



The transition to living in a university residence: first year students' perceptions in this regard.

A [minor] dissertation submitted in [partial] fulfilment of the requirements for
the award of the degree of
MASTERS IN CLINICAL SOCIALWORK

By

Carima Adams

(BHRCAR002)

Supervisor: Fatima Williams

Department of Social Work & Social Development

Faculty of Humanities

University of Cape Town

2023

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

1. I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and pretend that it is my own.
2. I have used the HARVARD/UCT referencing guide for citation and referencing. Each contribution to, and quotation in this research from the work(s) of other people has been contributed and has been cited and referenced.
3. This research is my own work and has not been previously submitted in part or whole for the award of my degree.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow anyone to copy my work.

Signature:

Signed by candidate

Date:

16 December 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the guidance and support of many people, whom without this study would not have been possible. I would like to thank:

The participants in this study; your bravery in sharing your stories with me was so inspiring. The ability to leave home and thrive in a new environment shows so much resilience and this has inspired me to continue my work at the university.

Fatima Williams, my supervisor, for her unwavering commitment to my research even in times when I worried I wouldn't complete it. I felt that her patience and support has guided me and helped me learn the language of research – a language, which was foreign to me up until now.

Daniel Munene, the warden of one of the residences, for assisting me so greatly with my research. When I feared I would not find participants, he encouraged me and assisted me with this process. I feel that this study won't have been possible without his support.

The Department of Student Affairs at UCT for granting me access to the students in the residences and being patient with all the forms and protocols that needed to be completed. I hope that the findings can contribute to the wonderful work that they do with students in residences.

The research assistants, who worked around the clock to ensure I had enough participants for my study. Your commitment to the project meant a great deal to me and I am forever grateful.

My husband, for always believing in me and for being patient with the research process. It takes a village to raise a child, but it also takes one to complete a postgraduate degree and my husband was my village.

ABSTRACT

This study explored first year students' perceptions of the transition to living in a university residence at the University of Cape Town. It explored the positive and challenging aspects of adjusting to living in a residence as well as what support participants had received with this transition. Participants made recommendations to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence and to incoming first year students with regards to managing the transition to residence living.

The research was conducted using a qualitative approach, more specifically an exploratory design. Nineteen participants who were first year students and had moved into a residence were purposively selected. They were interviewed online and in-person using a semi-structured interview schedule. The data obtained were analysed using qualitative methods.

The findings of this study highlighted the experiences that first year students had when adjusting to residence life. Positive aspects in their transition were the convenience that residence offered, being independent and having freedom, flourishing, and having a roommate. Challenges included loneliness, catering in residences, the schedule of the residences and living with others. Areas of support that participants identified that assisted with their transition to residence were support from sub-wardens, mentors, and peers.

Participants made recommendations to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence and this included improvements in the residence and increased support for students. Participants recommended that incoming first year students who are moving into a residence should make use of support services, prioritise their studies and focus on their self-development. Further recommendations were made to The Department of Student Affairs at UCT and recommendations for future research are included.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION.....	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	II
ABSTRACT.....	III
LIST OF TABLES	IX

CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM FORMULATION	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	1
1.3 Problem context.....	3
1.4 Rationale/ significance of this study.....	3
1.5 Research topic	5
1.6 Main research questions	5
1.7 Main assumptions.....	6
1.8 Research objectives	6
1.9 Clarification of concepts.....	6
1.10 Main ethical considerations	7
<i>1.10.1 Avoidance of harm.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>1.10.2 Privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>1.10.3 Informed consent</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>1.10.4 Deception of respondents.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>1.10.5 The actions and competence of the researcher</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>1.10.6 Publication of findings.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>1.10.7 Debriefing of respondents</i>	<i>10</i>
1.11 Reflexivity.....	10
1.12 Structure of the dissertation	12
1.13 Conclusion	12

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW	13
2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Theoretical frameworks	13
2.2.1 <i>Ecological Systems Theory</i>	13
2.2.2 <i>Schlossberg's Transition Theory</i>	16
2.3. Policies pertaining to the study	19
2.3.1 <i>The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 (2009)</i>	19
2.3.2 <i>The Higher Education Act (Higher Education Act, No. 101 of 1997) and The National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa (Department of Education [DOE], 2001)</i>	20
2.3.3 <i>The Policy on the Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Housing at Public Universities (2015) as part of The Higher Education Act 1997 (Act no. 101 of 1997) ..</i>	22
2.4 The transition to university	23
2.4.1 <i>Positive aspects of transition to university</i>	23
2.4.1.1 Flourishing.....	23
2.4.1.2 Developing new peer relationships	24
2.4.2 <i>Challenges of transition to university</i>	25
2.4.2.1 Meeting academic demands	25
2.4.2.2 Accessing university support services	25
2.5 Life in residence	26
2.5.1 <i>The positives of living in residence</i>	26
2.5.1.1 The role of roommates	26
2.5.1.2 Acquiring independence.....	27
2.1.5.3 Convenience offered by residences.....	28
2.5.2 <i>The challenges of living in residence</i>	28
2.5.2.1 Loneliness.....	28
2.5.2.2 Food insecurity – catering	29
2.5.2.3 Mental health challenges	30
2.5.2.4 Cleanliness of the residence	31
2.6 Support mechanisms assisting students with the transition to university and residences	32
2.6.1 <i>Support from university</i>	32
2.6.1.1 Mentor programmes	32

2.6.1.2 Support from staff	33
2.6.2 <i>Social support</i>	33
2.6.2.1 Support from families	33
2.6.2.2 Social media	34
2.7 Conclusion	35

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY.....	36
3.1 Introduction.....	36
3.2 Research approach and design	36
3.3 Population and sampling.....	38
3.3.1 <i>Sampling technique</i>	38
3.3.2 <i>Sampling characteristics</i>	39
3.3.3 <i>Sampling procedure</i>	39
3.4 Data collection approach	40
3.4.1 <i>Data collection method</i>	40
3.4.2 <i>Data collection tool</i>	41
3.4.3 <i>Data recording</i>	41
3.5 Data analysis	42
3.6 Data Verification	43
3.6.1 <i>Credibility</i>	43
3.6.2 <i>Transferability</i>	43
3.6.3 <i>Dependability</i>	44
3.6.4 <i>Conformability</i>	44
3.7 Limitations of the study.....	44
3.7.1 <i>Research design</i>	44
3.7.2 <i>Sample size</i>	45
3.7.3 <i>Researcher’s bias</i>	45
3.7.4 <i>Data collection</i>	45
3.7.5 <i>Data analysis</i>	45
3.8 Conclusion	46

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS	47
4.1 Introduction.....	47
4.2 Demographic Profile of Participants	47
4.3 Presentation of Findings	48
4.3.1 <i>Theme 1: The benefits of living at a residence.</i>	48
4.3.1.1 <i>Residence offers convenience.</i>	48
(i) Proximity to campus and amenities	49
(ii) Services offered by the residence	50
4.3.1.2 Independence and freedom.....	51
4.3.1.3 <i>Flourishing</i>	52
4.3.1.4 <i>Having a roommate</i>	53
4.3.2 <i>Theme 2: The challenges of living at a residence.</i>	54
4.3.2.1 <i>Loneliness</i>	54
4.3.2.2 <i>Catering</i>	55
4.3.2.3 <i>Residence schedule</i>	56
4.3.2.4 <i>Living with others</i>	57
4.3.3 <i>Theme 3: Support received by first year students living at a residence.</i>	58
4.3.3.1 <i>Support from sub-wardens</i>	58
4.3.3.2 <i>Support from mentors</i>	59
4.3.3.3 <i>Support from peers</i>	60
4.3.4 <i>Theme 4: To determine what recommendations would the participants make to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence.</i>	61
4.3.4.1 <i>Residence improvements</i>	61
(i) Improving catering	61
(ii) Improving the mentor programme	62
4.3.4.2 <i>Increased support for students</i>	62
4.3.5 <i>Theme 5: To determine what recommendations would the participants make to incoming first year students with regards to managing the transition to residence living.</i>	63
4.3.5.1 <i>Accessing support services</i>	64
4.3.5.2 <i>Prioritising studies</i>	65
4.3.5.3 <i>Focus on self.</i>	65
4.4 Conclusion	66

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	67
5.1 Introduction.....	67
5.2 Conclusions.....	67
5.2.1 <i>Objective One: To explore the participant's perceptions of the positive aspects of adjusting to living in a residence.</i>	67
5.2.2 <i>Objective two: To investigate the participant's perceptions of the challenging aspects of adjusting to living in a residence.</i>	68
5.2.3 <i>Objective three: To examine what support participants have received with the transition to living in a residence.</i>	68
5.2.4 <i>Objective four: To determine what recommendations would the participants make to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence.</i>	69
5.2.5 <i>Objective five: To determine what recommendations would the participants make to incoming first year students with regards to managing the transition to residence living.</i>	70
5.3 Recommendations	70
5.3.1 <i>Recommendations to the University of Cape Town</i>	70
5.3.2 <i>Recommendations for future research</i>	72
5.4 Conclusion	74
REFERENCES.....	75
APPENDIX A	94
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH	94
APPENDIX B	97
SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....	97

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Demographic of participants.....	47
Table 2: Framework of Analysis	48

CHAPTER ONE

Problem Formulation

1.1 Introduction

This study focuses on the experiences of South African first year university students' transition to residence and the first chapter introduces the study. The chapter provides the statement of the problem and the rationale of the study and will explain the research questions, main assumptions, and the research objectives. Furthermore, key concepts pertaining to this study will be clarified. The researcher paid special attention to the ethical considerations because data was collected during the COVID-19 pandemic and the ethical considerations are discussed. The researcher's reflexivity will also be elucidated. A structure of the dissertation is given followed by a summary to the chapter.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Black South Africans were forced to live in impoverished communities and had limited access to education under Apartheid and higher education in South Africa actively contributed to the political agenda and disadvantaged Black students. For example, these citizens were excluded from attending previously White universities (Vandeyar & Mohale, 2017; Maila & Ross, 2018). When South Africa became a democracy in 1994 changes were made to how higher education was structured (Matsolo, Ningpuanyeh & Susuman, 2018). These changes aimed to meet the needs of a democratic society by overcoming the discrimination of Apartheid, expanding access to Black students, and improving the quality of higher education in the country (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2013).

Previously disadvantaged students now have access to higher education but because these students often come from communities which are isolated geographically, they are unable to go to university (McMillan & Barrie, 2012; Pym & Kapp, 2013; Walker & Mathebula, 2020). Black students are further disadvantaged because they are not fluent in English, which is the predominant medium of instruction in South African universities (Jones et al., 2008; Bangeni et al., 2017).

Access to education in South Africa which was previously determined by race is now determined by class as well as geography (Graven, 2014; Higher Education South Africa [HESA], 2014; McKay, 2019). Many South African students come from schools where they

are not prepared for university. One reason for this is the articulation gap between schools and tertiary education (Mayet, 2016). The articulation gap can be defined as the difference between the requirements of higher education and the ability and knowledge of students entering higher education (Fataar, 2018). Although the number of students obtaining a bachelor's degree has doubled since 1996 (Statistics South Africa, 2016) the articulation gap between schools and tertiary education in South Africa still has an impact on Black students due to the teaching methods and lack of financial resources in Black schools (Mayet, 2016). The methods taught to Black students in high school cannot be applied at university and these students need to learn new ways of thinking, reading, writing and problem solving which means Black students enter university already at an academic disadvantage (Kapp et al., 2014; Pineteh, 2014; Fataar, 2018).

The COVID-19 pandemic emphasised the existing structural inequalities in South African higher education partly because universities had to migrate to online learning (Mpungose, 2020). Online learning led to students not only having to adjust to the academic requirements of higher education, but also needing to adjust to the new structure of learning online and not in-person as anticipated. Previously White-only universities had the infrastructure to implement online learning and teaching, but many less privileged universities did not. The class divide was further emphasised as students from privileged universities were able to successfully complete their academic year (Thaba-Nkadimene, 2020). Geographical and socio-economic challenges also were more evident as students in rural or impoverished areas battled with network coverage, internet access and access to electricity (Songca, Ndebele & Mbodila, 2021; van Schalkwyk, 2021).

As well as the macro factors mentioned above, students attend university to pursue a qualification that will prepare them for a career and an individuals' career maturity is influenced by race, even at an individual level. Career maturity occurs when an individual must learn to manage age-appropriate developmental tasks (Abe, Chikoko & Lubinga, 2021). While career maturity is a lifelong process, it is particularly relevant during adolescence (Grobler, Lacante & Gossen, 2017) and this is important to this research as the study focuses on first year students who are in the adolescent phase of development (Winter, 2014; Stokes, Schultz & Alpaslan, 2018). Career maturity, as a concept is contentious, as it is still too "westernised" and rooted in middle class ideals (Mudhovozi & Chireshe, 2012; Shumba & Naong, 2012; Watson, 2019). Career maturity must factor in the historical timeframe and the context of the

individual and should instead be defined as the ability to adapt to a career path as needed and the acknowledgement of contextual factors and the influence that they have on achieving this career (Albien & Naidoo, 2017).

Once an individual has made the decision to study, they then need to choose a particular university. If they select a university away from where they live, accommodation becomes a factor, and these individuals may decide to move into a residence.

1.3 Problem context

This study was conducted at residences at the University of Cape Town (UCT). UCT has 36 on-campus residences and is currently leasing three off-campus residences (Nofemela, personal communication, 2021, October 28). There are 16 residences that house first year students. First and second year students are accommodated in junior residences or what is known as first-tier residences. First-tier residences are all catering residences where food is provided (Nofemela, personal communication, 2021, October 28). The participants of this study lived in different residences as the focus of the study was not to explore the experiences within a specific residence.

1.4 Rationale/ significance of this study

Despite increased access, South Africa has one of the lowest higher education retention rates in the world with a dropout rate as high as 45% (Matsolo et al., 2018). This figure is higher for Black students and around 50% of Black students drop out primarily in their first year (Council on Higher Education [CHE], 2013; HESA, 2014; Pather & Dorasamy, 2018).

