

Title page

Title: Exploring the motivation behind studying for a degree: a cross sectional, qualitative study on third year students using interviews.

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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 been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

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I would like to acknowledge all the participants' who –willingly- volunteered to contribute to this research paper. Despite their own work and stresses they took time out of their schedules to have a zoom call with me. When the signal dropped they did not get irritated and were patient with the number of questions asked. They were all enthusiastic to help out in anyway and answered the questions to the best of their abilities.

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ABSTRACT

Motivation is the driving force behind why third year students continue to pursue their studies and want to successfully pass. Without motivation it often leads to failure. The purpose of this study is to evaluate what factors contribute to this motivation specific to third year students. This topic is important when looking at the low pass rates of third year students in universities. The aim of this study is to close this gap. Through semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted on five participants, the study aimed to understand what was motivating these third-year students. The responses received were analysed using a thematic analysis which resulted in nine major themes emerging. The results concluded that having a schedule and positive support system was essential in staying motivated, and thus how the student's spent their time with was vital to their success in their studies. All participants in the study felt a high level of pressure with regards to passing as this would ensure they get a career that pays well. If a student wishes to stay motivated a schedule needs to be created based on their assignments, classes and exams, and remind themselves why they are studying and the purpose behind it.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Contextualisation

This research proposal is going to be looking at the motivation behind why third year students are studying towards a degree, using semi-structured interviews. This allows the researcher to have a general sense of what direction to take, but allows enough freedom so that the researcher is able to use his or her own discretion when wanting to elaborate further on an answer given by the participant. This topic is important due to the low pass rates found within third year university students. The 2010 cohort showed that only 22% of third year students in university were able to complete their degree in three-years, and 39% were able to complete theirs in four years (Writer, 2019). This also showed that in 2010 in South Africa, only 56% of student's in varsity who were registered by year six had completed their three-year degree (Writer, 2019). Having as many students pass as far as possible should be a goal the country aims to fulfil as this would boost the economic standard. Spaces and more opportunities for students who wish to study would be available if students passed within the correct timeframe given to them (Writer, 2019). The government has also said that due to the low pass rate it becomes costly in relation to resources and time (Writer, 2019). This study aims to close this gap by increasing the students' motivational levels, in order for them to pass in the correct timeframe and at a higher standard academically.

1.2. Rationale

Personal rationale:

This topic is important to me as, being a student myself, motivation is a key factor in getting through third year of an undergraduate degree. Despite already completing my undergraduate degree, the findings from this research will assist me with my postgraduate degree studying, and can assist me in any other degree I wish to complete thereafter. This research will add practical ways that I can use to stay motivated, regardless of the degree I am studying.

Academic rationale:

This topic is important to students who are studying and wish to stay motivated throughout their studying years. This topic will help students to understand what they

can use to help keep them motivated through the use of previous students. This is an important topic for any (current and future) students who wish to stay consistent in their motivation by applying practical methods to their personal lives, using methods that have helped previous students stay motivated up until now (Ferlazzo, 2015). When students are motivated, they tend to experience positive emotions and a bigger drive to succeed (Ferlazzo, 2015). This promotes a healthier lifestyle (Ferlazzo, 2015).

Relevance:

This research will be used by universities as motivation has been proved to increase pass rates (Kurebwa, Wadesango, & Wedhe, 2017). This study will help students in the long run by decreasing stress levels which will increase their health and well-being, along with giving them a better chance of finding a career as they have an advantage over someone who is not educated (Sinha, Stults- Kolehmainen, & Tuit, 2014). Motivated students tend to have more positive emotions and a more positive outlook towards life as they feel accomplished decreasing the levels of depression and increasing the pass rate (Sinha et al., 2014). Academic researchers would care about this researcher to see whether it has relevance and can be applied to universities. This research will add more knowledge towards the body of knowledge in academics (Kurebwa et al., 2017). While many studies have addressed this topic overseas there aren't many studies done in South Africa which highlights an academic gap and the need for this research in SA. (Tjonneland, 2017).

1.3. Problem Statement

Students are not always motivated to keep studying and can become tired when they reach their 3rd year of studies (Sin, 2018). Students may find it difficult to find ways in which they can motivate themselves as they do not understand what can motivate them and properly. This can lead to students feeling discourage and result in failure, decreasing pass rates (Sin, 2018). Currently it is not known what motivates students to keep studying despite the many studying years behind them, which becomes a problem when needing to have motivation to keep working.

1.4. Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to determine what factors impact the motivation of 3rd year student's to pursue their studies and successfully pass. This will entail that (current and future) students receive practical methods to ensure that despite feeling tired when studying towards their degree; they are able to continue to stay motivated. This will encourage higher pass rates in university.

1.5. Research Question

What are the factors that impact the motivation of 3rd year students to pursue their studies and successfully pass?

1.6. Objectives/Hypotheses/Sub-questions

- What influences student's perspectives on the different factors that can motivate them personally to pursue their studies and successfully pass their 3rd year?
- Objectives:
 - To explore the true motives behind why students study.
 - To explain how to motivate future students over a period of time.
 - To describe the methods students have used to become and stay motivated.
 - To discover new practical ways in helping students to want to pass with good marks but implementing practical methods into their daily life.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical foundation and how it links to the research problem

The two theories being looked at within this study are the Achievement Motivation theory created by McClelland (1953) and Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs theory. McClelland (1953) coined the Achievement Motivation theory which states that needs are learnt, developed and are placed in a hierarchical order. Dissatisfaction (theme 1) is what drives a person towards fulfilment (Souders, 2020). The needs (or motives) are: achievement (theme 2), power (theme 3) and affiliation (theme 4). These needs are influenced by either extrinsic factors or internal drives (Souders, 2020). The drive for achievement comes from the psychological need for competence and striving for excellence from a standard that comes from the task

itself, competition with the self, and against others (Souders, 2020). Achievement can come from a person's social environment and socialising influences. Parents value and promote standards of excellence which are developed through life experiences as a promotion for growth towards complexity (Souders, 2020). The need for power is internal and involves a person seeking to hold authority and control over another person, trying to influence their decisions according to their own needs and desires (Kukreja, 2020). This is their desire to increase their self-esteem (theme 5), and reputation (theme 6) drives this force (Kukreja, 2020). The need for affiliation encourages the person to seek social and interpersonal relationships with others (Kukreja, 2020).

This theory links with this research as students in university develop and learn their need for a degree through external forces. People with degrees are seen to have an advantage and this is motivation in itself as this gives students that are still studying the motivation to achieve their degree; knowing that the degree will give them power and affiliation. They become motivated through striving for excellence. Students can be motivated by the task, the competition in the class, and competition from themselves. If the student has a good support system such as being surrounded by people who are driven and motivated to succeed this will contribute to the student's motivation. If a student has a balance between socialising and varsity work this will help contribute to their work ethic, as this can create the feeling of achievement and a healthy balance in their life, which will create a more positive feeling towards studying (Kukreja, 2020).

Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs theory states that motivation through the satisfaction of needs is arranged in a hierarchical order. As satisfied needs do not motivate, it is the dissatisfaction that moves us in the direction of fulfilment (Souders, 2020). The satisfaction to pass, and pass at an acceptable standard, can in itself be motivational. Maslow's (1943) theory states that people's motivations are to generate their wants, desires, and strivings that tend to maintain the promotion of growth, well-being and life (Souders, 2020). These offer a person satisfaction in their life (Souders, 2020). Maslow describes how motivated people feel in five basic categories. In hierarchical order, these categories are: physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs, and self-actualisation needs (Hopper, 2020).

