kept in a locked place for a duration of at least 5 years. Only the researcher will have access to this recording.
- After the 5 year period has elapsed, the recording will be wiped from the storage device.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix F: Consent Form for Audio and Video Recording



CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING

Consent form for participants

I, _____, agree to allow Bongeka Anele Minentsha Sibisi to audio record my interviews as part of the research on the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships.

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 G: Originality report

The screenshot shows a web browser window with multiple tabs. The active tab is titled 'SafeAssign Originality Report'. The address bar shows the URL: myvc.iilearn.ac.za/webapps/mdb-sa-885f5880ccc4141/originalityReportPrint?course_id=_83060_1&paperId=3619980714&&attemptId=4e05e1c0-1ce7-4439-b060-372960bccd2c. The SafeAssign logo is visible in the top left corner of the report page.

Safe Assign Plagiarism Practice

Bongeka Anele Sibisi
on Wed, Oct 28 2020, 6:48 PM
100% highest match
Submission ID: 4e05e1c0-1ce7-4439-b060-372960bccd2c

Attachments (1)

research summative project- draft 19 october.docx 100%
Word Count: 14,166
Attachment ID: 3619980714

research summative project- draft 19 october.docx

1 A QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACADEMIC RESILIENCE OF BLACK AFRICAN FEMALE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS LIVING IN TOWNSHIPS.

BONGEKA ANELE M SIBISI IIE VARSITY COLLEGE RESE8419 SUPERVISOR: LUCINDA JOHNS 28 OCTOBER 2020 17597831

research summat....docx

Go to PC settings to activate Windows. Show all

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2020-10-28

Title: A qualitative study exploring factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black African female university students living in townships.

Research Purpose/ Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/ Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Anticipated Findings	References
The purpose of this study was to qualitatively explore and gain insight in to the factors that contribute to the academic resilience of black female township university students from Durban.	What factors contribute to the academic resilience of black African female township university students?	1.lack of studies that explained risk and resilience from the perspective of the youths themselves 2. will contribute to social psychology literature on resilience on the South African population	1. Dr Michael Ungar (2011) 2. Shole, (2017)	Theme 1: Resilience Theme 2: Challenges facing youths from townships Theme 3: Protective factors of youths living in South African townships	Paradigm: Constructivist paradigm Epistemology: understanding is constructed through experiencing and reflecting on experiences Ontology: multiple beliefs exists and individual reality are created through interactions Axiology: the outcome of the research will reflect the values of the researcher	Qualitative	Semi-structured Skype interviews.	Participants: Informed consent Confidentiality Avoiding harm Voluntary participation • Researcher: How will you avoid bias? Use of information Technology	1. parent figures and the environment will be both a source of risk as well as a resilience resource. 2. motivational friends and religion will be a source of resilience	1. Mampane, (2014) 2. Shole, (2017) 3. Pretorius, (2016) 4. Wills & Hofmeyr, (2018) 4. Ngubane, (2019) 5. Ngcobo,(2019)
Research Problem	Secondary Questions/ Hypotheses/ Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Population				
There is a lack of research-based knowledge on the factors that promote academic resilience of South African youths that live in these townships. As a result, not much can be done to help students who struggle academically and who are affected by these environmental factors.	1. Identify factors that contribute to the academic resilience of South African Black female university students in response to adversity and challenges present in townships. 2. Identify protective factors township youths attribute to their academic resilience and success to.	1. Resilience 2. Academic resilience 3. Township 4. University students 5. Black/ African	the social-ecological approach to resilience by Dr Michael Ungar (2011)			Black African university female students living in Durban townships who are between the ages of 18 to 25 years and are academically resilient.				
						Sampling	Data Analysis Method(s)	Limitations	Anticipated Contribution	
						Non-probability sampling Purposive sampling method 3 participants	Thematic analysis by Braun and Clark (2006).	1. small sample 2. the study is conducted at a single point in time 3. Covid-19 pandemic 4.skype, data challenges 5. researcher has no experience	1.closing the gap identified by focusing on township dwelling youths and what contributes towards their resilience 2. literature in the field of social psychology 3. student's resilience from a South African youth perspective	