The first year of study is clearly the most challenging and the dropout rates in first year can be as high as one in four students, which means that universities must address the challenges that students face with the transition to university for dropout rates to decline (CHE, 2013; Pather & Dorasamy, 2018). A significant amount of research has been conducted around the difficulties that first year students face with the transition to university, including research that focuses on challenges with academic and social adjustment, high dropout rates, and a lack of psychosocial support and access to housing (Rensburg, 2011; Molotja, 2020; Walker & Mathebula, 2020). Students also find that the transition to university is far more challenging

than expected and this leads to students failing many of their subjects by the end of first year and not continuing to second year (McGhie, 2017).

Students from poorer communities have different needs than students from upper- or middle-class communities and require more assistance with adjusting to university (Rensburg, 2011; Walker & Mathebula, 2020). A review of the literature on South African higher education emphasises that most students entering university in South Africa are first generation students and their transition is even more challenging (Dykes & Green, 2015; McMillan, 2015; Liversage, Naudé & Botha, 2018). A first-generation student can be defined as a student whose parents have not completed a university degree (Stephens, Hamedani & Destin, 2014). These students face specific challenges including being unprepared for university and needing more assistance to achieve results at the same level as non-first-generation students (Stephens, Hamedani & Destin, 2014).

Some reasons for this include that several Black families may not have the knowledge or experience of what tertiary education entails and thus cannot guide children around the opportunities offered by tertiary education. These families are not au fait with what is required to apply to university, how to apply for admission, funding, and accommodation or what to expect once accepted (Chetty, Pather & Condy, 2015; Walker & Mathebula, 2020). Due to the inability of the families to assist, some Black students who enter tertiary education are forced to find their place away from their communities by themselves, without support from home (Walker & Mkwanzani, 2015; Walker & Mathebula, 2020).

The researcher argues that unless retention rates are improved, higher education in South Africa will not be truly transformed as students require a higher education system that is not only accessible, but also assists them in completing their course of study. Universities play a vital role in student retention (McGhie, 2017) and to improve retention students must have a positive transition to university. Aiming to ensure retention among first year students and to assist with the transition to university, the student's expectations of university and their actual experience need to align with each other (HESA, 2014; Pather & Dorasamy, 2018). This study can contribute to the knowledge of how to improve students' experiences of transitioning to university and ultimately how to improve retention rates because it explores a vital aspect of university life — the transition to living in residence.

One of the transitions that first year students may need to make is the transition to living in a residence which raises the issue of housing. Housing is another challenge faced in the higher education sector because increasing student numbers means that more housing is needed, and South Africa can only house around one-fifth of the students enrolled at higher education institutions (Rensburg, 2011; L'Ange, 2017).

Much literature can be found globally on the first-year experience but there remains a lack of research specifically focused on the transition to moving into a residence. This study aimed to investigate the perceptions that first year students have of their experiences of the transition to living in a residence. The dearth of research in this area indicates the importance of this study. If universities have a better understanding of how to facilitate the adjustment to residences, it could assist with facilitating the overall adjustment to university. This adjustment could in turn influence student retention, academic performance, and the mental health of students. Rensburg (2011) supports this statement and indicates that there is insufficient research on how students adjust to living in a residence and their experiences of residence life in the South African context. This research can thus contribute to knowledge in this field.

Based on South Africa's unique political history, it is also important to obtain indigenous information on this topic (Vandeyar & Mohale, 2017). The findings of this study will be made available to the Department of Student Affairs at UCT as the findings could assist the student housing department in ways to optimally support first year students. The findings will also be made available to other South African universities that offer residences to first year students.

1.5 Research topic

The transition to living in a university residence: first year students' perceptions in this regard.

1.6 Main research questions

- 1.6.1. What have been the positive aspects of adjusting to living in a residence?
- 1.6.2. What have been the challenging aspects of adjusting to living in a residence?
- 1.6.3. What support have participants received with the transition to living in a residence?
- 1.6.4. What recommendations would the participants make to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence?

- 1.6.5. What recommendations would the participants make to incoming first year students with regards to managing the transition to residence living?

1.7 Main assumptions

The researcher assumed that first year university students living in a residence were undergoing the transition to residence life, and that they would be able to share their experiences. They could describe the positive factors and challenges of the transition to living in a residence as well as any supportive factors they felt assisted their transition to living in a residence. The first-year students living in a residence were also in the position to make recommendations to the university and to incoming first-year students on aspects that could assist with adjusting to residence living.

1.8 Research objectives

- 1.8.1. To explore the participant's perceptions of the positive aspects of adjusting to living in a residence.
- 1.8.2. To investigate the participant's perceptions of the challenging aspects of adjusting to living in a residence.
- 1.8.3. To examine what support participants have received with the transition to living in a residence.
- 1.8.4. To determine what recommendations would the participants make to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence.
- 1.8.5. To determine what recommendations would the participants make to incoming first year students with regards to managing the transition to residence living.

1.9 Clarification of concepts

First year students — are students entering university (Erickson, Peters & Strommer, 2009; Windham et al., 2014).

Residence — is defined as the student's campus home (Blimling, 2014). The residences that will be used in this study form part of the student housing for students at UCT.

Perceptions — refer to the way in which an individual interprets something, and this is influenced by their personal narrative (McDonald, 2012; Piaget, 2013).

Exploring — refers to the examination of an idea or subject in a specific setting for diagnostic purposes (Stebbins, 2001; Engel & Schutt, 2017).

Transition — can be defined as an event that leads to changes in routines, relationships, assumptions, and roles (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Bridges & Bridges, 2019) and refers to the response an individual has as they go through a period of change (Kralik, Visentin & Van Loon, 2006; Bridges & Bridges, 2019).

1.10 Main ethical considerations

The following ethical issues were considered in this study:

1.10.1 Avoidance of harm

Participants should not be harmed by the research process in an emotional or physical manner (Wiles, 2012; Young & Tsoi, 2013; Dixon & Quirke, 2018). Emotional harm was avoided by thoroughly informing the participants beforehand around what the possible impact of the research could be, and they were given the opportunity to withdraw at any time as advised by Roostenburg, Strydom and Fouché (2021). Additionally, the researcher asked participants to sign a consent form (see APPENDIX A) which detailed the purpose of the study and reminded participants that should they feel uncomfortable or no longer want to participate, they could end their participation at any time.

The researcher intended to conduct this study in person but because of the COVID-19 pandemic and wanting to avoid physical harm, she gave the participants a choice to meet in person or online. Only three participants chose to meet in-person. At the time of the interviews no COVID-19 protocols were required. The researcher still felt it important to avoid physical harm to the participants so she held the interviews in a well-ventilated space, sanitised any surfaces that the participants would be in contact with and sanitised the hands of the participants as well as her own hands.

1.10.2 Privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality

When looking at the violation of privacy/ anonymity/ confidentiality, privacy refers to personal privacy or the space in which the interview will be conducted (Strydom & Delpont, 2011; Hammersley & Traianou, 2016). Privacy on an online platform cannot be guaranteed as other internet users could gain access to “private” sites which could enable them to join a private meeting and participants cannot be certain that no other person is listening to their online interview (Eynon, Fry & Schroeder, 2017). The researcher informed each participant who

chose to be interviewed online that her venue was private, and that no other person was able to hear the online interview. The participants were also informed that they needed a private space. The researcher used Microsoft Teams or Zoom which are password protected platforms. This ensured that only those with the password could join the interview and an added electronic “waiting room” meant others could not join the interview as advised by Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman (2020).

Confidentiality refers to the handling of information in a private manner where information is not shared with others (Strydom & Delpont, 2011; Wiles, 2012; Kamanzi & Romania, 2019). Participants were informed that their confidentiality would be upheld allowing participants to retain ownership of what they had shared with the researcher which is an important element of confidentiality as stated by (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher is the only person who knew the identity of each participant and transcribed the interviews herself to help ensure confidentiality. When an interview took place online and was recorded, the data storage was monitored to assist with confidentiality. The recorded interviews were saved to a cloud and a local device as authors have indicated that this is a safer way to protect the information as others can gain access to a cloud (Fox, Murray & Warm, 2003; Kerpen, Dorgeist & Zantis, 2018; Lobe, Morgan & Hoffman, 2020).

In the face-to-face interviews, the researcher used a tape-recording application with the signed consent of the participant. She did not make use of hidden media devices without the consent of the participant as advised by Cairney and St Denny (2015) and Wiles (2012).

Anonymity can be defined as making modifications to the data so that the research participants cannot be identified (Wiles et al., 2008; Vainio, 2013). In qualitative research absolute anonymity cannot be guaranteed as the researcher has personal contact with the participants when they are being interviewed and thus knows who the participants are (Vainio, 2013; Hammersley & Traianou, 2016). The researcher established as much anonymity as feasible by ensuring that only she and her supervisor, had access to the data. She also did not reveal the identity of the participants in the findings.

When online interviews take place, anonymity can be compromised if messages are left on online platforms like Zoom as these message boards and cloud content can be downloaded by others (Kobakhidze et al., 2021; Reñosa et al., 2021). The researcher ensured that all content

was also saved to an external device, and she did not make use of message boards on online platforms.

1.10.3 Informed consent

Obtaining informed consent means that all information around the research is explained to the participants including the goal of the investigation, procedures that need to be followed, the advantages and disadvantages that participants may face, and the credibility of the researcher (Strydom & Delpont, 2011; Grady, 2015). This information must be shared as accurately as possible as this will allow the participants to make an informed decision about their voluntary participation in the study (Mouton, 2001; Hammersley & Traianou, 2016). As noted previously, the researcher provided participants with a consent form detailing the above which they were asked to sign. When the interview took place online the participant completed the consent form via email as advised by Lobe, Morgan and Hoffman (2020). The researcher emailed the consent form to participants before the interview and asked that they attach an electronic signature, which indicated consent. The form was signed by the participants before the online or in-person interview took place as this ensured that the participants were aware of any audio or video recordings that occurred as suggested by Janghorban, Roudsari and Taghipour (2014) as well as Deakin and Wakefield (2014).

1.10.4 Deception of respondents

Deception of respondents can be defined as withholding or offering the incorrect information to encourage participants to remain in the study where they may choose to withdraw (Strydom & Delpont, 2011; Charness, Samek & van de Ven, 2022). Deliberate deception must be avoided but the researcher should be aware of any deception that takes place during the study that occurs coincidentally such as the participants only partially understanding the purpose of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher ensured that the participants signed a consent form before the interview. She also discussed the objectives of the study with the participants at the beginning of the interview and gave them an opportunity to ask questions. This was essential in ensuring that deception did not occur.

1.10.5 The actions and competence of the researcher

The actions and competence of the researcher to manage the nature of the study is an ethical obligation (Strydom & Delpont, 2011; Grady, 2015). Researchers must be culturally aware and sensitive and ensure that they do not pass value judgements on the cultures of the community

that they are entering (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher is a qualified social worker and has experience with working with diverse cultures. She also received supervision throughout the research process.

1.10.6 Publication of findings

When looking at the release of publication of findings, the final written report must contain all essential information and be objective and clear so that the reader is not deceived by the findings (O'Mathúna, 2018). A report based on the results of this study will be submitted to UCT as well as the participants. It is important to note that as per UCT's Data Management Plan (DMP) this thesis will be publicly accessible.

1.10.7 Debriefing of respondents

Debriefing of respondents allows the participants an opportunity to assess the impact the study had on them (Strydom & Delpont, 2011; Lowton, 2018). Here the researcher can assist with minimising any possible unintentional harm that the research could have caused the participants (Wiles, 2012; Padgett, 2016). In this study, the researcher ensured that time was allocated after each interview for debriefing where participants could address any possible distress that they may have felt. The researcher had planned that if a participant required further support, the participant would be referred to UCT Student Wellness Service. One participant needed a referral as they felt isolated in their residence and that they had not made any connections. She referred them for further counselling to assist them with their transition to residence life.

1.11 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is essential in qualitative research and can be defined as the reflection of the researcher on the ways that their biases, values, and personal history can influence interpretations made during the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Upon reflection, the researcher chose this topic while working at UCT Student Wellness Service as a peer counsellor. In this role the researcher became aware of the influence that residences had on first year students transitioning to university and how it was either a source of stress or support. The researcher also works as a mentor facilitator for the Faculty of Health Sciences and her work with first year students has further demonstrated that first years often struggle with adjusting to residence life which influences their overall transition to university. The researcher

believes that because South Africa is so diverse in terms of language and accessibility, students who come from rural or informal areas also battle to transition to the metropolitan areas of Cape Town where residences are based. The researcher noticed that not much literature or information was available around how to assist first year South African students with their transition to residence and wanted to contribute to research in this area. The researcher is passionate about student's well-being which further influenced her decision to conduct this study.

Reflexivity relates to the researcher's social position and can include gender, age, race, sexual orientation, and personal experiences (Berger, 2015). Furthermore, the emotions of the researcher are central to reflexivity as stated by Creswell and Creswell (2018). The researcher interrogated her own emotions and experiences of transitions. Her most significant transitions included: 1) transitioning to a previously White neighbourhood and school in 1994 just after Apartheid ended, 2) transitioning to living in Asia where she did not speak the local languages 3) transitioning back to living in Cape Town and 4) transitioning as a post-graduate student at UCT. These transitions were highly evocative, and the researcher experienced several challenging emotions which included loneliness, isolation and feeling misunderstood. She also felt insecure about her academic abilities and struggled with burnout after trying multiple ways to manage these transitions.

The researcher was an undergraduate student at UCT and is currently a postgraduate student at UCT. She understands the university's context, but she was mindful not to impose her experiences of the university and predetermine her findings. The researcher was optimistic to conduct this study as she hoped that this study could contribute to knowledge in what appears to be an under researched area.

Obtaining a sample proved incredibly challenging due to the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) and the researcher worried that she would be unable to complete this study. This caused her much anxiety. The researcher was aware of issues around coercion and wanted to ensure that that did not occur in her attempt to secure a sample and frequently discussed her anxieties with her supervisor.

Once the researcher finalised the sample a further challenge occurred as the participants were about to write examinations and they struggled to arrange a time for the interview. When the

interviews eventually happened, the researcher felt inspired by the insights that the participants shared. While the researcher is a student, she has not lived in a residence thus the participants were the experts of living in a residence and were able to easily share their experiences. The literature confirms that when the researcher has no experience with what is being studied this can allow the participants to be the expert thus empowering the participants (Berger & Rosenberg, 2008; Berger, 2015).