Physiological needs are general needs such as water, air, food, sleep, clothing, shelter and reproduction (Hopper, 2020). Safety needs consist of resources, health, personal security, employment and property. Love and belonging needs include intimacy, sense of connection, family and friendship (Hopper, 2020). Esteem needs include status, recognition, freedom, strength, self-esteem and respect. Lastly, self-actualisation is when someone strives to be the most that they can be (Hopper, 2020). According to Maslow (1943), as soon as a person feels as if their current level of needs is sufficiently satisfied, then they move higher up the hierarchy to the next one (Hopper, 2020). Physiological needs are the most vital out of all the needs. These needs will always be the first to be met for a person (Hopper, 2020). A safe environment is the next important need. Feeling safe and having an environment that is predictable is essential so that a person does not feel anxiety or fear, and in developing countries safety needs are more apparent in emergency circumstances (Hopper, 2020).

This theory relates to this topic as the research pertains to what motivates students. Satisfaction (theme 6) and fulfilment (theme 7) can be strong driving points. Analysing a students' wants, desires, and strivings will help better explain what drives students to do better and work harder in their academics. As each need is met (or if it is lacking) this can help the researcher better understand the possible cause of motivation (or lack of it). If a student passes at an acceptable rate for themselves this will give them satisfaction that will drive them to pass again or encourage them to do better. This will play into the individual's self-esteem. If the student feels satisfied with his or her marks, he or she will have a high self-esteem which will build up their confidence in regards to their studies, encouraging them to view their studies as being positive. This will positively encourage their motivation. The opposite though can occur; if an individual is not satisfied with their results they may become discouraged and thus no longer have motivation to pass or try harder. This means they will have a low self-esteem resulting in not feeling motivated or confident towards their studies. Through further research of this topic, the researcher will be able to understand how many students' needs are being met and whether they are met in the correct hierarchy order, contributing positively or negatively towards the motivation of the student.

2.2. Review of previous literature

This study looks at multiple themes that impact motivation which can be looked at when trying to decipher what motivates third year students specifically. The themes within this previous literature that have been identified are parenting styles, motivational intervention programme and its impacts on higher education students, self-determination theory; specifically looking at extrinsically and intrinsically motivation, positive moods and regulations, and the low pass rates of three-year degrees in South Africa.

Theme 1: Parenting styles

Three parenting styles were identified by Baumrind, namely: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. These parenting styles have been shown to have an impact on their children's motivation levels (Arenliu, Bërxulli, Hoxha, & Jemini - Gashi, 2014). Each parenting style contains two dimensions known as warmth and control, and depending on the level of both exhibited would result in what type of style is portrayed. These two dimensions are known as personality traits that are constant aspects of the parental behaviour during different situations (Arenliu et al., 2014). Warmth is the level of affection the parent shows towards their child, you get two types of parents, those who are warm and affectionate and those who are relatively uninvolved in their child or children's lives. The level of control splits into two forms, psychological control and behavioural control (Arenliu et al., 2014). Psychological control is when a parent manipulates their child's emotional states and the efforts done towards this. Behavioural control is setting limits on what their child can and cannot do by setting rules (Arenliu et al., 2014).

Authoritarian parents tend to display a high level of dictating, hostile and limiting behaviour (Arenliu et al., 2014). Authoritarian parenting consists of little warmth with a high level of control. Children are expected to follow rules without any discussion between the child and parent (Cavanaugh et al, 2019). Respect and obedience are emphasised by parents but is not reciprocated back to the child as there is very little give-and-take (Cavanaugh et al., 2019).

Permissive parents tend to implement little control and demands with marginal punishment (Arenliu et al., 2014). There is little parenting control and warmth and

caring is offered. Punishment tends to be infrequent and the children's behaviour is generally accepted because they are allowed to make their own decisions despite their maturity levels (Cavanaugh et al., 2019). Rules are seldom enforced because little expectation is placed on the children (Cavanaugh et al., 2019).

Authoritative parents tend to be more sensitive, more willing to reason with their child and encourage them to be independent and responsible (Arenliu et al., 2014). These parents are warm and responsive to the children while still having a fair degree of parental control and rules. Rules tend to be explained followed by a discussion that is encouraged (Cavanaugh et al., 2019). This type of parenting style results in an increase in motivation for the child specific to succeeding and learning academically (Arenliu et al., 2014). When conducting research, considering the type of parenting style a child has been raised with is important as this will result in what kind of motivation the child will exhibit when in university.

Theme 2: Concepts for Academic Performance – A motivation intervention programme

A motivational intervention programme called 'Concepts for Academic Performance' was implemented on a group of higher educated students (Govender, 2012). This was to test whether the implementation of this programme would result in performance improvement, increased output rate and more responsible attitudes (Govender, 2012). This study's aim was to see whether this would help increase the students' attitudes towards learning to become more positive, more engaged, motivated, and to see whether the programme increased the students' output rate improved performance (Govender, 2012). This research included pre-test and post-test phases that were compared, and both qualitative and quantitative data were collected for analysing (Govender, 2012).

The findings showed that students' post-test attained higher academic results/higher positive attitudes when it came to learning and assessments after they went through the motivational programme (Govender, 2012). For a student of higher education to perform well academically there needs to be self-motivation and engagement. A motivational programme is needed to allow

students to acquire the tools and techniques needed to guide them. This is so that they understand they need to be responsible for their learning, complete assessments well and successfully graduate (Govender, 2012). When evaluating the research, the researcher would need to evaluate whether there is a motivational intervention programme available at the university and what emotions the student's feel towards studying and towards the university itself. This will give more insight into how the students view their studies.

Theme 3: The Self-Determination Theory

An individual has the ability to control the function of their motivation through extrinsically, intrinsically or in an amotivated manner, which, according to the self-determination theory, is what motivation consists of (Koseoglu, 2013). This theory is accepted within educational fields. In order to measure the extent to which this theory is working in education, the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) was created (Koseoglu, 2013). The three levels within the theory: extrinsic, amotivation and intrinsic are measured in the AMS. The goal was to measure first year students' academic motivation within the two separate populations (Koseoglu, 2013). ANOVA, t-tests and descriptive statistics were statistical procedures that were used to analyse the data. Different faculties, diverse years and genders effects were explored (Koseoglu, 2013).

The results specified that students are more inclined to exterior stimulations. This type of mind-set is expected to adapt to a more intrinsic self-regulation (Koseoglu, 2013). Human behaviour is potentially influenced by motivation. If an individual is not motivated they are mostly likely not going to persevere through studying when struggles occur (Koseoglu, 2013). People tend to prefer activities they feel they can adequately complete, along with activities seen to be integrally satisfying or contributing (Koseoglu, 2013). The researcher will need to better understand how an individual feels towards their studies. If the students see their studies as a challenge they can overcome, they are more likely to approach their studies differently and with higher motivation.

The self-determination theory states that freedom of choice is a function of motivation, this means that the intensity of motivation may increase and decrease depending on the level of volitional behaviour (Koseoglu, 2013). The theory's aim

is to explain an individual's personality and motivation. This theory is conducted based on three approaches such as the Cognitive Evaluative Theory, Basic Needs Theory, and Organismic Integration Theory (Koseoglu, 2013). Basic Needs Theory states that three essential needs: autonomy, relatedness and competence, are what directs human behaviour. Self-determination theory proclaims that to uphold psychological well-being, these three needs need to be met (Koseoglu, 2013). Self-determination is said to be assumed to be a natural need in the Cognitive Evaluation Theory. This would mean a person's motivation comes from their capacity to regulate or guide their own behaviour (Koseoglu, 2013). A student's environment that meets these needs is seen to be self-determining environments, and controlling environments tend to hinder these needs (Koseoglu, 2013). This research aims to test whether autonomy, relatedness and competence are present in the student's studying and motivation.

When human behaviour is viewed as being not just intrinsically focused but also extrinsically, they can be adapted to intrinsic using the developmental processes of regulation and internalisation, then Organismic Integration Theory comes into play (Koseoglu, 2013). Intrinsic motivation consists of behaviours that are focused on internal rewards- within the individual as it tends to be naturally satisfying (Cherry, 2019). (Koseoglu, 2013). Extrinsic motivation is the opposite: it is driven through earning external rewards (Cherry, 2019). Intrinsic motivation consists of an individual acting deprived of noticeable external rewards. The activity is either enjoyable or an opportunity to realise and discover their potential (Cherry, 2019).

Intrinsic motivation in regards to education is important; the aim is to create intrinsically rewarding environments. As many find studying to be tedious according to traditional paradigms, extrinsically goading needs to occur when it comes to educational activities (Cherry, 2019). Thomas Malone and Mark Leeper suggest that it is possible to make the environment for learning intrinsically rewarding. This is done when a person engages in their education for their own sake and not to achieve external rewards (Cherry, 2019). Certain words will evoke positive connotations toward activities, these words are captivating, enjoyable, interesting and intrinsically motivating (Cherry, 2019). When goals with

personal meaning are pursued, individuals tend to be more motivated at achieving them (Cherry, 2019).

When an activity or behaviour that is being engaged in is intrinsically motivated, the student studying will be engaging in learning-related activities, even when the perceived rewards are absent (Koseoglu, 2013). This type of motivation results in the individual's execution at a higher level and will persist when faced with challenges as opposed to an individual who is extrinsically motivated. Intrinsically motivated is categorised in three stages: 'experiencing stimulation' (stage one) is when intrinsic motives are at a minimum, 'accomplishment' (stage two) set by own standards when achieving goals, and 'to know' (stage three), which is when a person has complete self-determination (Koseoglu, 2013).

Individuals that are intrinsically motivated focus on the process of tasks. Extrinsically motivated individuals focus on the end-results. Multiple motivations can occur at once for an individual activity, this means a profession or course can be selected for both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons (Koseoglu, 2013). Questions by the researcher should be asked that investigate whether the participant is intrinsically motivated or extrinsically motivated, as this plays a role in the how, why and whether the individual will remain motivated.

Theme 4: Positive moods and Self-regulation

First year students are explored in Human-Vogel's (2006) study to understand if positive moods correlate with self-regulation and its relevance. The students in this study were given ten construct definitions which related to features of general health broadly which is: physical health, self-regulation (which includes self-efficacy, intelligence, and motivation). Positive mood includes: emotional response, self-esteem, explanatory style, psychological well-being and hope (Human-Vogel, 2006). This study also explored whether these students believed a causal relationship existed between construct pairs, and the direction in which they understood the causal relationship existed in (Human-Vogel, 2006).

The results were that students believe that positive mood concepts are casually associated with aspects of self-regulation. Positive mood constructs were the main driver and primary outcome correspondingly (Human-Vogel, 2006). Optimism is a key factor in self-regulation and overall academic achievement.

Self-efficacy beliefs influence self-regulation through decision-making, goal choices and their ability to efficiently problem-solve (Human-Vogel, 2006). This shows that optimism is significantly related to self-regulation and academic achievement (Human-Vogel, 2006). The students' mood influences their self-regulations which influence their motivational levels, meaning it is important to understand the student's mental state, as this is a factor when it comes to motivation.

Theme 5: Decreasing rates in passing

Tertiary education over the last 25 years in South Africa has had both failures and successes published through a review by the government (Writer, 2019). From 1994 to 2017 graduating students numbers have increased from 58, 560 to 210, 931 students. Despite these numbers there are many students who do not graduate within their three-year degree time period. Only 22% of third year students complete their three-year degree according to the 2010 cohort on time, while 39% of student's completed theirs in four years instead of three (Writer, 2019). Students who are registered in a varsity for a three-year degree, only 56% of these student's within six years had completed their degree. Due to low pass rates it has become costly in relation to resources and time (Writer, 2019). The government measures only every 4 year intervals the number of students who have passed their degrees in the allocated time period. The results from the review showed that varsities need to make more of an effort to support, encourage and motivate their students to in the obligatory time, complete their qualifications (Writer, 2019).

There are not many studies conducted on third year students and their capacity to keep themselves motivated. Recent information on motivation is challenging to find. Motivation that is internal seems to be the best type of motivation, which is a person's internal drive, yet some studies show that external motivation may be what is needed when it comes to motivating someone. There are many factors that influence a person's motivation, and can have many facets that additionally contribute to this. Parenting style can be said to be one of these contributions – if a parent uses an authoritative style to parent their children, this tends to encourage the student to become more independent, motivated and more likely

to do well academically (Arenliu et al., 2014). The pass rates in South Africa for a three-year degree are not very high and quite low when looking at the statistics (Writer, 2019). This shows that motivation in third year students is lacking resulting in dropping out, failing or taking a lot longer to get their degree.

2.3. Conceptualisation

Motivation

Motivation is an individual's drive to overcome obstacles and inspires them in order to keep going and grow (Meier, 2016). Motivation is a person's will, drive and inspiration when it comes to new experiences that the individual finds him or herself in (Meier, 2016). Acherman (2020) explains that self-motivation is more fulfilling as it means a person completes a task for their own purpose and its own sake, making the task more enjoyable and pleasing as the person feels more successful, compared to doing things for external sources and pleasing others. For the purpose of this assignment both Meier (2016) and Acherman's (2020) definitions will be used.

Influence

Macmillian (2020) defined 'influence' as the effect a thing or person has on someone else's choices, thoughts, manners, or the way something is conducted. A person can change their behaviour so that it aligns with the social situation, due to a new situation being presented or the way to behave is unknown, showing that social settings can influence this person and their behaviour (Meier, 2016). For the purpose of this assignment, Macmillian (2020) and Meier (2016) definition of influence will be used.

Behaviour

Bergner (2011) defined 'Behaviour' as visible activity. This is how an individual conducts themselves or acts in a specific way towards another person. Farnsworth (2018) describes 'Behaviour' as being the way a person acts in a particular way and behaviour is said to be caused through the connection a person's actions and their brain. Both definitions will be acceptable for this assignment.

Fulfilment

Fulfilment can be defined as a person feeling satisfied when something is achieved that tends to be useful (Collins, 2020). Sue-Wah-Sing (2017) describes fulfilment as being intensely personal, it is the feeling of satisfaction and gratitude for what the individual has. It can be a person's wants and desires. For the purpose of this assignment both definitions will be used.

Satisfaction

Satisfaction can be defined as a pleasant feeling when an individual receives something that they wanted, or when an individual completes something they wanted to do (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). According to Dan and Elegba (2017) satisfaction is seen to be a multifaceted concept, with numerous meanings and application. It is subjective and value-laden, as there are certain set of standards which includes; expectations, precious values and beliefs. It is something that leads to a pleasing feeling or fulfilment of a need or desire a person has (Dan & Elegba, 2017).

Needs

Needs are things that are necessary and essential (Webster, 2020). This is something a person will aim to acquire (Webster, 2020). Human needs are what actions are driven by; it is the motivation in arrears to human behaviour (Guillen-Royo, 2014). This can also be mechanisms used to achieve a person's goals, and as a common requirement can be used to flourish or experience a good life as it contributes to elements needed to achieve this, and gives the person the realization of what goals they wish to achieve (Guillen-Royo, 2014).

Students

According to Webster (2020) A student is a scholar or learner, a person who is currently studying. In this study it is someone who is studying towards a degree in their third year of studies. Diaz, Ojukwu, Padilla, & Steed (2019) describe students as individuals who are currently studying towards something and in this case a degree.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Outline of worldview/paradigm/tradition

A paradigm signifies what we contemplate about the world (Creswell et al., 2020). Actions that we take as inquirers and in the world cannot occur without reference to those paradigms, which means that what we think we do (Creswell et al., 2020). This signifies that a paradigm is a person's lens of the world that is used to interpret reality (Creswell et al., 2020).

This research has used an interpretivism approach as it has used a qualitative approach. This is because interpretivism believes that society is shaped by individuals, and is specific to qualitative methods (Creswell et al., 2020). Interpretivists believe that reality is subjective to people's experiences (ontological), specific to the external world, thus can lead to the adaption of inter-subjective epistemology and ontological beliefs of reality being made up of social constructs (Creswell et al., 2020). These constructs are created by the researcher through in-depth examination of the topic. Knowledge is not objective, but subjective (epistemology). This knowledge tends to be synonymous to reasoning and thinking of humans, as meaning and knowledge are created through interpretation (Creswell et al., 2020).