1.12 Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is composed of five chapters. Chapter one presents the problem formulation and in chapter two previous literature on the topic is presented. The methodology is discussed in chapter three and chapter four reports on the research findings. Chapter five comprises the researcher's concluding remarks and her recommendations that are based on the research findings.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the statement of the problem and the rationale of this study which clearly indicated that the transition to university and the transition to residence can be quite complicated. These transitions are further complicated for South African students because of the country's traumatic political history. The chapter explained the research questions, assumptions, and the research objectives. Key concepts were clarified, and the ethical considerations which were formulated at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic were elucidated. The researcher makes note of how transitions in her life influenced the choice of topic in the reflexivity section. The following chapter will discuss the literature review which explores previous literature pertaining to the research topic.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

From the first chapter, it is evident that the higher education sector in South Africa is a highly contested space. The focus in this chapter is to expand on issues related to higher education such as the policies pertaining to this sector, key issues related to higher education and the transition that first year students make when they enter university and the residence space. The chapter commences with the theoretical frameworks which underpin the study and the policies pertaining to the study are discussed. Literature related to the topic is explored around the positive and challenging aspects of the transition to university and living in a residence and the various support mechanisms that assist students with the transition to university and residences are included.

2.2 Theoretical frameworks

There are two theories that underpin this study. The first theory is:

2.2.1 Ecological Systems Theory

Ecological Systems Theory (EST), articulated by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as cited in Gray, M and Webb (2013) explores the developing person, their environment, and the interaction between these two elements. It looks at the study of human development over a period and in the context in which the individual exists (Neal & Neal, 2013; Tudge et al., 2016; Schirmer & Michailakis, 2019). The underpinning ideas are that the way an individual views and deals with their environment impacts on their development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Hepworth, Rooney & Rooney, 2017).

EST uses a broader viewpoint and looks at the unique settings or the environment where people play out various roles and how these settings influence individual functioning (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Besthorn, 2013; Schirmer & Michailakis, 2019). The individual is seen as situated in concentric circles that represent the subsystems which the individual is a part of, and this theory aims to understand strengths and weaknesses in transactions between these subsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Hepworth, Rooney & Rooney, 2017). This concept is relevant to this study as it aimed to better understand the positive and challenging aspects that participants experienced as they transitioned from their home subsystem to their residence subsystem.

The theory highlights the no human lives in isolation as we are all connected to a system and just as problems can be found in the arenas where systems overlap, solutions can also be found there thus, the theory considers the social environment and has a holistic approach (Matthies & Närhi, 2018; De Jesús, Rodríguez & Anaya, 2021). EST explores reciprocity within the relationships among people, families, neighbourhoods, social networks, and other systems (Besthorn, 2013; Matthies & Närhi, 2018).

A core aspect of the theory is the concept of levels or systems. Bronfenbrenner (1979) states that EST has five types of nested systems which are in constant interaction with one another, and which help to shape human development (Besthorn, 2013; Neal & Neal, 2013). These five systems are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem (Hepworth, Rooney & Rooney, 2017; Shelton, 2018). These five levels create the person-environment-fit model of EST highlighting the importance of personal and contextual factors in an individual's life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Van Heugten & Gibbs, 2015).

The microsystem looks at the developing person and their immediate environment including how an individual responds to this environment, and how this environment directly and indirectly impacts them (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bowers & Bowers, 2017; Shelton, 2018). The mesosystem explores the interrelationship of two or more settings that the person interacts with and is formed when an individual moves into a new setting and takes on a new social position (Neal & Neal, 2013; Shelton, 2018). The microsystem and mesosystem can influence each other as the mesosystem explores the interactions between these microsystems (Van Heugten & Gibbs, 2015; Bowers & Bowers, 2017). In this study the participants being the microsystem have moved into the new environment of the residence. In the residence, their experience of the mesosystem included new social positions that they had to navigate such as living away from family, living with a roommate, and being independent.

The exosystem is made up of settings where the individual is not directly involved, but these settings influence the individual and it includes social interactions with social welfare agencies, health systems, educational systems, and policing services (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Neal & Neal, 2013; Van Heugten & Gibbs, 2015). The macrosystem focuses on the broad sociocultural context which includes public policy, institutional structures, beliefs, ideology, culture, and social problems (Hepworth, Rooney & Rooney, 2017; Shelton, 2018). Each level in a macrosystem impacts another level (Payne, 1991; Peterson Dealey & Evans, 2021).

Participants in this study indicated that they struggled to eat the food that was served in the residence, and this caused them much distress. Even though the participants were not a part of the catering they received as it can be viewed as an exosystem, they were still significantly impacted by this. On a macro level, participants also questioned the university's policies around residence catering and participants recommended that this issue be addressed.

The chronosystem considers the changes that occur over time within the person and the environment and the relationship between these two processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). It explores the dimension of time throughout the course of an individual's life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Van Heugten & Gibbs, 2015). All the systems of EST can be related to this study and the chronosystem is also relevant because it explores life transitions (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). The researcher therefore believes that the concept of the chronosystem can be applied to this study as the study focuses on how students experience their transition to life in a residence.

EST is a useful framework to understand how first year students may experience their transition to living in a residence as it aims to describe how individuals interact with different systems with which they are involved. In this study, the student moves from the family system into the residence system; a system which operates within the university system. The student thus interacts with different systems when living in a residence and these systems all influence the student's transition to a residence.

Furthermore, this theory acknowledges the importance of networking as people in their system shape the types of information they receive as well as the beliefs that they have which then impacts their actions (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; De Jesús, Rodríguez & Anaya, 2021). Social interactions are a key aspect of EST as microsystems and mesosystems are defined in terms of social interaction by Bronfenbrenner (1979) who further identified the importance of social networks which is where the mesosystems arise from. The researcher further argues that this theory is vital to include when looking at the transition to living in a university residence as the research indicates that socialising plays an important role in a student's transition to residence life.

When using EST, support and stressors are seen as not just related to the individual but also to their wider environment (Van Heugten & Gibbs, 2015; De Jesús, Rodríguez & Anaya, 2021). Overall, this theory emphasises the importance of using a broad scope when looking at support

and stressors of an individual (De Jesús, Rodríguez & Anaya, 2021; Peterson Dealey & Evans, 2021). For this study this broad scope helped identify the strengths and stressors that students face when transitioning to a residence.

2.2.2 Schlossberg's Transition Theory

Schlossberg developed Transition Theory to help individuals cope with transitions in their life and to assist them with developing and coping to manage these transitions (Schlossberg, 1981; Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022). The goal of the theory is that the person who is experiencing the transition should experience it as a positive growth occurrence (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Barclay, 2017). The model defines a transition, explores different types of transitions and transition processes, and lastly what influences the transition (Evans et al., 2009; Schiavone & Gentry, 2014).

Schlossberg (1981) states that a transition occurs when a person changes their view of themselves as well as their view of the world. This then links to changes in behaviour and relationships (Chickering & Schlossberg, 2002; Stokes, Schultz & Alpaslan, 2018). A transition also occurs when there is a role change which is seen as a loss or gain of a role that can cause positive feelings or stress (Schlossberg, 2008; Barclay, 2017). It is not the transition itself that an individual can find challenging but how this transition changes roles, routines, and relationships (Schlossberg, 2011; Winter, 2014). Thus, even an eagerly anticipated transition, such as entering university and moving into a residence, can be experienced as stressful (Schiavone & Gentry, 2014). Transition Theory is often used when exploring how university students manage the transition into higher education (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022).

In this theory an individual's internal and external resources are examined including personal characteristics, policies, and facilities of an institution (Montgomery, 2017; Stokes, Schultz & Alpaslan, 2018). Key elements to Schlossberg's framework are the perceptions that the individual has about the transition, their ability to adapt to the transition, and the amount of stress that the transition is causing the individual (Schlossberg, 2008; Barclay, 2017; Motala & Van Wyk, 2021).

The model has three parts where the first step is identifying the nature of the transition and secondly exploring the resources that the individual uses to cope (Anderson, Goodman &

Schlossberg, 2012; Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022). These coping resources could include the situational strengths of the individual, aspects of the self and support structures. The third part of the model looks at how coping resources can be strengthened (Evans et al., 2009; Schlossberg, 2011; Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022). The theory states that for an individual to cope with a transition they need to use resources and Schlossberg refers to these resources as the “4 S’s”: situation, self (individual attributes), support, and strategies. Based on the “4 S’s” a lens can be established of how an individual could cope with a transition (Montgomery, 2017; Stokes, Schultz & Alpaslan, 2018).

The first “S” refers to the situation or factors that are triggering the transition. This can include the timing and duration of the transition, prior experience with a similar transition, and the individual’s awareness of the transition itself (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Montgomery, 2017; Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022). Whether the transition is an anticipated event, unanticipated event, or non-event can also impact how the transition is experienced (Schlossberg, 2011; Barclay, 2017). An anticipated event is something that the individual knew was upcoming for example, a student who is aware that they will move away from home into a residence and an unanticipated event is an unknown event such as delayed entry into university, registration challenges or issues with fees (Schlossberg, 2008; Schiavone & Gentry, 2014). A non-event is an event that the individual wants to experience but which does not happen such as a student not getting accepted at university or having to choose a different career path (Schlossberg, 2008; Gbogbo, 2020).

The second “S” focuses on aspects of the self, such as demographics, socioeconomic status, age, stage of life, health, culture, gender, ethnicity, and the coping mechanisms which the individual uses (Winter, 2014; Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022). The self also highlights that the transition must be understood from the perspective of the individual themselves and for a smoother transition, the individual must be aware of their attitudes, beliefs, abilities and perceptions of themselves (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Barclay, 2017). Psychological aspects of the self that will influence how the person experiences transitions are how they cope with threats, their ego development, maturity, their level of commitment, resilience, self-efficacy, outlook on life, spirituality, and sense of optimism (Schlossberg, 2011; Stokes, Schultz & Alpaslan, 2018). Many participants in this study emphasised that part of the value of living in a residence was experiencing independence and freedom and that the

residence space can be used as a space to be free to be yourself and experiment with new activities.

Types of support that the individual has in the life comprise the third “S”. This support includes relationships, social networks, institutional support, and communities to which the individual belongs (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Schiavone & Gentry, 2014; Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022). Support is experienced differently by men and women and age plays a factor thus a student or young adult may seek support from peers, social networks, mentors, and the campus community before turning to family (Schlossberg, 2011; Barclay, 2017). Having a wide range of support and being able to identify where other support can come from are all important factors that help an individual manage a transition (Schlossberg, 2011; Barclay, 2017). This was evident in this study as participants indicated that sub-wardens, mentors and peers were support systems that helped them transition to a residence.

Once the transition is identified, the stage of transitioning can be understood in terms of the beginning (moving in), middle (moving out) and end (moving through) of a transition (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Wall, Fetherston & Browne, 2018). In the moving in stage of a transition the individual learns new roles, routines, and responsibilities. In the student community this can include the orientation and new skills learnt through studying or living alone for the first time (Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022). The university student can experience moving in as a stage of anxiety due to a new campus, new roommate, managing registration and new course work (Schlossberg, 2008; Barclay, 2017). This study focused on the moving in stage of the transition to a residence and participants indicated that their mentors helped them adjust. Roommates were also identified as a source of support as participants felt that they didn’t experience the transition alone but shared the experience with their roommate.

Schlossberg’s Transition Theory highlights that students can feel marginalised in the moving in stage as they may have a sense that they do not fit in or belong during this stage (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022). The concept of belonging is highlighted in this theory and is referred to as mattering such as where humans need to feel that they matter to someone (Schlossberg, 2011; Barclay, 2017). A conflict occurs when an individual experiences a change in their roles because of a transition and can feel marginalised. The individual resolves this conflict when they regain a sense of their new role and feel that they belong (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Barclay, 2017). A challenge that

emerged in this study was loneliness as participants experienced a change when moving into a residence as they were living away from family for the first time. This hindered the participants' ability to adjust to the residence as they were more focused on their home environment as opposed to their new residence space. Once this understanding starts to take place, moving through can occur and the individual begins to manage the transition in a way that best serves them. In moving out the transition comes to an end and the individual explores what the next step will be (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Wall, Fetherston & Browne, 2018). As the student enters the moving through stage they aim to learn as much as they can while balancing their social life and life back home whereas in the moving out stage the student aims to transition smoothly through graduation, finding employment and new place to live (Schlossberg, 2008; Barclay, 2017).

The theory is useful to understand university students entering university as it marks the end of living at home where their relationship with their family changes and it could mean the potential end of some friendships (Schlossberg, 2008; Barclay, 2017). Furthermore, students need to evaluate the new challenges that occur when transitioning to university and they must explore options that can assist them with coping with these transitions (Schlossberg, 2008; Barclay, 2017). This study explored the transition to life in a residence and the theory is thus perfectly suited as a theoretical framework for the study as it focuses specifically on transitions. It therefore can provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the transition to living in residence.

2.3. Policies pertaining to the study

2.3.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 (2009)

As noted previously South Africa's political history has significantly shaped all spheres in the country including higher education. The cornerstone policy in the country is the The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (2009) because the foundations of a democratic society are laid down here (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 2009; Bushe, 2019). The Constitution focuses on social justice, and democratic values to address the injustices of Apartheid. It is considered a progressive constitution because of its emphasis on human rights (Modiri, 2018; Maphumulo & Bhengu, 2019). The Constitution outlines many principles including equality before the law; the right to life, privacy, property and freedom

and the right to freedom of speech, religion, and assembly (Albertyn, 2019; Bushe, 2019). It is built on an ethos of justice and fairness and South African citizens are required to fulfil this ethos (Albertyn, 2019; Dube, 2020). The Bill of Rights (1996), as part of the Constitution, highlights the right to education and states that everyone has the right to further education which the state must make accessible to all citizens (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 2009).

Many authors argue that the South African government has failed in their attempt to fulfil their constitutional mandate. This failure is due to lack of accountability, corruption, and failure to address economic inequality and social inclusion. The Constitution has not resulted in justice and dignity for the Black majority in South Africa (Modiri, 2018; Maphumulo & Bhengu, 2019). Scholars further state that the content of the Constitution is grounded in faulty political ideals and citizens have too much faith in the Constitution. They add that the Constitution has failed to generate change and if implemented incorrectly, it can become an instrument of injustice and prejudice (Albertyn, 2019; Dube, 2020). The researcher believes that despite the criticisms around the implementation of the Constitution, it is still a vital legislation as it underlines the importance of accessibility of higher education. The researcher argues that right to a residence should be seen as part of the right to access to higher education because residences play a key role in impacting student's academic performance by providing them with a place to live close to campus and with resources that can aid their studies as noted by Sikhwari et al. (2020) and Simpson and Burnett (2019).

2.3.2 The Higher Education Act (Higher Education Act, No. 101 of 1997) and The National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa (Department of Education [DOE], 2001)

The two main legislative documents for higher education are firstly, The Higher Education Act of 1997 (*Higher Education Act No.101 of 1997*) and secondly, The National Plan for Higher Education (DOE, 2001). The Higher Education Act (*Higher Education Act No.101 of 1997*) addresses several aspects around higher education including the regulation of higher education; the establishment of a Council on Higher Education (CHE) (2023); the funding of public higher education institutions and the appointment of an independent assessor to investigate higher education institutions. The Act further outlines the process for registration of private higher education institutions; quality assurance in higher education; and lastly to provide for transitional arrangements and repeal of laws where necessary (CHE, 2023).

As with the Constitution there have also been critiques of The Higher Education Act (Higher Education Act, No. 101 of 1997). Adonis and Silinda (2021) as well as Ede, Jili and Vezi-Magigaba (2022) highlight the Act's lack of adaptation to reflect the indigenous culture of South African citizens, the lack of considering the latest needs of society and the need for an upgrade to the pedagogical content in the Act. The researcher also notes that it does not specifically address student living or housing.

The National Plan for Higher Education (DOE, 2001) looks at transforming higher education to help with the reconstruction and development of South Africa. Some goals of The National Plan include promoting access to higher education, eradicating discrimination in higher education institutions, and improving the overall efficiency of the higher education system in South Africa (Cooper, 2001; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017). The National Plan also does not address residences.

Further criticisms of The National Plan as stated by Mabokela and Mlambo (2017) and Mzangwa (2019) are that it barely made any changes to previously White higher education institutions while previously Black higher education institutions were not strengthened enough. The National Plan did not curb the disadvantage of Black students. For example, some parts of the Eastern Cape, where many Black students originate from, still have no universities meaning that some provinces in South Africa are underserved which continues to leave Black students marginalised (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017; Mzangwa, 2019). Furthermore, there is not enough funding in higher education, low graduation rates continue, and very little change can be seen in the retention rates of Black students (Simpson, 2018; Mzangwa, 2019). The overall criticism of The National Plan is that no infrastructure has been developed in South Africa to support the policies outlined in The National Plan (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017; Simpson, 2018). The current higher education landscape has changed significantly since 2001 and a plan more suited to contemporary higher education is needed (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017; Simpson, 2018).

The researcher believes that these policies are still relevant even though they do not speak to residences specifically because they are the overarching policies that determine how higher education institutions in South Africa operate. These policies thus influence how universities operate their residence systems. The next policy that the researcher explores is The Policy on the Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Housing at Public Universities (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2015).

2.3.3 The Policy on the Minimum Norms and Standards for Student Housing at Public Universities (2015) as part of The Higher Education Act 1997 (Act no. 101 of 1997)

In 2015 the Ministry of Higher Education gazetted a policy for student housing (DHET, 2015). Regulation of on-and-off campus student living in public South African universities is outlined in this policy. This policy is relevant to the study because it determines how residences operate and it specifically mentions the needs of first year students who are the population under investigation.

This policy aims to ensure that students are provided with adequate accommodation and are thus able to enjoy learning and living in an environment that fosters academic success (DHET, 2015). Universities should create a committee which, is to be composed of equal amounts of university staff and residential students to govern residential life and students are seen as having an active role in this regard (DHET, 2015). Staff and students in off-campus housing must also be included in the committee and meetings should take place quarterly where minutes are presented to the council of the university (DHET, 2015).

The policy acknowledges that first year students are the most vulnerable and indicates that universities should assign 30% of their residence capacity to first year students (DHET, 2015). Poor, working class and rural students are prioritised as increased access to university living should be granted to these students. They should also be provided with support mechanisms to assist them with the transition to the academic, social, and cultural life of the university (DHET, 2015). The policy states that every student must have access to medical and psychological services during work hours and in the event of emergencies (DHET, 2015).

Authors have noted that the policy is vague in its descriptions around norms and standards of the safety and security of students in residences and has set unrealistic targets for on-campus and off-campus housing (Gopal & van Niekerk, 2018; Gbadegesin et al., 2021). The policy is viewed as being reactive and not planning for future issues such as studentification – the social spatial implications of students living in housing in suburbs surrounding universities. The policy further needs to consider that student housing should be a city-wide, more evenly spread plan which centres around adaptability and flexibility (Gopal & van Niekerk, 2018; Gbadegesin et al., 2021).

The above section presented the policies related to the study and the following section focuses on literature relating to the topic. The first area to be addressed is the transition to university which comprises of both positive and challenging factors.

2.4 The transition to university

2.4.1 Positive aspects of transition to university

2.4.1.1 Flourishing

Flourishing is an important concept and is defined as complete mental health that can be associated with high levels of positive functioning, happiness, and wellbeing (Ryff, 1989; Ryff, 2019; Elphinstone, Whitehead & Bates, 2020). First year students who are taught about flourishing and ways to increase flourishing adapt better to university life and report significantly lower symptoms of depression in their first year (Keyes & Lopez, 2002; Hirshberg et al., 2022). Flourishing helps an individual reach their full potential in life, and this means that an individual can achieve a sense of purpose (Seligman, 2011; Volstad et al., 2020; Silveyra et al., 2021). Fostering a sense of flourishing in first year students helps students pay attention to their studies but also increases their social connections because they tend to be more compassionate and empathic to others (Messer, 2013; Butler & Kern, 2016).

Flourishing in first year is associated with the excitement of being at a university and having high expectations that the overall university experience will be positive (Vuckovic, Riley & Floyd, 2019; Volstad et al., 2020). It is experienced as a continuous process throughout first year and increases gradually as the year progresses (Vuckovic, Riley & Floyd, 2019; Volstad et al., 2020). Furthermore, students who enjoy what they are studying are also associated with higher rates of flourishing (Knoesen & Naudé, 2018; Goodday et al., 2019).

For South African first year students flourishing is linked to achieving academic mastery which is achieved when students understand what is expected of them, how they will be assessed, and are provided with support to ask questions. Students who pass the first semester also have more of a drive and sense of flourishing to complete the remainder of the year (Knoesen & Naudé, 2018; van Rooij, Jansen, & van de Grift, 2018). These students experienced academic flourishing when they are externally supported by the university space but also when they have a personal orientation or drive towards learning (Knoesen & Naudé, 2018; Goodday et al., 2019).

Flourishing in the South African context is impacted by challenges that first year's face with access to university, and the social and economic difficulties that students face when they enter university (Wilson-Strydom & Walker, 2015; Mostert, de Beer & de Beer, 2023). Due to the aforementioned challenges, flourishing in South Africa can be more focused on how students compare their performance to others in terms of their pass rate, the work they produce and the friends they make. Social consciousness also plays a role and students gain a sense of flourishing by supporting and uplifting others in their lives that were not able to attend university (Fink, 2014; Wilson-Strydom & Walker, 2015). Higher rates of flourishing can be found among students who partake in civic, community and political engagements and are invested in social consciousness (Low, 2011; Fink, 2014).

2.4.1.2 Developing new peer relationships

Peers play a central role in the student's transition to university because new peer relationships are not only a rewarding aspect of transitioning to university, but peers also provide important emotional and academic support (McMillan, 2013; Worsley, Harrison & Corcoran, 2021). New peer relationships contributed to a sense of belonging and feelings of self-confidence in first year students (Gray, R et al., 2013; Brooman & Darwent, 2014; Means & Pyne, 2017). Friendships provided similar support to that of the family system and students who feel that they have a peer in their living space at university are better able to share their experiences of the challenges of being a student (McMillan, 2013; Worsley, Harrison & Corcoran, 2021).

Globally studies have found that obtaining new peers in first year enabled students to overcome racial, religious, cultural and language differences (Rosenthal & Levy, 2016; Katsumoto & Bowman, 2021). Making new peers who come from diverse backgrounds can create more positive group interaction as students learn to appreciate and respect the differences in others (Rosenthal & Levy, 2016; Katsumoto & Bowman, 2021). Although South African students have grown up in a democratic society, many students still do not have the opportunity to socialise with other race groups and making new peers in first year presents the first opportunity for them to interact with people from different races, cultures, or religions (Wertheim, 2014; Petersen & Arends, 2018). This interaction should occur in first year as it encourages students to become more comfortable socialising with other races and religions for their remainder of their time at university (Wertheim, 2014; Petersen & Arends, 2018). Scholars also indicate that

new peer relationships assisted students to self-regulate their emotions and better manage their workload (Akinla, Hagan & Atiomo, 2018; Räisänen, Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2021).

The positive aspects of transitioning to university were noted above and the challenging aspects will be discussed next.

2.4.2 Challenges of transition to university

2.4.2.1 Meeting academic demands

Atherton (2017) and Mah and Ifenthaler (2018) state that first year students who enter university are often unprepared for the academic demands of university. Students often lack confidence around their grades and worry that they could underperform during examinations because they battle to keep up with academic demands. This is particularly relevant in South Africa where the quality of school education varies, and many schools are not equipped to prepare students for the academic demands of higher education (Mah & Ifenthaler, 2018; van der Merwe, Botha & Joubert, 2020). For these reasons Black and first-generation students report that their biggest stressor at university are the academic demands (Mah & Ifenthaler, 2018; van der Merwe, Botha & Joubert, 2020).

2.4.2.2 Accessing university support services

Authors argue that support services are vital as a student adjusts to university life as this can help the student cope with stress and increase their wellbeing (Denovan & Macaskill, 2013; Bantjes et al., 2019). However South African studies indicate that first year students have a low rate of accessing university support services even where these services are free. Male, Black, and first-generation students are amongst the lowest rate of students who make use of university support services, especially mental health services (Bantjes et al., 2019; Gulliver et al., 2022). Issues like stigma and scepticism of the success of the help offered can act as barriers and students may be less likely to seek help if they have experienced stigma around their help seeking behaviour before entering university (Pace et al., 2018; Gulliver et al., 2022).

Individual psychological factors should be explored when considering help seeking behaviours of first year students. Living in university accommodation and having a sense of belonging at university increased student's help seeking behaviour as well as if the services were culturally appropriate (Bantjes et al., 2019; Gulliver et al., 2022). Students also need to develop new

coping strategies as they adjust to university and universities should continuously inform students of support services available to them (Denovan & Macaskill, 2013; Pace et al., 2018).

2.5 Life in residence

The literature reveals that there are positive and challenging aspects to living in residence. The positive aspects will be discussed first.

2.5.1 The positives of living in residence

2.5.1.1 The role of roommates

Global research indicates that a roommate can be a positive factor for students who are transitioning to living in a residence (Vandeyar & Mohale, 2017; Zhang & Pu, 2017). Students feel more socially connected when a roommate was welcoming, engaged with them, and included them in their peer group as this made the student's transition to the residence smoother (Utter & Deangelo, 2015; Vandeyar & Mohale, 2017). When students formed a connection with their roommates, they reported developing a sense of belonging, they felt socially connected to the residence and this support led to students engaging in more residence activities (Whitmore & Dunsmore, 2014; Utter & Deangelo, 2015). Furthermore, students who found roommates supportive, learnt to trust these roommates in a short period of time (Whitmore & Dunsmore, 2014; Tolman, 2017). Roommates often helped students with accessing campus resources which further helped students feel that they had a sense of community at the university thus facilitating their adjustment to the residence (Tolman, 2017; Zhang & Pu, 2017).

A roommate from a different race helped students to become more open minded because they experienced their roommate as an individual and not in terms of previously held stereotypes (Tolman, 2017; Zhang & Pu, 2017). These stereotypes emanated from their parents who having lived through Apartheid, were fearful of their children socialising with White students or being at a historically White university (Vandeyar & Mohale, 2017; Matthews, 2023). When Black students had a White roommate, they were able to connect with the roommate enabling them to view White students differently and shared commonalities meant that students felt a sense of belonging in the residence space (Wertheim, 2014; Vandeyar & Mohale, 2017).

The literature search revealed that when roommates performed well academically and invested effort in their work students responded positively as they felt they had a supportive space to grow academically (Zhang & Pu, 2017; Pu, Yan & Zhang, 2020). Roommates in the top 25% of their academic programme of study influenced students to study more which led to higher scores in first year students grade point average (GPA) (Garlick, 2018; Quinn, Canevello & Crocker, 2023). When a student was paired with an academically strong roommate they could learn study strategies, could be tutored by their roommate, and they were influenced to spend as much time on their studies as their roommate did. All these factors contributed to the student's academic growth in first year (Zhang & Pu, 2017; Garlick, 2018).

The challenges with schools in Black areas were discussed in the first chapter and Garlick (2018) and Quinn, Canevello and Crocker (2023) add that students with a low GPA can be positively influenced by their roommates if they have a high GPA. This is beneficial in South Africa, as some students could be performing well, and others could be academically unprepared due to possible discrepancies between the schooling of the student and their roommate. Furthermore, students are academically influenced based on social proximity of their peers and because of sharing a living space, roommates often have a significant impact on the first-year student's academic performance (Garlick, 2018; Quinn, Canevello & Crocker, 2023).

2.5.1.2 Acquiring independence

Research has indicated that the ability to live independently and with more freedom, away from parents and restrictions, is a common motivation for first year students to enrol at university and live in a residence (Lowe & Dotterer, 2018; Ives & Castillo-Montoya, 2020). Authors state that the independence that students encounter at university and while living away from home can encompass several areas such as gaining a sense of freedom from parents' rules, being able to openly express themselves, and pursuing their own interests (Allison & Risman, 2014; Covarrubias et al., 2019). Students also value being able to socialise more while living in a residence because they were closer to peers and residences are located in neighbourhoods where there are more activities which students enjoy (Allison & Risman, 2014; Covarrubias et al., 2019). Furthermore, they experience independence by becoming more mature, developing resilience, relying on themselves, and being more responsible for themselves (Allison & Risman, 2014; Covarrubias et al., 2019). Ultimately students found the independent culture

that most universities aim to foster to be a positive aspect of living in residence (Lowe & Dotterer, 2018; Ives & Castillo-Montoya, 2020).