This paradigm applies to this research as motivation is a subjective topic. A person's motivation is largely shaped by their upbringing, surroundings, drives and so forth. Due to the data of this study being highly subjective, the data has been thoroughly interpreted (Creswell et al., 2020). Exploratory type questions were asked as this meant phenomena's were studied in their own right, using emic perspectives, and there were strategic ways the researcher used in order to increase the credibility of the data analyses and research design (Creswell et al., 2020). An interpretive paradigm was applied to this study by describing the purpose of this study, which was, to interpret and understand student's perspectives on the factors that subjectively motivate them to keep studying and successfully pass in their 3rd year.

Ontology specifically to the interpretive paradigm, believes that reality is multiple. It can be explored, and through meaningful actions and human connections, it can be constructed (Kumar, 2011). By looking at an individual's daily routine, writing which can be either visual pictures or text, and conversations when they are interacting with others, allows the researcher to navigate and understand how that person makes sense of their social world around them in a natural setting (Kumar, 2011).

Due to the variety of human experiences, there are multiple social realities. These realities include the person's experiences, knowledge, interpretations and views (Kumar, 2011). This research looked at a variety of individuals who all had their own social realities as they have experienced different human experiences, which showed that reality is multiple yet still has value. It was the job of the researcher to evaluate these realities, and to interpret the contributing factors to a person's motivation when it comes to their studies.

The epistemology of this study encompasses gaining an understanding of events that are influenced by interactions within a social setting, by interpreting mental processes (Kumar, 2011). Knowledge is constructed socially through undergoing natural and real life settings by those who are actively partaking in the research process (Kumar, 2011). Knowledge is gained through co-operative processes such as reading, listening, and writing, which interconnect the inquirer and that which is being inquired-into. This tends to be a more personal way to conduct data collection through a more interactive mode (Kumar, 2011). Through the interactions between the researcher and the participants, it was the researcher's responsibility to understand how the participant's interactions influence their motivation levels. This resulted in the data collection method becoming personal between the researcher and those who were interviewed.

The researcher values an individual's subjective experience of the world around him or her, thus meaning type orientated methodology is important and tend to focus on the subjective relationship between the subjects and researcher (Kumar, 2011). An interpretive paradigms methodology is collecting data through the use of reflective sessions; gaining insight of self and practise through experience and learning, interviews, observation of participants and text messages as this is a form of communication the researcher and person being researched used (Kumar, 2011). This researcher's data was collected and conducted through interviews which were used to interpret what motivates the individual personally, and then comparisons were drawn to find similar motives.

3.2. Research approach and design

Methodology

This is a qualitative study as it is an exploratory study into what motivates third year students. This type of study aimed to gain an understanding into a person's opinion, fundamental reasons and motives (DeFranzo, 2011). This was established through interviews that were semi-structured (DeFranzo, 2011). This study showed insight into the motivation of students and gave an understanding on how a person can improve in this area of their life.

Exploratory

This research is an exploratory study as the research sought to explain the motivation behind third year students regarding their studies. This research gives a better understanding into an existing problem such as a lack of motivation in students, but did not provide conclusive results into the matter (Creswell et al., 2020).

Indicative

This research takes an inductive approach, which means the researcher collected data that was relevant to the topic first. Once there was an adequate amount of data collected it was reviewed (Creswell et al., 2020). The aim was to see if there were patterns within the data collected (Creswell et al., 2020). Using these patterns, theory was developed to explain them (Creswell et al., 2020). You started with a set of observations known as data and moved towards a theory (Creswell et al., 2020).

Cross-sectional

This is a cross-sectional study due to research only being conducted at a certain point in time and solely analysing data from one population (Creswell et al., 2020).

3.3. Population

3.3.1. Population

3.3.2. Unit of analysis

3.3.3. Target and accessible population

3.3.4. Population parameters (characteristics)

The target population is defined by McLeod (2019) as being the entire community of people from whom the sample may be obtained. In this study the target population consists of third year students. The accessible population is the real sampling frame from which the researcher collects the sample at random (McLeod, 2019). In this study the accessible population consists of third year students specific to a private tertiary institution in Johannesburg. A population parameter is an attribute or information that represents a distinction of a whole population (Creswell et al., 2020). In this research the population parameters are third year students studying towards a degree. The unit of analysis are people.

3.4. Sampling

3.4.1. Probability or non-probability sampling

3.4.2. Sampling method

3.4.3. Sample size

The sampling method used within this research is non-probability, specifically, convenience, purposive and snowballing sampling (Creswell et al., 2020). Non-probability sampling is characterised as a sampling technique wherein the researcher chooses samples based on the researcher's subjective opinion rather than random collection (Trochim, 2020). It is an approach which is less rigorous. This method of sampling is hugely reliant upon the researchers' expertise. This is achieved through evaluation, which is commonly utilized through academics for qualitative studies (Trochim, 2020). This type of sampling is used in this research due to it being a more suitable and realistic approach for studies conducting interviews in the modern world. This type of sampling is easier and more cost-effective to obtain responses using non-likelihood sampling than probability sampling, since the researcher understands the question. The participants quickly respond compared to randomly chosen people, as they have a high level of motivation to participate (Trochim, 2020). As the researcher is a student a more cost-effective method of conducting interviews is ideal. As there is a small sample size, the answers given need to come from participants who are motivated to participate in order to ensure there is adequate data provided.

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling process in which the survey is collected from a community of individuals who are simple to approach or meet. The selection process does not include any other requirements only that the individuals are eligible and ready to participate. Furthermore, this method of sampling does not demand the generation of a simple random sampling method, since the only requirements would be that the respondents participate voluntarily (Alkassim, Etikan, & Musa, 2016). Convenience sampling is used as individuals that meet certain criteria's such as: being easily accessible, found within the set location (the specific university used), availability at the time they will be needed, and are willing to participate (Alkassim et al., 2016). The researcher needed to be aware that the study can be biased due to this type of sampling. Bias will impact the results from the study and that's the last thing the researcher wanted (Alkassim et al., 2016).

Purposive sampling is a method of non-probability sampling, in which researchers depend on their own decision while selecting sample participants to take part in their analysis (Alkassim et al., 2016). Purposive sampling was used as the researcher needed to find participants that were willing to provide information that was an asset to the research (Alkassim et al., 2016). A snowballing sampling technique is solely dependent on referrals and this is how a researcher may produce a sample (Creswell et al., 2020). Due to COVID-19, finding participants without help from fellow students would have been difficult, as it was unforeseen when students were allowed back onto campus, thus snowballing sampling was used. As students are in their third year they already have pressures on them to pass and well, along with the added stresses of COVID, thus finding students that were able to meet in the timeframe given was essential, thus convenience sampling was used. The aim was to find students that were doing well and were motivated in order to understand what drove them, along with student's that were lacking in motivation in order to compare the results in order to understand what differentiates the pair, thus purposive sampling was needed. Due to COVID-19 impacting this study the only way to approach people was over Whatsapp (a social platform). This means referrals were important as there was no one

on campus that the researcher could have approached. The participants needed to take time out of their days to be interviewed via zoom (a social platform), which meant they had to be motivated to be a part of the study.

Some disadvantages that could have arisen from the snowballing sampling method are: sampling bias and margin of error: this sampling approach may have had a possible sampling bias and margin of error because people who refer others recognize and have similar characteristics with each other (Creswell et al., 2020). The researcher only interviewed five participants, and was not willing to conclude the test without definitive findings. A lack of cooperation could have also occurred despite having referrals, as there was an equal chance that citizens may not have collaborated and failed to engage in the study (Creswell et al., 2020). Due to a small sample size being used the researcher had to ensure there was an adequate number of referrals given, and that the participants were motivated to ensure results from the study gave reliable data.