2.1.5.3 Convenience offered by residences.

The convenience of living in a residence and being near to resources that assist students while studying can prove useful for first year students as they transition to university life (Li, Shelley & Whalen, 2005; Long, 2014; Velasquez-Garcia & Garcia, 2016). Other useful conveniences include being near peers, access to computer laboratories and libraries, fast internet, being near fitness centres, access to kitchens and laundry facilities and communal TV rooms and lounges (Long, 2014; Graham, Hurtado & Gonyea, 2018). Modern and well-kept buildings situated close to classes, private spaces to work as well as residences being close to amenities were further conveniences that students felt assisted their adjustments to residence (Blimling, 2014; Velasquez-Garcia & Garcia, 2016). Students appreciated not having to use public transport, not needing to have their own transport, or having to endure traffic to get to class (Long, 2014; Velasquez-Garcia & Garcia, 2016). Amenities that students wanted to be near to included health, dining, and religious facilities (Blimling, 2014; Velasquez-Garcia & Garcia, 2016).

It is evident from the literature that living in a residence has many positive aspects such as having roommates, acquiring independence, and making use of the convenience of a residence. Some challenging aspects relating to residence life were also apparent and will be discussed below.

2.5.2 The challenges of living in residence

2.5.2.1 Loneliness

Dagnew and Dagne (2019) define loneliness as an individual's subjective sense of lacking social or familial contact to the degree that they hoped for, leading to lowered quality of life. Two types of loneliness can be distinguished: social loneliness and emotional loneliness where emotional loneliness is found to be more common in first year students (Weiss, 1987; Diehl et al., 2018; Labrague, De los Santos & Falguera, 2021). If a student lacks intimate relationships, they can develop emotional loneliness whereas social loneliness occurs when the student lacks social networks and relationships (Weiss, 1987; Diehl et al., 2018). Loneliness is clearly a significant issue because when reviewing the literature, the researcher noted that loneliness came up as a general transitional challenge for all first-year students and for students living in residence. This is an important factor for universities to be aware of.

Research states that first year students experience a high rate of loneliness due to feelings of homesickness as they recently moved from their homes to a residence and are still adapting to university (Diehl et al., 2018; Dagne & Dagne, 2019). Loneliness in students is much higher in first year than second year partly because students have such a brief period to transition to the university space in their first year before the term starts (English et al., 2017; Dagne & Dagne, 2019).

Students often found that in first year they had social connections which meant a lower rate of social loneliness but because these friendships were new and superficial, this led to emotional loneliness (Diehl et al., 2018; De los Santos & Falguera, 2021). Making new friends in first year and maintaining ties with old friends could assist with this kind of loneliness.

Contributing factors to loneliness in first year students include physical inactivity, changes in diet and routine, being an immigrant, and students making less friends than they expected to (Hashim & Khodarahimi, 2012; Diehl et al., 2018). Loneliness is also more common in female students than male and can depend on sociocultural aspects including family wealth (Zilioli et al., 2017; Labrague, De los Santos & Falguera, 2021). Students who didn't have a romantic partner also reported higher rates of loneliness (Hashim & Khodarahimi, 2012; Diehl et al., 2018). Students who reported high rates of loneliness when transitioning to university experienced more symptoms of depression and anxiety (Diehl et al., 2018; Kılınç et al., 2020).

The feelings of loneliness in first year students increased during the COVID-19 pandemic due to higher stress levels, less physical activity, and poorer sleep quality due to changes in routine (Gestsdottir et al., 2021; Hendriksen et al., 2021). Loneliness further increased as students were unable to form face-to-face social connections as most universities made use of online teaching (Gestsdottir et al., 2021; Wallace et al., 2021). During a pandemic where students were already isolated from all other norms in their lives, online classes exacerbated this sense of loneliness (Cairns et al., 2020; Wallace et al., 2021). Students who managed to cope with their loneliness during lockdown sought support from peers and family (Hendriksen et al., 2021; Labrague, De los Santos & Falguera, 2021).

2.5.2.2 Food insecurity – catering

Students are also still adjusting to a new diet and routine at a residence as they learn to transition to the residence life (Wagner, Kaneli & Masango, 2021) and this raises the concern around

possible food insecurity. Food insecurity is defined as a lack of access to healthy and safe food which can impact first year students living in a residence in terms of the catering that they are provided (El Zein et al., 2019). Authors note that the consequences of being a food insecure student include poor academic performance, lower graduation rate, higher stress levels, poor sleep, and inconsistent sleeping patterns (Bruening et al., 2016; Wagner, Kaneli & Masango, 2021). In addition, food insecurity in students showed an increase in alcohol abuse, mental health challenges, chronic disease, and unhealthy eating (Bruening et al., 2016; Wagner, Kaneli & Masango, 2021). Given these consequences of food insecurity universities must pay attention to the catering in residences. Bruening et al. (2016) concur and note that many students do not have the financial means to purchase food or to buy alternative meals because their parents cannot provide the funds to do so.

2.5.2.3 Mental health challenges

First year students are particularly vulnerable to a mental illness as rates of depression and anxiety among them ranged between 60% and 70% (Auerbach et al., 2018; Islam et al., 2022). Furthermore, students from rural areas appear to experience higher rates of depression and anxiety than those from urban areas (Shamsuddin et al., 2013; Islam et al., 2022). It is also of concern to note that the rates of anxiety and depression in first year South African students is higher than those of international students (Bantjes et al., 2019; Rousseau et al., 2021). The rate appears higher in marginalised students including females, students with a disability and atypical sexual orientations (Bantjes et al., 2019; Rousseau et al., 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated mental illness in students in South Africa as students had difficulty coping psychologically with the lockdown and experienced more symptoms of anxiety and depression and a sense of hopelessness (Van der Walt et al., 2020; Visser & Law-van Wyk, 2021). Some students described the pandemic as a traumatic experience and had feelings that greatly discomfited them, impacting their mental health (Van der Walt et al., 2020; Visser & Law-van Wyk, 2021). Students in first year were more affected by the pandemic as well as students who were staying in informal settlements or areas with limited resources (Van der Walt et al., 2020; Visser & Law-van Wyk, 2021).

The literature states that other contributors to mental health problems include living in a large residence, loneliness, peer pressure, family pressure, academic performance, having to study in a language other than their mother tongue, a heavy workload and being in a new environment

(Abdallah & Gabr, 2014; Beiter et al., 2014; Alim et al., 2015). Lack of sleep and exercise as well as excessive internet use have also been identified as contributors to the high rate of mental illness amongst first year students (Bruffaerts et al., 2019; Islam et al., 2022).

The importance of the peer group is evident again as students with few peers in their residences and low residence staff engagement reported higher mental health challenges and low mental wellbeing (Horgan et al., 2016; Worsley, Harrison & Corcoran, 2021). As students need to re-attach to the residence environment as they have disrupted their attachment to the home environment, the role of peers to support mental health is crucial (Horgan et al., 2016; Worsley, Harrison & Corcoran, 2021). Students often have the expectation that the residence will be a fun-filled and friendly place and if this expectation is not met, then their wellbeing can be impacted (Ali et al., 2021; Worsley, Harrison & Corcoran, 2021).

While more research is needed in this area, authors recommend that due to the high rates of anxiety and depression in first year students, it would be advisable to screen first year students for a mental illness to be able to refer them as needed (Auerbach et al., 2018; Bantjes et al., 2019). Residence staff should act as a support network for students especially those that struggle to make friends as they are transitioning to a residence. A further recommendation is that residences hold group-based events for peer engagement to occur such as regular meet ups (Ali et al., 2021; Worsley, Harrison & Corcoran, 2021).

2.5.2.4 Cleanliness of the residence

Students identify the cleanliness and cleaning services such as laundries in residences as one of the most important factors that increase their satisfaction with the residence experience (Oke, Aigbavboa & Raphiri, 2017; Simpeh & Shakantu, 2020). Cleanliness impacts how students view their living and working space, and this affects their ability to focus on their studies (Oke, Aigbavboa & Raphiri, 2017; Abdullahi & Wan Yusoff, 2018). Clean residences helped improve the academic performance of students, improved cohesion among students and helped them take responsibility for their own living space in the residence (Oke, Aigbavboa & Raphiri, 2017; Abdullahi & Wan Yusoff, 2018).

Studies found that because students expected a clean residence as well as cleaning facilities, they were distressed when the residences were not deemed clean as they worried about the health consequences of a lack of hygiene (Abdullahi & Wan Yusoff, 2018; Simpeh & Shakantu, 2020). They felt that their living space was not functional if it was not clean, and

this impacted their living and learning in the residence (Abdullahi & Wan Yusoff, 2018; Simpeh & Shakantu, 2020). Students may need training and guidance around how to keep the residence clean as this may be a new daily task that they have to complete as they learn to live in residence (Oke, Aigbavboa & Raphiri, 2017; Simpeh & Shakantu, 2020).

The transition to university and to a residence has been discussed above in terms of the main positive and challenging aspects that arose from the literature. What was also apparent in the literature was the role that support played in these transitions and this will be explored below. Given that students can face many challenges when entering university and residence, the need for support becomes obvious. The researcher's exploration of the literature revealed that there was minimal literature that addresses how universities can promote the adjustment to residence. There is however a wide body of literature that speaks to the support that universities can offer all first-year students with regards to the transition to university. The researcher would argue that it is important to note these mechanisms because if students feel supported with their academic studies it could possibly improve their adjustment to residence.

2.6 Support mechanisms assisting students with the transition to university and residences

2.6.1 Support from university

There are various support mechanisms that universities can put in place, and some of these will be discussed below.

2.6.1.1 Mentor programmes

Considerable research states that providing mentors for first year students is an important mechanism with which universities can facilitate their transition to university (Leidenfrost et al., 2014; Akinla, Hagan & Atiomo, 2018). Mentors offered psychosocial support, academic support, and role modelling to first years in their first semester (Gershenfeld, 2014; Akinla, Hagan & Atiomo, 2018). First year students who are mentored by a peer or more senior student feel more connected and integrated to the university space and reported that they were more likely to persist to graduation (Hernandez et al., 2017; Yomtov et al., 2017). Mentoring assisted with networking within the university and strengthened the student identity of first year students (Hernandez et al., 2017; Yomtov et al., 2017). First year students who had mentors reported a decrease in surface learning and an increase in deep learning which led to mentored

students faring better academically. In addition, mentors offered support by creating a space for first years to share their fear of failure and mentors helped first years identify and make use of coping strategies (Chester et al., 2013; Akinla, Hagan & Atiomo, 2018).

2.6.1.2 Support from staff

Several scholars assert that university staff can be of support to first year students as they transition to the university space and there are various ways in which staff members can assist. Mentoring by faculty members can help students feel connected to the university as well as capable to manage their studies (Bettinger, Boatman & Long, 2013; Tinto, 2017).

Consistent social interaction between staff and first year students is vital as this helps students feel less anonymous and more that they belong in the university space (Gist-Mackey, Wiley & Erba, 2018; Box & Moffat, 2019). Through social interaction with staff, students reported feeling emotionally supported and they found the university space to be a welcoming environment and felt accepted (O'Keeffe, 2013; Graham, Hurtado & Gonyea, 2018). Furthermore, when students felt that staff valued their input this increased their sense of belonging and they were more likely to consider completing their degrees (Bettinger, Boatman & Long, 2013; Tinto, 2017).

2.6.2 Social support

2.6.2.1 Support from families

Many authors highlight that families can provide support to first-year students who are transitioning to university. This includes alleviating stress, motivating students to study, and helping them develop their own coping skills (Kunanithaworn et al., 2018; Arias-de la Torre et al., 2019). Students who felt uncomfortable approaching staff directly, made use of their family for support and it is recommended that families are included in any plans directed at first year students who need extra guidance (Stebbleton, Soria & Huesman, 2014; Kunanithaworn et al., 2018). As mentioned in chapter one South African students transition from high school to university under stressful conditions that lack preparedness and finances making the family a vital component of moral and emotional support (Ajani & Gamede, 2020; Nosisana, 2021).

2.6.2.2 Social media

The role of social media in supporting students was evident in the literature and scholars argue that students who use social media regularly were more likely to complete their degrees due to the support that this offers them (DeAndrea et al., 2012; Owusu-Ansah et al., 2021). Social media platforms create a social information-seeking space i.e., first year students seek information about other first year students and through this, they identify and connect with other students whom they have things in common with (DeAndrea et al., 2012; Gray, R et al., 2013).

Social media sites have helped students engage with their roommates before meeting them and have enabled students to form friendships in residences and classes before entering university (Gray, R et al., 2013; Owusu-Ansah et al., 2021). This ability to connect socially with others helped first years feel less uncertain about the university experience (Gray, R et al., 2013; Owusu-Ansah et al., 2021). WhatsApp was also found to be a popular social media tool for information sharing, peer support and making new peers (Gray, R et al., 2013; Owusu-Ansah et al., 2021). Social media use among first year students was used to collaborate on academic projects and inform each other about available resources (Gray, R et al., 2013; Owusu-Ansah et al., 2021).

Students also felt they could merge their “old” identities to their “new” university identity by maintaining past friendships and making new friends via social media (Stephenson-Abetz & Holman, 2012; Thomas, Orme & Kerrigan, 2020). Students can see through social media how their life was before university and how it is at university which is a useful reflective experience for them as it demonstrated their growth (Stephenson-Abetz & Holman, 2012; Thomas, Orme & Kerrigan, 2020). Using social media platforms to keep in touch with friends and family from back home offered students more support as they could easily connect with those in their life that they trusted and felt comfortable sharing with (Stephenson-Abetz & Holman, 2012; Gray, R et al., 2013). Maintaining ties with the old community enabled students to always stay in contact with home no matter their transition and this acts as a support against homesickness (Stephenson-Abetz & Holman, 2012; Gray, R et al., 2013). On social media students can see how their peers are transitioning to their new university lives making students feel less isolated (Gray, R et al., 2013; Thomas, Orme & Kerrigan, 2020).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, students also found social media to be a supportive mechanism, and it is noteworthy that students who made use of social media to maintain

friendships showed less symptoms of anxiety and depression (Larnyo et al., 2021; Sitar-Taut et al., 2023). This meant that they felt more socially supported during the pandemic (Larnyo et al., 2021; Sitar-Taut et al., 2023). Overall, the literature indicates that students who felt supported due to using social media were better able to adjust to university and were more likely to return in their second year of study (Gray, R et al., 2013; Thomas, Orme & Kerrigan, 2020).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter reiterated that the higher education landscape in South Africa is a complex space. The literature denotes that the move into university and residence is complex and for South African Black students, these complexities are amplified. Challenges exist but various support mechanisms that assist students with the transition to university and residences were also included. Theoretical frameworks that underpin the study and the policies pertaining to the study were also discussed. The next chapter presents the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology of the study beginning with the research approach and design. The population and sampling are examined in terms of the sampling technique, the sampling characteristics, and the sampling procedure. The data collection approach is discussed followed by data analysis and data verification. To conclude, the limitations of the study are explored.