3.5. Data collection

3.5.1. Data collection method

An in-depth semi structured interview was used to collect the data. A semi-structured interview is a gathering where the interviewer did not obey a structured set of questions to the specific (Doyle, 2020). More open-ended questions were posed, which resulted in more of a conversation taking place with the person being interviewed, rather than a simple question and response style (Doyle, 2020). Some structure was needed to ensure the correct information was obtained and a decent timeframe was kept. This was an interactive study (Creswell et al., 2020). Five 3rd year students were interviewed, via zoom. The human element of face-to-face contact was eliminated creating a disadvantage as the bonds created were not as strong. A set number of questions were asked but when warranted further questions were asked, giving a more detailed and direct answer. Despite COVID-19 preventing face-to-face contact using zoom still offered a more personal setting, allowing for a personal line of questioning to be used and offered some form of a visual representative of how the person being interviewed was

feeling when answering the questions. This still allowed for some form of connection to be formed between the person being interviewed and the researcher, despite it being a little less personal. A problem that did arise was Wi-Fi and signal connection issues. Using a social platform and having load-shedding being implemented at random times within South Africa, the signal did drop which affected the audio and visual of the interview. This meant some answers were missed or broken up.

The aim of this research was to understand what influences the students' perspectives on the different factors that can motivate them personally to pursue their studies and successfully pass their 3rd year, using in-depth semi structured interviews. Thematic analysis was used, due to not having a suggested line of questioning. Due to motivation being a very personal topic, allowing the researcher to ask the participant to give further detail to their answer was important as this lead to important information and depth being given. Having some form of structure was important as this gave guidance, ensured time was kept short, and ensured that there was not too many questions asked.

3.5.2. Data collection application

1. The researcher first messaged a known third year university student in the specific private institution of higher education being looked at for this particular study. Through this individual numbers were given out to the researcher of 4 other known university students.
2. A Whatsapp message was sent to each individual within the interview. This message explained who the researcher is, how the researcher got into contact with the individual, and explained the reason for the message. A message was posed at the end asking whether the individual is willing to participate in the study, and if the social platform Zoom was ideal for the individual.
3. Based off of the responses further information was given. This either was a "thank-you for your time" response or a "please can your email be sent in order for the consent form to be sent", and a further explanation of what was expected of the individual was given. This was instructions such as "you will be asked a number of questions and all

that is needed is an honest answer. There is no right or wrong answer and thus there is no pressure”.

4. Once the email was sent and the recipient had it, a time was set up for a zoom call, based off of what was convenient for the recipient.
5. Before any zoom call was conducted the researcher made sure that all consent forms were sent back and completed.
6. Once the interview started the researcher introduced herself, made sure to get consent to record the interview and explained who would have access to the recordings- the researcher, her supervisor and possibly another faculty member-, made sure the interviewee was aware of the aim of the study, explained again what was expected of the interviewee, and then asked if there was any questions before further conducting the interview.
7. 13 questions in total were asked to each interviewee, and based on their response further elaborations were asked to be given. If it was seen that the interviewee was a bit lost for words, nervous or did not have an answer the researcher would make a joke, further explain or give examples.
8. As each answer was given the researcher wrote down notes, engaged in the participant and their answer, and kept a friendly and open facial expression at all times.
9. Once all the questions were asked the researcher ended off the interview with: thanking the person for their time, asking whether the person would like to know the results from the study, letting them know that at any time if they have any queries or questions they can contact the researcher, and that at any point the individual is able to say they do not want to be part of the study and all of their information, responses and so on will be removed from the study and nothing will be held against them.
10. The interviews then were transcribed, problems arose when there were Wi-Fi connection problems or the person mumbled as it made it hard to hear.

3.6. Data analysis

3.6.1. Data analysis method

Thematic analysis was used. This is a method that interprets, identifies and analyses themes known as the patterns of meanings conducted through your data (Braun & Clarke, 2016). This method was used as it is a flexible method that can be adapted to the purpose of the study. Due to the interview not having set guidelines and only suggestions this will be the correct method (Braun & Clarke, 2016). This is a good research method in which you aim to figure out more from a collection of observational evidence, such as interview transcripts, social media accounts, or survey results, about people's attitudes, beliefs, expertise, perceptions or values (Braun & Clarke, 2016). The purpose of this study was to understand what motivated the five interviewees. This was conducted through interviews and the analysis was performed on their interview transcripts. This study was based on the individuals' beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, values, and expertise in what they believed motivation was, and how it was implemented in their life. This means it was based off of the collection of observational evidence, which is the purpose of thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis has six phases; familiarisation, coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2016). The familiarisation phase, is when an in-depth understanding of previous studies has been conducted (Braun & Clarke, 2016). The researcher conducted further investigation onto the topic at hand, and made notes of initial analytical observations that were important for this study. In relation to the research question it is a systematic process that emphasises features of the documents; which was known as the coding phase. Grouping of similar data started to occur here (Braun & Clarke, 2016). The researcher looked through different data and compared findings to one another. In the searching for themes phase, codes were clustered together that produced a reasonable plotting of key arrangements in data (Braun & Clarke, 2016). This meant the researcher needed to understand what codes were important for the research. The reviewing themes phase was making sure the themes that were discovered were appropriate for the entire data set and coded data, creating a distinct central organising concept (Braun & Clarke, 2016). Defining and naming themes phase consisted of defining themes in a short summary of the theme, and creating a name for the summary as a whole, which created clarity

about the concept so that it is easy to follow during the final write-up (Braun & Clarke, 2016). Writing the report was the last phase which was the completion of the researcher's analytical account and persuasive data extract, creating a framework for the examination and forming a logical conclusion across all the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2016).

3.6.2. Data analysis application

Thematic analysis has six phases; familiarisation, coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing the report

Familiarisation: The first step was to get to know the data that has been collected, and before evaluating the individual pieces it was essential to have a detailed overview of all the data gathered (Caulfield, 2019). This was directed through understanding the aim of the research topic and figuring out which questions needed to be asked to answer the research question. Once this was completed (the list of questions), interviews via Zoom were conducted. Once completed the recordings were transcribed. This resulted in making basic notes, and going through the data collected to get familiar with it. Throughout the interview notes were taken by the researcher about how the person responded (important body languages) and their answers given. The interviews were recorded allowing for a transcription to be made for each interview, which could be revised. This is important in qualitative research because it is essential the researcher is heavily involved in the data collection method, as this familiarity with the participants' aids in the credibility of the interpretation of the data (Koonin, 2018).

Coding: Next was coding the information. Coding involved marking parts of the document – typically phrases or sentences – and defining their meaning with shorthand marks or "scripts" (Caulfield, 2019). Once transcribing all the interviews this was made possible. Words or sentences that were deemed important and were constantly brought up were highlighted, grouping colours by the same ideas. The researcher highlighted the various phrases that corresponded to different codes in various colours (Caulfield, 2019). That

code represented the emotion or concept conveyed in that section of the language. The researcher made sure to be comprehensive at this stage: the researcher went over the transcript of each and every interview and highlighted something that stands out as important or informative. The researcher also considered new codes as she went over the text, as well as highlighted all the words and phrases that match those codes (Caulfield, 2019). This was often in the form of finding reoccurring topics. When a question was asked and the answer provided gave specific steps such as; having a schedule for example, it was highlighted as this was important in the individual's motivation.

Searching for themes: The codes that were developed were looked at, and then similarities within them were defined, this allowed for the start of creating themes. Themes are broader than codes, in general. The researcher merged multiple codes into one common word (Caulfield, 2019). Around this point, she concluded that any of the codes that are too ambiguous or insufficiently applicable (for example, since they don't occur in the data too often), can be discarded. Certain codes also became subjects in their own right (Caulfield, 2019). Yet again, what she concluded was dependent from what she sought to figure out. The aim was to build possible patterns that tell the researcher and reader something meaningful about what motivates third year students. This was conducted through finding similar answers amongst the interviewees. When similar words kept appearing throughout the transcribes, it was noted, as a pattern started to emerge about what certain individuals had implemented into their life to ensure they passed their third year. This created themes.