3.2 Research approach and design

A qualitative approach was used in this study. Within research, the qualitative approach has increased in popularity since the 20th century and qualitative methods have grown over time, particularly in psychological research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Howitt, 2019). The value and prestige of qualitative research has increased across fields and the strengths of qualitative research are becoming more evident (Wadams & Park, 2018).

Qualitative approaches aim to increase the understanding of situations, contexts, and people by focusing on understanding these realities from the inside out (Roestenburg, Strydom & Fouché, 2021). Marshall and Rossman (2016) identify further strengths of qualitative research and state that it explores cultural aspects, takes on a holistic perspective, goes in-depth into complex issues, explores little-known phenomena and novel populations, and seeks to understand experiences. This approach further aims to explore the meaning individuals or groups assign to a social or human issue which makes it more interactive and humanistic in nature (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) and as this study aimed to explore the meaning that first year students make of their transition to a residence, a qualitative approach was best suited for this study.

The process of qualitative research entails asking emerging questions and noting that context matters because it acknowledges that human interactions are influenced by the setting in which they take place and so studies that take place in real-life situations are vital (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Furthermore, conducting the research in the participant's setting is important as the qualitative researcher has a more holistic view of the phenomena under study (Mouton, 2001; Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Whitley, Kite & Adams, 2013). This study was conducted

primarily via online interviews and the participants joined from their rooms in the residences, meaning that they were in their natural setting.

Qualitative research provides an in-depth understanding of the social world as it aims to understand the meaning that participants make of their experiences and perspectives and this is emphasised through the data-gathering methods as the individual can provide descriptive feedback (Ritchie et al., 2013; Howitt, 2019). When the researcher uses face-to-face interaction in a natural setting, the researcher can understand a deeper perspective of an individual's lived experience by unpacking the individual's thoughts, feelings, behaviours, beliefs, and values (Marshall & Rossman, 2016) and it is important to note that for this study all interviews were face-to-face.

Qualitative data is praised amongst authors for its volume and richness as it is rich in description because its data collection methods, such as in-depth interviews, provide descriptive data (Ritchie et al., 2013; Howitt, 2019). Data is generated in a manner that is sensitive to the social context of the study thus the data that emerges is complex, and detailed (Ritchie et al., 2013). Data gathered from qualitative research can feel more authentic as the researcher unpacks what participants have experienced in their own words and from their perspective, adding to this richness (Engel & Schutt, 2017).

Qualitative researchers are in touch with the social world as their research uncovers greater detail in the lives of their participants (Howitt, 2019). Qualitative researchers are viewed as having a caring ethical stance as they have a sense of personal responsibility for the wellbeing of their participants. This means that qualitative researchers do not merely want to identify the challenges faced by participants, but also seek for change to occur (Howitt, 2019). Areas where change could take place are provided in chapter five of this study under recommendations.

The researcher aimed to get an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and experiences of first year students on their transition to living in a residence. As qualitative research specifically explores the meaning that a participant makes of an experience, the researcher believes that a qualitative approach was most suited for this study.

Engel and Schutt (2017) identify four types of research designs which are: descriptive, explanatory, evaluation and exploratory. Descriptive research generally involves gathering

facts and aims to describe and document the phenomena being studied (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Explanatory research aims to identify causes and effects of social phenomena and how phenomena changes in response to different variants (Engel & Schutt, 2017). Evaluation research explores research around the effects and implementation of social policies and the impact of programmes for a particular client group or community (Engel & Schutt, 2017).

Lastly, exploratory designs seek to understand how people manage in a certain context and the meaning they associate with that experience (Engel & Schutt, 2017). The research design used in this study was the exploratory design as it is interpretative in nature and findings are emergent and less predetermined (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In exploratory research, the researcher begins by observing a social interaction and then aims to gather an explanation for what has been observed (Engel & Schutt, 2017). As mentioned in chapter one, the researcher worked at UCT Student Wellness Service as a peer counsellor and mentor facilitator for the Faculty of Health Sciences and through these roles became aware of the influence that residences had on first year students transitioning to university and thus decided to research this topic.

In addition, in exploratory research, the researcher is aiming to make sense of social phenomena, rather than to test a hypothesis (Engel & Schutt, 2017). The researcher wanted to better understand the social phenomena of how first year students experience their transition to a residence and thus believes that the exploratory design was best suited for this study.

3.3 Population and sampling

3.3.1 Sampling technique

Traditionally in qualitative research non-probability sampling is used and in non-probability sampling the participants are deliberately selected to reflect the sample population (Ritchie et al., 2013; Elliott & Valliant, 2017). The sample is not meant to be statistically represented but instead the characteristics of the population are used as the basis for selection (Ritchie et al., 2013; Elliott & Valliant, 2017). Non-probability sampling does not make use of a random selection procedure as in qualitative research the sample can be smaller, as a smaller sample allows for more in-depth research (Engel & Schutt, 2017).

This study made use of non-probability sampling and more specifically, purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is based on the judgement of the researcher as the sample must be composed of the most representative group for the chosen population (Whitley, Kite & Adams, 2013; Palinkas et al., 2015; Roestenburg, Strydom & Fouché, 2021). The researcher is required to seek out individuals in a setting where the phenomenon under study is most likely to occur (Roestenburg, Strydom & Fouché, 2021). For this study, the chosen population were first year university students who were living in a residence. The researcher required a particular group which were first year students that had moved from home into a residence in their first year of study. As Engel and Schutt (2017) indicate, an exploratory design seeks to understand the meaning people associate with an experience and based on this, the researcher chose purposive sampling of first-year students to gain the best understanding of how these participants experienced the adjustment to residence life.

3.3.2 Sampling characteristics

For this study, the participants were first-year students living in a residence while studying at UCT. Nineteen participants were recruited for this study, irrespective of age, gender, and their chosen degree. All racial groups were included, and only Black students volunteered to participate in the study. The participants had completed high school in the year before entering university and lived at home before living in a residence, so residence was their first experience living independently from family.

3.3.3 Sampling procedure

This research did not focus on a particular first year residence but interviewed participants from some of the 16 residences that house first year students at UCT. The researcher adhered to the Protection of Personal Information Act No. 4 of 2013 (POPIA) which states that personal information of an individual must be protected and cannot be made available or processed by others without the permission of that individual. Abiding by POPIA, the researcher contacted The Department of Student Affairs at UCT and sent them and specifically the housing department a copy of her ethical clearance, a consent form, and an information leaflet about the current study. The Department of Student Affairs granted the researcher permission to approach the wardens of the residences.

The researcher contacted the wardens and was given permission to liaise with sub-wardens for a student in the residence who was interested in working as a research assistant on the study.

Three research assistants were recruited. The research assistants advertised the study to first year students in the residences on the researcher's behalf. When a participant was recruited and had given consent to have their information shared with the researcher, the research assistant emailed the researcher with the participant's information. The researcher then emailed the participants, introducing herself and the study and arranged a time and platform to meet with the participants.

3.4 Data collection approach

3.4.1 Data collection method

In-depth, in-person and online interviews were used to collect the data. Face-to-face interviews are common in qualitative studies where the researcher asks participants open-ended questions to gather opinions and views from the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). They are not one-sided and allow participants to tell their story and share their perspective (Greeff, 2011; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In in-depth interviews, the researcher should convey to the participant that their views are valuable to the study as the ideal participants are seen as those who are keen to engage in a deep discussion about the topic (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The engagement between the researcher and the participant in an in-depth interview can be viewed as a kind of relationship and this should be based on attention and respect for the researcher to obtain suitable information for the study (Lavee & Itzhakov, 2023). In-depth interviews, while lengthy in nature, allows researchers to obtain detailed information from participants and to unpack their experiences which is an important element of qualitative research (Howitt, 2019).

In this study the participants could choose to attend an in-person interview or an online interview which was held using Zoom or Microsoft Teams. When in-person interviews occurred, they were held in a venue on UCT Upper campus. Most participants preferred online interviews via Microsoft Teams or Zoom as this was most convenient for them. Each participant was interviewed once, and the interview was between 60 and 90 minutes in length. The participants were not reimbursed for data costs or travel costs as the participants were residing in a residence where free Wi-Fi is provided as well as a free shuttle service to various UCT campuses and residences.

3.4.2 Data collection tool

A semi-structured interview schedule was the chosen data collection tool, and the interview schedule was constructed using the research objectives of this study. Semi-structured interviews are usually used in qualitative research and an interview schedule can be defined as a written questionnaire that guides the interview (Greeff, 2011; Howitt, 2019; Roestenburg, Strydom & Fouché, 2021). The interview schedule should have questions that are specific to the area being researched, questions should not be leading but neutral, and jargon or ambiguous questions should be avoided (Stake, 2010; Roestenburg, Strydom & Fouché, 2021). The semi-structured interview encourages the participants to talk at length and in-depth about a topic and is less structured, compared to other more structured interviews (Howitt, 2019). The researcher adhered to these guidelines when constructing the interview schedule and ensured that the questions related to the research topic (see APPENDIX B).

The researcher made use of a pilot study which is a preliminary study to test the data collection tool in preparation for the larger study (Malmqvist et al., 2019). The pilot study is useful because it helps the researcher be better prepared by identifying and improving on weaknesses in the data collection (Malmqvist et al., 2019). The pilot study tests if the data collection tool enables the participants to give a coherent account of the topic and doesn't limit what the participants are able to share about the topic (Ritchie et al., 2013). Should this not be the case, the data collection tool would need to be revised (Ritchie et al., 2013).

The researcher interviewed two participants who are first-year students in a residence for the pilot study and the researcher found that the structure of the interview schedule worked well in enabling that participants to engage with the topic. She did not need to revise the interview schedule and the findings from the pilot study were not included in the data analysis.

3.4.3 Data recording

Recordings of interviews are common in qualitative research, but notes should be taken alongside the recordings in case the device malfunctions and the consent of the participants must be provided (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Roestenburg, Strydom & Fouché, 2021). If the interview is being recorded, it allows the researcher to devote their full attention to what the participant is saying and respond accordingly (Ritchie et al., 2013). Recordings also provide an accurate account of what the participants said and enables the researcher to capture the

language that the participants used which adds to the richness of the data (Ritchie et al., 2013), which is an important element of qualitative research.

For this study the interviews were recorded once consent had been obtained from the participants, and notes were taken. The interviews were transcribed by the researcher, and the analysis was based on the written transcripts.

3.5 Data analysis

Data analysis is built on themes and the researcher makes interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study made use of thematic analysis which is a qualitative research method that identifies and analyses the themes in the data (Nowell et al., 2017). The process of data analysis that was used in this study is the Marshall and Rossman (2016) seven phase approach:

- 1) The first phase consists of organising the data which was done by logging data into a software programme to list the basic details of the participants, when they were interviewed and any themes that emerged (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The researcher used Microsoft Word and created a table with the details of the participants, the date that they were interviewed and themes that emerged from their interviews.
- 2) The second phase entails immersion in the data where the researcher rereads the data to get to know the data on a deeper level (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The researcher printed out the themes that emerged, cut them into flash cards and used colour to categorize them as this helped her better understand the data.
- 3) The third phase consists of generating case summaries and possible categories and themes; salient themes, recurring ideas and beliefs are explored here (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). On the Microsoft Word document mentioned above, during this phase the researcher added additional columns which highlighted the themes.
- 4) The fourth phase consists of coding the data using theory-generated codes and in-vivo codes (Marshall & Rossman, 2016) and the researcher created and applied various codes to her analysis based on the clusters and subclusters of information that emerged from the data.
- 5) The fifth phase is offering interpretations by writing analytic memos (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Here the researcher wrote down notes and reflective points alongside the data analysis and also kept a journal for notetaking.

- 6) In the sixth phase searching for alternative understanding takes place where the researcher scrutinises the data for any errors or bias caused by the researcher herself (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The researcher used the reflective notes as indicated above to help monitor any bias and the researcher frequently met with her research supervisor to discuss concerns around this and to ensure that no errors were being caused by the researcher.
- 7) The seventh phase is writing the report for presenting the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016) and the findings are presented in chapter four.

3.6 Data Verification

Lincoln and Guba (1999) developed four criteria against which the trustworthiness of the research project can be evaluated, and these four criteria were applied to this study.

3.6.1 Credibility

Credibility highlights that the subject of the study must be accurately identified and described. This needs to occur because validity of a qualitative study depends on the strength of its description. Validity occurs through the in-depth description of the variables stemming from the data. There are many strategies to check the credibility in a study such as persistent observation, peer debriefing and member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1999; Amankwaa, 2016). The prolonged engagement that the researcher usually has with participants in a qualitative study as well as using supervision can contribute to credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1999; Amankwaa, 2016). The researcher made use of peer debriefing and consulted with social work peers who were impartial but were still qualified to review and assess the findings. The researcher also used supervision and frequently reviewed her findings with her research supervisor to contribute to credibility of the study.

3.6.2 Transferability

In order to obtain transferability, the researcher must relate to the theoretical frameworks to illustrate how the data collection and the data analysis is guided by concepts and models of the theoretical framework thus, creating theoretical parameters (Lincoln & Guba, 1999; Amankwaa, 2016). This allows other researchers who conduct a study with the same theoretical framework and using the same parameters to determine if the research can be transferred to another setting or ties in with the specific theoretical framework (Lincoln & Guba, 1999;

Amankwaa, 2016). The researcher used The Systems Theory Perspective and Schlossberg's Transition Model as the two theoretical frameworks through which the theoretical parameters were based.

3.6.3 Dependability

In terms of dependability, changing conditions are explored in the area chosen for study as well as changes in the design through a refined understanding of the setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1999; Amankwaa, 2016). In qualitative research, the assumption is that the social world is always being constructed making the concept of replicating the study complex and using an "inquiry audit" could be useful. The inquiry audit can be defined as an external researcher who can evaluate the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1999; Amankwaa, 2016). This study made use of an inquiry auditor as the study was supervised by an academic from the Department of Social Work and Social Development.

3.6.4 Conformability

Lastly with conformability the researcher should explore whether the findings of the study can be confirmed by another study as this removes researcher characteristics from the study and puts the emphasis on the data alone (Lincoln & Guba, 1999; Amankwaa, 2016). In this study, the research supervisor was evaluating the research process. The researcher also practised reflexivity during data collection and data analysis in order to limit the researcher's own influence.

3.7 Limitations of the study

The limitations of the study pertain to:

3.7.1 Research design

The research design is a limitation due to the lack of generalisability of qualitative research. However, a qualitative approach aims to understand the phenomena from the perspective of the participants and aims for more exploration and depth rather than to generalise the findings (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The researcher wanted an in-depth understanding of the topic rather than to generalise and thus chose to conduct the study using a qualitative research design.

3.7.2 Sample size

A small sample is a potential limitation, but as qualitative research aims for depth instead of a sample that represents a larger population, a smaller sample is advised to achieve this level of depth (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This pertains to this study because as mentioned above, the researcher wanted an in-depth understanding of the topic and used purposive sampling to seek out individuals in a setting where the phenomenon under study is most likely to occur, which led to smaller sample of nineteen participants.

3.7.3 Researcher's bias

The researcher's bias comprises the researcher's experiences, values and identity and as qualitative research is subjective in nature the researcher's bias can influence the study making this a limitation (Stake, 2010; Wadams & Park, 2018). The researcher's bias can be more prevalent when in-depth interviews were used as the researcher enters the participant's life in a personal, albeit brief manner (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The researcher had supervision throughout the study and monitored her own biases by journaling and reflecting on her thoughts and experiences of the study.

3.7.4 Data collection

The data collection approach can be seen as a limitation as interviews rely on a level of trust between the interviewee and interviewer (Roestenburg, Strydom & Fouché, 2021). The participants could feel uncomfortable sharing or may find they struggle to verbalise their thoughts. For interviews to be effective the researcher must be skilled at personal interaction with good listening skills and question forming (Lavee & Itzchakov, 2023). As the researcher is a qualified social worker, she has experience with interviews and was confident about her ability to engage in personal interaction, listening and question forming. She did not feel that participants felt uncomfortable to share.

3.7.5 Data analysis

Data analysis can also be a limitation as qualitative data analysis is time-consuming and does not occur in a linear fashion meaning that certain aspects in the data could be overlooked (Roestenburg, Strydom & Fouché, 2021). The researcher regularly engaged with her supervisor who assisted with the data analysis stage.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the methodology of the research where a qualitative research design was used for the study. The penultimate chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. A demographic profile of the participants is provided first. The findings are then presented, beginning with the framework of analysis, where the themes, categories and subcategories are outlined. These themes are in line with the research objectives. A brief conclusion completes the chapter.

4.2 Demographic Profile of Participants

Table 1: Demographic of participants

Name ¹	Age	Academic Programme of Study	Gender	Place of Origin
Emmy	19	Bachelor of Business Science	Female	Gauteng
Que	19	Bachelor of Science in Geomatics	Male	Western Cape
Prince	18	Bachelor of Science in Engineering	Male	Mpumalanga
AND	19	Bachelor of Science in Engineering	Male	KwaZulu-Natal
Light	18	Bachelor of Science in Mathematical, Physical and Statistical Sciences	Male	Gauteng
Jay	20	Bachelor of Business Science	Male	Western Cape
MM	19	Bachelor of Business Science	Male	Western Cape
Sman	18	Bachelor of Science in Engineering	Male	Western Cape
Lion	18	Bachelor of Science in Engineering	Male	Western Cape
Zee	19	Bachelor of Music	Female	Western Cape
Bee	19	Bachelor of Music	Female	Eastern Cape
Emcee	20	Bachelor of Music	Male	Gauteng
Zeez	18	Bachelor of Science in Engineering	Male	Eastern Cape
Ashley	18	Bachelor of Social Science	Male	Eastern Cape
Zest	20	Higher Certificate in Disability Practice	Male	Gauteng
Mimi	18	Bachelor of Science in Engineering	Female	North West Province
Chad	19	Bachelor of Laws	Male	Western Cape
Don	19	Bachelor of Science in Engineering	Male	Gauteng
Conation	18	Bachelor of Science in Engineering	Male	KwaZulu-Natal

Most of the participants are 18 or 19 years old, while three participants are aged 20. Most of them identify as male with four of the participants identifying as female. The participants are mainly from the Western Cape but some hail from other provinces. They are enrolled in various

¹ All participants have been identified by their pseudonym.

academic programmes with Bachelor of Science in Engineering in Chemical Engineering being the most common.

4.3 Presentation of Findings

Table 2: Framework of Analysis

Themes	Categories	Sub-categories
4.3.1. The benefits of living at a residence.	4.3.1.1 Residence offers convenience	(i) Proximity to campus and amenities (ii) Services offered by the residence
	4.3.1.2. Independence and freedom	
	4.3.1.3. Flourishing	
	4.3.1.4. Having a roommate	
4.3.2. The challenges of living at a residence.	4.3.2.1. Loneliness	
	4.3.2.2. Catering	
	4.3.2.3. Residence schedule	
	4.3.2.4. Living with others	
4.3.3. Support received by first year students living at a residence.	4.3.3.1. Support from sub-wardens	
	4.3.3.2. Support from mentors	
	4.3.3.3. Support from peers	
4.3.4. To determine what recommendations would the participants make to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence.	4.3.4.1. Residence improvements	(i) improving catering (ii) improving the mentor programme
	4.3.4.2. Increased support for students	
4.3.5. To determine what recommendations would the participants make to incoming first year students with regards to managing the transition to residence living.	4.3.5.1. Accessing support services	
	4.3.5.2. Prioritising studies	
	4.3.5.3. Focus on self	

4.3.1 Theme 1: The benefits of living at a residence.

All the participants reported that there were benefits to living in a residence and there were four core areas that emerged from the findings.

4.3.1.1 Residence offers convenience.

Many participants indicated that the convenience offered through living in a residence was beneficial and facilitated their adjustment to their life in the residence.

(i) Proximity to campus and amenities

The first factor that the participants valued was the residence's proximity to campus because it meant that they could easily hail transport to and from campus. The participants believe that the proximity to campus facilitated their learning because their academic activities were easily accessed.

Its [the residence] ²location is a positive because sometimes I will be late and when I get to the bus stop, there are no Jammies. So, I'll just run to upper campus. Yeah, that's the positive. Its location is great and that's why I don't want to leave [the residence] because of its location.

-Prince

The location of [the residence] in general is good and I love that it is easy for me to get to class. I would say that where it is located on lower campus helps as you are close to the main road also.

-Chad

Not only were the residences close to campus, but they were also close to amenities such as grocery stores and shops. The participants valued this because most of them were not familiar with the area that their residence was in and being close to amenities meant that the participants could easily access these facilities. They indicated that they benefitted from the convenience offered by living in residence. This helped them adjust to their residence as they were able to focus on their studies and did not have to worry about the practical aspects of daily life.

The new city means new people and things. I like the fact that res is conveniently situated. So, like the shops are here, the bus stop is here, like everything is just convenient in that sense.

-Don

The findings indicate that the location of residences is beneficial to participants because it facilitates the transition to residence as students do not have to struggle to access campus or another amenities. Most participants saw the residences as an extension of the Western Cape as both were unfamiliar spaces. The convenience offered by residence had deeper meaning because it indicated to participants that their needs could be met even if the environment was unfamiliar. This was more profound for the participants who do not hail from the Western Cape because having their needs met in residence meant that despite living in a new province, the environment could still meet their needs. These findings can be understood through Ecological

² The names of the residences have been removed to further protect anonymity.

Systems Theory, which argues that the individual is an active participant in their development and this development is influenced by how they view their environment (Hepworth, Rooney & Rooney, 2017; Matthies & Närhi, 2018). Participants found that residences facilitated access to the university and necessary resources, and this access assisted participants with their adjustment as first year students in a residence. The theory further argues that it is vital that there are suitable resources in the environment for the individual to feel that their needs are met (Besthorn, 2013; Matthies & Närhi, 2018). Thus, one can argue that students experiencing their environment as easily being able to meet their needs could aid their adjustment and transition to the residence, as well as their overall development into their new role of being a first-year student.

(ii) Services offered by the residence

The second key factor that the participants noted that was beneficial about living in a residence were the services offered by the residences. Having access to these services, which included meals being prepared for them and having their laundry done meant that the participants could focus on their studies. Some participants also noted the value of being able to use facilities including study rooms, computer labs, gyms, game rooms and music rooms. Being able to use study rooms and labs in residence meant that participants did not have to leave the residence to study which saved them time and leisure services offered an element of enjoyment which helped participants with the transition to a residence.

Res has everything that a student needs because we don't even cook for ourselves. We also have study rooms, and we have a computer lab. We even have like a ballroom where you can go to gym. So, I don't really have to go somewhere to find things like printing machines. So, it was convenient for me, and I like that.
-Ashley.

Let's start with the laundry. It's very fitting because you can wash and dry your clothes. While like at home you wash your clothes and then put them outside where you could dry them. So that's very effective, but here you can just take only two hours and you are done with your laundry instead of doing your laundry for 7 hours. Washing it, waiting for it, for it to dry also.
-Light

We have this gaming room here. I go there sometimes and play games with friends. Yeah, that's like a thing I enjoy the most and, we have video games here. I think I play PlayStation. That's really fun and playing with other people is fun too.
-MM

It is evident that having all their physical needs taken care of and having access to specific facilities has meant that the participants can focus on their studies. Furthermore, these facilities could be viewed as helping the participants manage anxiety or stress that transitioning to a residence can cause. Various researchers have also found that the convenience of living in a residence and being near to resources that assist students while studying can prove useful for first year students as they transition to university life because the proximity of these services allows them to focus on their studies and alleviates stress (Li, Shelley & Whalen, 2005; Blimling, 2014; Long, 2014).

4.3.1.2 Independence and freedom

All the participants left home for the first time when they moved to residence, and they valued being able to live independently. Firstly, many enjoyed not being bound by their parents' rules and secondly others felt that having the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and thus being able to get to know themselves better was very valuable to them.

Now living in [the residence], positives would be I don't have to worry about having my mom to overwatch me or micromanage me. OK, I don't wanna say, micromanage. But being always under her supervision instead of me having to look out for myself. And like, you know, make my own mistakes, and learn from them.
-Emcee

The most positive thing is well I think the self-discovery part. Yeah, really getting to know how to become a balanced student. Realizing what matters most and like how I should allocate my time and my energy into different activities of my life. I kind of got to become a little independent also and more accountable for my actions.
-Mimi

Independence was clearly an important consideration for these participants. The literature supports this statement and scholars note that the ability to live independently and with more freedom, away from parents and restrictions, is a common motivation for first year students to enrol at university (Lowe & Dotterer, 2018; Covarrubias et al., 2019). The need for independence is appropriate for the participants' life stage as noted by Stokes, Schultz and Alpaslan (2018) and Winter (2014). Schlossberg's (2008) Transition Theory acknowledges first year students' anxiety as they transition into the university space but mentions that the perceptions that they hold of the transition (either positive or negative) can affect how they experience the transition (Barclay, 2017). In this study many participants perceived the

transition more positively because of the independence and freedom that living in a residence offered which in turn facilitated their adjustment to residence.

4.3.1.3 Flourishing

Many participants revealed that experiencing flourishing was a further benefit to living in a residence. These participants flourished personally and academically. Firstly, they were able to flourish as they understood their personality better as noted above. They also indicated that being able to form relationships with others and seeing their ability to display warmth and kindness added to their flourishing. Secondly, they developed skills that could help them with mastering their studies. These skills included being self-motivated, focusing, problem solving, people skills and decision-making skills. They also found more meaning in their studies.

One thing that I've learned about myself living here in a residence since I'm living with someone. I've learned something about myself that I am able to accommodate other people and wanting to learn more about them and understand them because I've been living in South Africa where you have 11 different languages. So, I've been able to learn more about other people, learn more about their cultures and stuff.

-Zeez

I think I just learned that in general I've got quite good people skills. I think that overall, it was quite a good adjustment, and I learned by myself that if you just take it day by day and you surround yourself with good people and you just open up enough to be like "Hey, I need some help", then it will go perfectly fine.

-Bee

For first years, it has everything to do with academics. You are not as smart as you think. That's what I learnt. You are smart but not for university, so study. You need to study and stay focused. I learnt to work hard to maintain my academic record.

-AND

In this study, the positive aspects of flourishing are noted. Other authors echo the important role that flourishing plays in promoting transition for first years to university. This is because flourishing can be accompanied by feelings of personal growth, as new opportunities are created, and is accompanied with a positive outlook on life and goal achievement (Ryff, 1989; Knoesen & Naudé, 2018; Elphinstone, Whitehead & Bates, 2020). Participants indicated that they experienced personal growth as they adjusted to residence life. They learnt many lessons including whether they were introverted or extroverted, learning to ask for help, that they could solve their own problems, and were understanding of others' experiences. Furthermore, flourishing is also defined as a combination of positive relationships, meaning and purpose,

and positive affect and engagement (Seligman, 2011; Butler & Kern, 2016; Volstad et al., 2020) and this was also evident in the findings through participants interaction with others in the residence.

4.3.1.4 Having a roommate

Almost all the participants mentioned that having a roommate was a benefit to living in a residence. The main reason was that roommates provided companionship and the participants could discuss their feelings and concerns with their roommates. This meant that they felt that they were not alone and that they had someone who understood their experiences. Roommates were often the first relationships that participants formed and sharing a space with a roommate gave them a sense of community.

I've got a good roommate, and we talk about everything like academics and life. I think your roommate is your brother where you can talk about anything. If you are suffering, you talk to your roommate. Your roommate will tell you that it isn't easy for anyone, but you must push and work hard and move forward. It is also for guidance. Let's say you are a first year and you know no one. If there is an emergency like you are sick, then your roommate can report to the sub warden.