Reviewing themes: The researcher insured the concepts were effective and that reliable data was represented. This meant reviewing the data collection and contrasting the concepts established to it (Caulfield, 2019). The researcher asked herself three questions to ensure this was the case: What was missing? Are there really those themes in the data? What should be done to enhance the functioning of the themes? The researcher went through the data again, and made sure nothing important was missed. The themes were then reviewed to ensure they accurately represented the data collected.

Defining and naming themes: Now that there are a full set of patterns, it was time to name and describe any one. Defining themes involved generating with each theme precisely what was being implied, and finding out how it allowed the researcher to interpret the details (Caulfield, 2019). The researcher then labelled the themes, which meant having a concise name for each theme which was readily understood. This was finding themes that were common, grouping them together under one name that could represent them all.

Writing the report: The final step was to write down the data review. Writing up a thematic review like other scholarly texts includes an introduction to define the study issue, objectives and method (Caulfield, 2019). The researcher also included a segment on research methods, described how the data was gathered (in this research it was through semi-structured interviews) and explain how the thematic analysis itself was conducted. The results or conclusions segment discussed each topic in turn. They explained how much and when the trends showed up, using details from the data as proof. Finally, the conclusion outlined the key takeaways, which reveals how the study query was addressed by the review.

4. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

Based on five interviews, which sought to find answers to the research question: “What are the factors that impact the motivation of 3rd year student’s to pursue their studies and successfully pass?”, three themes emerged: (1) Motivating factors, (2) demotivating/ distracting factors, and (3) the role of support structures, organisations and hard work. Themes have been identified from the interviews in order to better understand what keeps 3rd year students motivated to keep studying and to pass their modules well. These themes will be used to explore the true motives behind why students study, to explain how to motivate future students over a period of time, to describe the methods they have used to become and stay motivated, and to discover new practical ways in helping students to want to pass with good marks.

Theme 1: Motivating factors

When looking at motivation the factors are important to consider as they contribute to the individuals' true motives for studying. These factors are often the reasons behind why the person is studying in the first place, and what pushes them to succeed over time. Four subthemes were identified for this theme. These factors have shown what has motivated these 5 participants to study and to pass well are external rewards (Cherry, 2019). The Achievement Motivation theory states that a person's needs are influenced by extrinsic factors or internal drives (Souders, 2020). A degree is viewed as having power and affiliation, which increases the individual's motives to study. This will also increase their self-esteem. This response is in line with Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs theory which states that people's motivations are to generate their wants, desires, and strivings that tend to maintain the promotion of growth, well-being and life (Souders, 2020). This contributes to the objective behind what the true motives for students' studies are. Based on the findings, it seems clear that each participant views a degree as being a way to go forward in life which will increase their growth. All participants' aim to have a job and a steady income as this can be due to having an insecurity about living in South Africa, and the stigma behind not having a degree.

Motivation for each individual is very important and is needed when trying to accomplish your goals, meet deadlines and doing better than before (Souders, 2020). This can be seen through the words of participant 1 who says motivation is "easy to get but hard to maintain therefore you need to form habits and become self-disciplined" (Participant 1, field notes, 2020). Participant 2 says "without motivation you battle to accomplish your goals" (Participant 2, field notes, 2020). Participant 4 uses motivational videos to help inspire him to get motivated and to remind him of the passion he once had for his degree (Participant 4, field notes, 2020). Each participant failed at least two subjects during the course of their studies and this was due to a lack of accountability, many did not attend lectures, there was a lack of motivation, their mind-set was not great, and there were issues with the lecturer which resulted in majority of the class failing. The above answers contribute towards the research question, as through understanding why each participant failed, they are not able to understand why their motivation was lacking. A lot of students assume university is going to be easy and because of movies assume that partying is part of the student life. This often results in failure as the students are not held accountable

and end up dropping out because they no longer can keep up, this can be contributing factors to failing.

The questions asked were to encourage the individuals to assess and reevaluate what matters to them personally, such as their values which are driven by their motivation (Kukreja, 2020). By understanding what keeps the individual motivated it allows the researcher to understand the reason for studying. This links to the objective of exploring 'the true motives behind why students study.' A sub-theme that emerged is a 'better job or salary' of 'motivating factors'. Participants 1 and 3 are the first individuals within their family to work towards their degree; this has motivated them to accomplish this in order to make their family proud. All the participants view getting a degree as being a solid foundation needed to accomplish a higher lifestyle, getting a better salary and having better job opportunities. "By getting your degree you are higher up on the selection sheet for a job, and you can become something more" (Participant 3, field notes, 2020). "Without a degree you will not be able to obtain a job" (Participant 5, field notes, 2020).

Another sub-theme of 'motivating factors' is 'getting a dream job'. When asking each participant what the consequences for not obtaining their degree would be each said that they would not be able to get a job. Participant 1 studies are sponsored and if she had to fail it would result in her having to pay back the money for her degree, and emotionally she would feel set back and as if she has disappointed her parents. Participants 2 to 5 expressed how they would not be able to go into their dream jobs as they would not be qualified to do so. This links to previous research as the research has stated that it lowers self-esteem which would negatively affect students' views on studying increasing the difficulty of trying again. This is due to optimism being a key factor in self-regulation and overall academic achievement (Human-Vogel, 2006).

When you are in third year your motivation shifts because you no longer have a few years left you are in your last year (Kukreja, 2020). This can be seen as the participants of this study are motivated to become more dedicated with regards to their studies as they know they are so close to being done. They also do not want to be left behind and watch their fellow classmates move on with their lives while they

have to repeat a year. “When I was in my first and second year I was not as motivated due to knowing I had a few years to go, but being in third year has motivated me to finish my degree as I no longer had more time” (Participant 1, field note, 2020). It can be said that graduation is an additional motivating factor for the participants. This links to the objective on ‘how motivation is kept over a period of time’ for third year students.

Theme 2: Demotivating/ distracting factors

When asked what can sabotage the participants motivation all expressed how technology has played a huge factor in this. All participants felt that they had a lot to do in their daily lives such as: family obligations, chores around the house, lack of sleep, and a lot of varsity work had to get done. Finding time to study was not always easy, and a few said that the lecturers were not always available to help or were not very committed to their lectures, working hard did not always result in good marks which lead to disappointment, lack of internet connection has led to irritation, and friends could become a distraction. It is easy to have a new sense of freedom and to take advantage of it, which often results in studies falling behind.

As they were all experiencing lockdown and no longer had a social life in regards to seeing friends, social media became a very important factor in each of their lives, which has led to procrastination. “Social media became a big distraction for me as I no longer could see my friends” (Participant 1, field note, 2020). The increase of computer time has also led to them each feeling overwhelmed when having to do assignments, tests and exams. “I started to develop a mental block when it came to using my computer due to frequently having to use it” (Participant 5, field note, 2020). This shows how technology and other distractions were big factors in decreasing motivation. Maslow’s (1943) theory states that people’s motivations are to generate their wants, desires, and strivings that tend to maintain the promotion of growth, well-being and life. If the individual chooses to watch YouTube videos over studying this expresses where their desires lie (Souders, 2020).

Theme 3: The role of support structures, organisations, and hard work

How the participants have tried to overcome these challenges is by setting daily goals for themselves, and to remind themselves why they started in the first place. "Being disciplined in all aspects of your life is important such as your physical and mental health, and having a routine is vital to success" (Participant 5, field notes, 2020). Participant 2 believes you need to "re-establish your goals, drives and attributes" (Participant 2, field notes, 2020). He also believes that when a person feels overwhelmed with all the tasks he or she needs to accomplish they need to prioritise and eliminate factors that are not important (Participant 2, field notes, 2020). Each participant believes healthy habits need to be implemented into a person's life. These habits include drinking water, exercising, having a timetable made, waking up early and getting some fresh air daily is vital to remain consistent when studying. What keeps the individual going is getting their degree and making their family proud. The above answers contribute to achieving the objective on describing the methods students have used to become and stay motivated, as it is clear that 3RD year students recognise that hard work and consistency is required in order to be motivated.

A sub-theme is the 'usefulness of creating a schedule'. As all of the participants being interviewed were experiencing lockdown due to Covid-19, they all expressed how their discipline has needed to increase as they no longer were able to physically go to campus but now had online classes. Each participant said that they had to implement a schedule when it came to their studies as this allowed for them to feel as if they are accomplishing things and gave them each a bit of normality.

'Importance of friends and family' is another sub-theme. Participants 2 to 5 reported on having a close family that motivates the individual to succeed and supports him or her in all that they do. Participant 1 feels as though her family has been more of a distraction due to the expectations and fighting at home (Participant 1, field notes, 2020). All participants reported having close friends that keep each other accountable with regards to assignments and studying, and also reminds each other when things are due ensuring everyone is on top of their work. "My friends are important as we push each other to study and excel" (Participant 5, field notes, 2020). Each individual also has a way of resting and rewarding themselves for all their hard work this includes: watching a movie or series, going out with friends when

it was not lockdown, bake, reward themselves with food, and spend time with family. This can be linked to previous research that says achievement can come from a person's social environment and socialising influences (Souders, 2020). A contributing factor is also what standards of excellence each individual's parents have expressed (Souders, 2020). If the individual finds his or her friends being good influences then they are more likely to achieve in their studies.

'Consistency and hard-work' are essential. Advice third year students have for a younger student is to have a balance, you have a new sense of freedom but this does not mean you must abuse this power and exploit it. They need to be consistent in their work ethics from year 1. The individual needs to remember to enjoy studying, as it is time they never will get back, and healthy habits need to be incorporated into their life to promote the health of their mind, body and spirit as these are what will ensure success. The advice answers to the objection on 'discovering new practical ways in helping students to want to pass with good marks but implementing practical methods into their daily life.' This is made evident as the third-year students are aware of how important having a healthy balance in the individual's life is vital to their success in their studies. This balance needs to be between their studies, friends, family and their own personal time.

The majority of the participants are studying as they want to get a job or accomplish their dream job. The participants believe having healthy habits, goals and consistency with regards to studying is very important to remain motivated and to pass well. These participants have integrated a routine or schedule into their life in order to become and stay motivated and use rewards to treat themselves when a task is completed. The participants believe that having a passion for what you do is very important as this will always remind you why you started your degree and push you when you are not motivated.

5. TRUSTWORTHINESS OF FINDINGS

In qualitative research trustworthiness is to encourage comprehension within a specific context of a single phenomenon and not to generalize findings to a larger community (Koonin, 2018). Trustworthiness is made up of four elements: (1) Credibility; (2) Transferability; (3) Dependability; and (4) Confirmability. Credibility applies to the precision with which the investigator analysed the evidence generated

by the participants. Credibility is strengthened from the viewpoint of the participants when the conclusions are trustworthy (Koonin, 2018). Transferability is the ability to adapt the findings to a comparable scenario and to achieve identical outcomes. In a method that does not lend itself to generalised results, this will allow for generalisation (Koonin, 2018). Dependability refers to the consistency of the integration process that takes place between the system of data processing, interpretation of data and the hypothesis produced by the data (Koonin, 2018). Confirmability refers to how much the gathered evidence matches the researcher's conclusions and analysis. Others who look at the facts need to come to similar conclusions as the investigator did (Koonin, 2018).

In this study the researcher ensured that all information reported was the truth and came directly from the participants and data. With regards to credibility the findings of this study are transferable as motivation is a constant need in any area of a person's life, not just with regards to studying. Credibility can also be enhanced through more time spent with the participant, and to get their interpretation on what the researcher has said. By understanding what motivates a person, or what maintains their drive by looking at the common themes within this research will allow it to be transferrable in other areas. In terms of dependability all information and data received by participants and along with all steps on how the research was conducted, will be easily explained and presented. With regards to confirmability, all results and data presented are based on the results received from the interviews conducted, and not the researchers own wording which can lead to biases.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1. Summary of findings as they relate to the research question, problem, hypotheses or objectives

This study has answered the question “what are the factors that impact the motivation of 3rd year student's to pursue their studies and successfully pass?” This question is answered through understanding what influence a student's perspective on the different factors that can motivate an individual personally to pursue their studies and successfully pass their 3rd year.

Through semi-structured interviews, questions were asked that were directed at trying to identify the contributing factors to the individual's motivation; good or bad. Three themes came about: theme 1: motivating factors; theme 2: demotivating/distracting factors; theme 3: the role of support structures, organisations, and hard work.

The 'true motives behind why students were studying' (objective 1) was due to wanting to either reach their dream jobs or because they wanted to actually be able to get a job and earn a decent salary. Most of the participants did not want to disappoint their parents and this resulted in them working harder. The 'advice given from the participants to students' (objective 2) is to remember why they started studying, and to do something they love as this will keep them motivated especially when a subject is hard. The 'methods the students have implemented in their lives to stay motivated' (objective 3) are timetables. They plan out their weeks to ensure they get all their varsity work and attend classes. This allows them time to also plan their social lives. They also believe you need to reward yourself after you have accomplished a task, how this was done was dependent on the individual. These themes have shown having a good social support system is essential in keeping the individual motivated. Through the data received one is able to identify 'practical methods to implement in his or her life in order to ensure motivation is consistent in a person's studies, to make sure that passing and well is accomplished' (objective 4).

6.2. Anticipated contribution of the study (Implications of findings)

This study has provided practical ways students can improve their motivational levels with regards to their studies. This will improve the pass rates in universities as the tools needed to understand what motivation is, how it contributes to a person's life, and how to stay motivated despite feeling tired after a few years of studying can be learnt. This study will contribute positively towards the educational field, as universities and lecturers are now able to understand what factors are vital to their students' motivational levels, and can teach them how to push themselves despite feeling drained. Despite being a very personal subject, this study has identified certain aspects that are important to maintaining consistency across the individuals studying years. The individual should have a schedule, but also should have a passion for what he or she is studying, as this will positively impact the individual

when he or she struggling to feel motivated. By understanding what motivation is and how vital it is to studies, the university can implement a course on motivation to help students excel in their studies.

6.3. *Ethical considerations*

A consent form was given out and all information is private if participants want to remain anonymous (Creswell et al., 2020). Informed consent was given by each participant to conduct a video call via zoom, along with permission to record each person via video and audio (Creswell et al., 2020). The consent form was received before any interview was conducted. All participants' were made aware of their rights, and knew they could pull out of the study at any time and none of their information would be used. The researcher was granted permission through ethical clearance before research was conducted from the private institute in which the participants' were approached (Creswell et al., 2020). No harm came to any participant within this study. No data obtained for this research was manipulated in any way (Creswell et al., 2020). All participants' within this study are anonymous and none of their personal information has been added to this study. All research is transparent and no falsified results are presented as facts (Shenton, 2004). A professional relationship was kept with the participants throughout the study ensuring it was unbiased as far as possible (Shenton, 2004). The researcher admits that there will always be their own predisposition that could affect the results but as far as possible has not let that affect the outcomes (Shenton, 2004).

6.4. *Limitations of the study*

- A small sample size was used (5 participants), which means the results cannot be generalised. It is a homogenous sample of individuals around the same age, thus it cannot represent the whole population. Data saturation was not achieved with this sample size.
- This research was conducted at one university which is a private institute, which means the participants are generally all privileged.
- Everyone in this research paper had failed their third year and are repeating certain subjects.

- Due to COVID-19 the interviews needed to be conducted over Zoom (a social platform), which resulted in a loss of connection when the Wi-Fi signal dropped. This meant some information was lost due to being cut-off, or the video paused and the question had to be asked again.
- Each individual in the study was studying the same subject.
- Due to being a once off interview and having limited time together, the credibility of this research is not very high.
- It was not a face-to-face interview which lost some of the personal element of conducting an interview. This means some body language and facial expressions were lost.

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8. ANNEXURES

8.1. Annexure A – Consent Form

Annexure: INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

To whom it may concern,

My name is Cherize Dionisio and I am a student at the IIE Varsity College in Sandton, I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Dr John Hunter, about exploring the motivation behind studying towards a degree based off of third year students using interviews. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of This research will contribute towards the educational field, universities and lecturers by helping them to understand what will help motivate student's to excel in varsity. This research hopes to help increase pass rates as third year students can be given the tools needed to understand how they motivate themselves when they are tired; and thus can learn how to push themselves when they need to get their work done and may not feel like it and pass their modules well.

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 this will help further student's as well as yourself to understand what motivates you as an individual and gives you insight into what drives you. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to conduct an interview with you. This will be a once off interview, where a number of questions will be asked. I would only require you to be honest with me,

and if you feel uncomfortable answering the question you won't be forced to. Please note the interview will be recorded.

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 drives, inspirations and motivations, that may remind you why you started studying and drive you to complete your third year. 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 transcribe (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:

Cherize Dionisio

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:
Dr John Hunter

Consent form for participants

I, [REDACTED] agree to participate in the research conducted by Cherize Dionisio about exploring the motivation behind studying for a degree: a cross sectional, qualitative study on third year students using interviews.

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

1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
3. 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.
4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
5. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Signature

Date

Consent form for audio-recording/ video recording

I, [REDACTED], agree to allow Cherize Dionisio to audio record my interviews as part of the research about exploring the motivation behind studying for a degree: a cross sectional, qualitative study on third year students using interviews.

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

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

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Signature

Date

8.2. Annexure B – Interview Schedule/Questionnaire

Introduction:

Greet.

Make the person who is being interviewed aware that the interview will be recorded and make sure you have their consent.

Explain to them what my research is about and the aim of the study, to ensure they are properly educated.

Explain to them who will have access to the recordings.

Begin with the questions.

Questions:

- 1.) What are your reasons for wanting to study and get your degree?
- 2.) What actions have you already implemented into your daily life to insure you pass and get your degree?
- 3.) What do you believe the consequences of not getting your degree would be, include not being motivated?
- 4.) What do you believe stops or reduces your motivation?
- 5.) What struggles or barriers do you believe may lead to sabotaging your motivation towards studying?
- 6.) How do you believe you can overcome these obstacles?
- 7.) What habits are you aware of that can increase your motivation levels and that you can create to increase your motivation?

- 8.) What do you believe can help remind you to stay motivated, such as a tangible reminder?
- 9.) What support structure do you have in place already? Do you believe this structure contributes positively or negatively towards your studies? Can you please elaborate if possible?
- 10) When you have accomplished a task, how do you reward yourself?
- 11) What is your viewpoint on motivation?
- 12) Have you failed any subjects and had to redo them? If this is the case what do you believe the reasoning is for this? What has motivated you to pass the subject the second time around?
- 13) What advice would you give first year students studying towards a degree to stay motivated?

Conclusion:

Thank the person for their time.

Explain to them that if they would like the results of the study they can ask.

Let them know that they can contact me at any point in time for queries or questions.

They are also able to withdraw from the study at any point and their information will not be used at all.

8.3. Annexure C – Ethical Clearance Letter



29 July 2020

Student name: Cherize Dionisio

Student number: 17569122

Campus: IIE's Varsity College Sandton

Re: Approval of Honours in Psychology Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS/PGDIP 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.

There are some aspects that you still need to address in your proposal. You will need to address these aspects in consultation with your supervisor before you may proceed (see below):

Please discuss with your supervisor/navigator/lecturer how you will address these issues listed below:

Please note: Your fieldwork may only proceed once you address the following issues:

- Please make all the changes suggested/recommended by your supervisor.

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

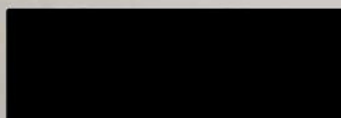
Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

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.

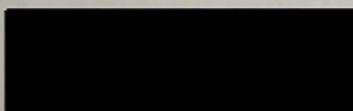
Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

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.
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: Dr John Hunter



Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC):



JENNA-LEE RAMNARAIN

8.5. Annexure E – Originality Report

8.6 Annexure F- Final Research Report Summary Document Template

Research Purpose/Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/Sources	Literature Review-Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Anticipated Findings	Reference
Exploring the motivation behind studying for a degree: a cross sectional, qualitative study on third year students using interviews.	To understand what influences student's perspectives on the different factors that can motivate them personally to pursue their studies and successfully pass their 3 rd year?	This research will be used by universities as motivation has been proved to increase pass rates, decrease student's stress levels increasing their health and well-being, along with	McClelland (1953) Maslow's (1943)	Theme 1: Motives. Theme 2: Dissatisfaction Theme 3: Achievement. Theme 4: Power. Theme 5: Affiliation. Theme 6: Self-esteem. Theme 7: Reputation.	Paradigm: Interpretive Epistemology: Inter-subjective epistemology Ontology: Reality is subjective to people's experiences specific to the external world, thus can lead to the adaption of inter-subjective epistemology and ontological	Qualitative Population Population Parameters: Third year students studying towards a degree.	In-depth interview.	A consent form. Research will be granted permission before research is conducted. Harm will be avoided that may be inflicted on students within my study. No data	This study expects to find different ways in which students are motivated through the use of interviews. By asking generally questions and then based off of their answers going into more detail and asking them to elaborate,	(Ackerman, 2020); (Alkassim, Etikan, & Musa, 2016); (Arenliu et al., 2014); (Bashir, 2008); (Bergner, 2011); (Braun, & Clarke, 2016); (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020); (Caulfield, 2019); (Cavanaugh, Kail, & Muller, 2019); (Cherry, 2019); (Collins, 2020); (Creswell et al., 2020); (Dan, & Elegba, 2017); (DeFranzo, 2011); (Diaz et al., 2019); (Doyle, 2020);

		giving them a better chance of finding a career.		Theme 8: Satisfaction. Theme 9: Fulfilment.	beliefs. Axiology: There is no objective knowledge as meaning and knowledge are created through interpretation			within my research will be manipulated.	using a cross-sectional qualitative study.	(Farnsworth, 2018); (Ferlazzo, 2015); (Govender, 2012); (Guillen-Royo, 2014); (Hopper, 2020); (Human-Vogel, 2006); (Koonin, 2018); (Koseoglu, 2013); (Kukreja, 2020); (Kumar, 2011); (Kurebwa, Wadesango, & Wedhe, 2017); (Lexico, 2020); (Macmillian, 2020); (McLeod, 2019); (Meier, 2016); (Miner, 2005); (Shenton, 2004); (Sin, 2018); (Sinha, Stults-Kolehmainen, & Tuit, 2014); (Souders, 2020); (Sue-Wah-Sing, 2017); (Tjonneland, 2017); (Trochim, 2020); (Webster, 2020); (Writer, 2019).
Research Problem	Secondary Questions/ Hypotheses / Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Sampling	Data Analysis Method(s)	Limitations	Anticipated Contribution	

Students are not always motivated to keep studying and become tired when they reach their 3 rd year of studies. How to motivate themselves may not be known, which can lead to discouragement leading to failure and decreasing pass rates.	What influences student's perspectives on the different factors that can motivate them personally to pursue their studies and successfully pass their 3 rd year?	Motivation Influence Fulfilment Satisfaction Needs Behaviour Students	McClelland's achievement motivation theory. Maslow's theory of the hierarchy needs.			Non-probability. Sampling method: Purposive sampling methods-snowballing sampling. Size: 5 Students.	Unit of Analysis: People. Data Analysis Method(s): Thematic analysis.	Results cannot be generalised to all students. Data can be biased as only one university is being used. A private university is being used therefore more of an advantage. Students may feel stress and find that they do not have enough time to fill out this questionnaire.	This research will contribute towards the educational field, universities and lecturers by helping them to understand what will help motivate student's to excel in university.	
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