-Que

And the positive thing is that when you first arrived here as a first year, you get your roommate, then it is nice to have someone to live with you and all that stuff so that made me to adjust quickly because he was going through what I was going through.

-Sman

The findings reveal the importance of having a roommate to facilitate adjustment to residence. Many authors support this statement and note that having a roommate in a residence provides support and helps students adjust to living in a residence (Tolman, 2017; Vandeyar & Mohale, 2017; Zhang & Pu, 2017). Schlossberg's (2011) Transition Theory posits that an individual who is transitioning in life must have support so that they can develop a sense of belonging, which can include relationships with others and developing a sense of community (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012; Barclay, 2017; Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022). These findings demonstrate that roommates provided a sense of belonging as participants felt that their roommates understood what they were going through which mitigated some of the challenges they experienced.

The above theme revealed that there were many beneficial aspects that occurred for participants when living in a residence. The location of the residence and the companionship of a roommate were viewed as positive. Participants also experienced growth through being independent and flourishing. In addition to positive aspects, some challenges were also encountered, which will be discussed below.

4.3.2 Theme 2: The challenges of living at a residence.

There were four key challenges that emerged from the data. The first was loneliness:

4.3.2.1 Loneliness

Several participants indicated that they often felt lonely while they were living in a residence mainly because they missed their families. Some participants indicated that they felt loneliness because of being away from their home and not having the support that their family can offer. Many participants even mentioned feeling so lonely that they went home to see their family or called them more often. They even considered moving to a university closer to home to be nearer to their family.

The only thing about [the residence] is that it can feel lonely sometimes. Everyone keeps to themselves. I mean I remember feeling homesick. At first, I was very excited to be in Cape Town, but it just went down like "Ok, I miss home. I want to go home." The feeling of being alone was hard cause I didn't even have friends.

-Emmy

I didn't really like it when I first came here. Maybe like my first week. It was really hard for me. I didn't really like staying in res because I'm a family person and my family is not here. And my father and all my family members were not here, and I was just alone. And then here I used to miss them a lot and then I would just sometimes go back home and then come back and do all of that again. That's the thing that was hard. I think that challenged me the most.

-Sman

Several participants felt lonely while trying to make new friends and felt that other students had formed cliques and were less friendly than anticipated.

I didn't expect for it to be so isolated cause now that I'm seeing it, everyone's got their own cliques and stuff. It's more about you being on your own. But that's from my experience. Obviously, I've heard that there's times where they don't do that, but from what I've seen everyone is isolated, including myself.

-Zest

'Cause when I got here and while being here, it kind of feels lonely in a way. Everyone is doing their own stuff with their groups. You must manage on your own and if you don't, you are the one that falls behind alone.

-MM

The sense of loneliness is a challenging aspect because it hindered the participants ability to adjust as they were more focused on their family and friends back home and less able to try and grow their friend circle and sense of community in the residence. Furthermore, this sense of loneliness could have influenced the participants' sense of belonging in the university space as they felt that the residence didn't provide the sense of comfort that their home did. Many authors concur with this finding and state that a high rate of loneliness can be experienced by first year students due to feelings of homesickness (English et al., 2017; Dagne & Dagne, 2019).

4.3.2.2 Catering

A central finding in this study was that almost all the participants indicated that their biggest challenge with living in a residence was concerns around the catering. These concerns included participants getting sick from the food provided in the residence and skipping meals altogether out of fear of getting sick. They mentioned that they or their roommates got sick and often experienced vomiting and diarrhoea which in some cases led to hospitalisation.

I think the only challenge was with the food, like people started getting pedantic about the food because the food was not good, and we complained a lot about it. Within the first month, six people in our res went to hospital for food poisoning. It was really bad, and it was something a lot of people were struggling with. Especially since when you get paranoid about those things, you don't want to eat, which is not healthy for you.

-Bee

I think for me, one of the reasons why people are so down is the food. No, because there's nothing worse than coming home after a long draining day and like your food is bad. Like sometimes you get rotten fruits. That was the thing in first semester people were getting sick or got a bug or something. The beef I had two days ago, it was off. And eating bad food puts you in a foul mood already.

-Don

These findings allude to the catering in the residences being of such poor quality that the food is inedible. Several authors speak of food insecurity encompassing food being inadequate for consumption (Bruening et al., 2016; El Zein et al., 2019; Wagner, Kaneli & Masango, 2021)

which is also confirmed in these findings. This was a very prevalent finding in this study and as much as the concern is around food insecurity, at a deeper level the catering in the residence made participants feel dehumanised because they were not having their basic human need of nutrition met. Moreover, as all participants are Black South Africans and are entering into a university where they feel alienated, experiencing this sense of dehumanisation could have exacerbated challenges with their transition to a residence. This could occur because the participants could interpret their unmet nutritional needs as an indication that they are not valued or important enough to have these needs met.

4.3.2.3 Residence schedule

A third finding was that some participants mentioned that they struggled with the schedule of the residence, particularly having to eat meals at certain times. Residences have scheduled mealtimes and they battled to adjust to this schedule. Several participants had difficulty learning to adjust to eating when they were not hungry and would skip meals as mealtimes did not suit them. They also forgot when to collect their meals or arrived too late when no meals were available. This was challenging for participants as they went without food at times, and they noted this influenced their ability to function and concentrate.

I feel like one of the challenges is this thing of eating food on a time schedule. I'm not used to that. I just eat when I feel like I'm hungry. So now I had to make sure that OK, even though I'm not hungry, I must go and eat at the dining hall. So that will be a challenge for me because I'm not used to eating based on a time schedule. I don't have a daily routine for eating. So that's one of the things that I had to adjust to.

-Jay

Another thing is, I wish they told me that if I come later to the dining hall food might get finished. That's the most irritating thing about the dining hall. Cause you come a little later because before you had to allocate the time, right? So, there would be a time that you would select, and you go during that time. So, if you pick a later time, you end up missing out on options that were really good. Now you must stick with that old option that you didn't want. But you could have gotten it if you had come earlier.

-Zest

Alongside the independence that residence offers, a challenge surrounding independent living is that first years are still required to follow the residence's structure. Research speaks to the need for first year students to live independently (Lowe & Dotterer, 2018; Covarrubias et al., 2019) and thus supports this finding which demonstrates the participants' struggle with not being able to have control over all aspects of their schedules. Within this finding an interesting

paradox is revealed. In the previous section the participants spoke about how important the freedom and independence were for them and that residence was a space where they flourished, but at the same time there was also this paradoxical element of feeling controlled and that they were unable to make their own decisions thus feeling less independent.

4.3.2.4 Living with others

Some participants found that having to learn to live with people who were not family members and who had different ways of being to be extremely challenging for them. An example of these different ways of being manifested in issues around cleanliness. Most participants felt angered by the way others managed their space. Several participants felt angry when bathrooms and common areas were left dirty by other students because they then spent time, that they could have used for their own tasks, cleaning up after these students. It also made participants feel that the residence space was unfamiliar to them and exacerbated their feelings that residence differed from their homes.

They are not cleaning up after themselves. I mean, there are problems with the sinks and with the toilet. They leave it dirty, and they don't care about that, so it stays that way, and this is not a good space for living.

-Lion

So, I share a corridor with a lot of people, I think 14 people. So, in the common areas not everyone is as hygienic as I hope for them to be. So, they leave the mess around in the shower, in the bathrooms, in the kitchenette, and I'm one person who cannot stand a mess. I really like to stay in a space that is clean and organized, so when I'm in a space that is messy I kinda get dysfunctional.

-Mimi

This finding brings to light another irony that while several participants found having a relationship with a roommate a positive aspect of adjustment, they simultaneously battled living with others in the residence. These conflicting experiences are common in the adolescence phase of development as they encounter conflicting ideas and values as stated by Stokes, Schultz and Alpaslan (2018) and Winter (2014). Many participants indicated that their biggest challenge living with others in a residence was around cleanliness which concurs with previous research (Abdullahi & Wan Yusoff, 2018; Simpeh & Shakantu, 2020). The researcher would argue that the cleanliness or habits of others was a manifestation of a deeper issue. For many participants there was a loss of how things were done at home and how their family did

things. Being exposed to how others live symbolised a loss for them as they had to acknowledge that they no longer lived in the comfort of their home.

This theme revealed that there were several challenges that participants faced when living in a residence. Some challenges were related to the residence itself while other challenges stemmed from the emotional effect that living in a new space had on participants including loneliness and living with others for the first time. While participants faced challenges, they felt that there were elements of support available to them and these will be discussed next.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Support received by first year students living at a residence.

All participants stated that they received support from individuals within the residence systems which fostered their adjustment to living in a residence. Three primary support systems emerged from the data.

4.3.3.1 Support from sub-wardens

Support from sub-wardens was mentioned by several participants as a factor that helped them adjust to the residence. Sub-wardens addressed problems, did check-ins with the participants, offered emotional and academic support, and shared their experiences of being a first-year student. This support was valuable because these participants felt that they were not alone in their struggles and that they had a fellow student who could assist them when needed. They also felt more comfortable engaging with a student as opposed to a more senior person in the residence such as the warden.

Sub-wardens helped because I had an incident this month where I had a breakdown, and the sub-wardens were quick to respond.

-Emmy

The sub-wardens were like my big brothers. They were people that are willing to talk to you. Even if my academics are really challenging. They are people who are there for you and would knock on the door and we can just talk about my problem and what I am going through. My res brothers have already gone through the experience, so they know what to say and what to do. So, they are like my bigger brothers.

-AND

This finding concurs with the literature that university staff can be of support to first year students (Gist-Mackey, Wiley & Erba, 2018; Graham, Hurtado & Gonyea, 2018). Residence sub-wardens were seen as one of the biggest supportive factors as they were readily available

to participants. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory highlights social support and identifies the importance of social interaction in an individual's life.

4.3.3.2 Support from mentors

Mentors in the residences, referred to by students as floor mentors, were mentioned by almost all participants as their main support system whilst living in a residence. Mentors helped participants with how to navigate the residence, campus, and Cape Town. They offered academic and emotional support, motivated participants, and were often the first person that participants felt they could go to for help. As mentors have been through the experience of being a first-year, numerous participants reported that their mentors normalised their experiences and this greatly supported them.

I would say the mentors, the floor mentors. The floor mentors were very helpful because their doors are open for anything. If you feel like you want to know maybe where the shops are, if you want to know where you can get certain essentials and stuff, you just have to approach them any time of the day. Even if it's in the morning, even if it's at night, we just have to tell them that "OK, I feel like doing this", and they would provide help. They were there to help us settle in.

-Jay

The mentors, they helped a lot. For me they were the biggest fact to me adjusting. I guess that because they have been here longer than us and essentially like just telling us stories about their experiences and you feel more reassured. Like OK, that these things that are happening are normal and all these other people also go through this and then like "Oh we can hustle for this!" I think just that perspective of older people helped us to feel more welcomed.

-Don

Mentor support is valuable to participants as they were able to see that their mentor had successfully transitioned to living in a residence in their first year and was coping in their second year. This gave most participants a sense of hope and assisted their transition. Schlossberg's (2008) Transition Theory highlights the importance of mentors as a support for young adults who may feel more comfortable confiding in others their own age (Barclay, 2017). As mentioned above, the sub-warden played an important supportive role and on a deeper level the sub-warden played the role of a symbolic parent for participants. It can also be argued that the mentors played the role of an older sibling. The mentor or "older sibling" had been through the residence experience and imparted their knowledge onto the "younger sibling" or in this case, the first-year participant transitioning to residence life. This finding

corresponds with the vast research stating that mentoring acts as a support structure for first year students in their transition to university (Chester et al., 2013; Yomtov et al., 2017; Akinla, Hagan & Atiomo, 2018).

4.3.3.3 Support from peers

Support from peers was identified by some participants as a source of support when navigating residence life. Several participants indicated that peer support in the first few weeks of living in a residence helped them adjust as they were sharing the same experiences and could relate to what they were going through. Many participants reported that peer support in the residence led to feelings of excitement about having peers and feelings of being accepted.

Making friends in the res was good. I really love how inclusive everyone was like they made me feel very comfortable with myself. Nobody judges you for being who and whatever you are. Everyone would accept you for you. Nobody complains or anything. Everyone is able to live together.

-Chad

Meeting new people, I must say, meeting new people. The guys here [in residence] they are the best. When I am at res I don't get bored. I'll be talking to this guy and then he'll be telling me about his experience. There'll be ten of us because talking about our different experiences, you know, we'll be making bonds. The point is there are guys here and we're making friends and also getting some connections in life. Talking with other people who experienced different things from what you have experienced, sharing their stories.

-Lion

I made a friend here in res and he was the one who was telling me where to go. Like when there's a place that I wanted to know about, he would tell me, and he would share things with me. I was really lucky to meet him because it helped me a lot.

-Conation

On a symbolic level all participants left their family behind to live in a residence and the structure in the residence provided by peers, mentors or sub-wardens offered participants a figurative family structure which was of support for them as they felt 'held' in the residence space. Peers also play an important role in the lives of young adults so they are developmentally significant as supported by Stokes, Schultz and Alpaslan (2018) and Winter (2014). This finding echoes Akinla, Hagan and Atiomo (2018) and Yomtov et al. (2017) who state that peer relationships help students feel more integrated at university.

In this theme it is evident that participants received support from individuals in the residence and the support from sub-wardens, mentors and peers also had deeper meaning for the participants. Based on the experiences of the participants, they made recommendations to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence and these will be discussed below.

4.3.4 Theme 4: To determine what recommendations would the participants make to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence.

It is important to note that the participants' recommendations were varied. There were no significant recommendations that emerged across all the participants however two recommendations were common.

4.3.4.1 Residence improvements

Two key areas of improvements were identified: catering improvements and mentor programme improvements.

(i) Improving catering

The primary recommendation from the participants, was that the food that is offered in residences need to be improved and that more food checks should be in place to ensure that the quality of the food that is served improves.

Well, obviously the food there [can be improved]. I don't know what they could do for the food situation but have more checks in place from an outsider perspective. Not just the inside people because I know quite a few reses where most people aren't always happy with the food and there were a few cases of food poisoning this year.
-Zee

So, I would recommend that they really fix the food issue. They give us fresh meals that are not rotten or just not in a good position to be eaten.
-Mimi

As previously noted in the chapter, the catering was a key concern for the participants, so it is not unexpected that catering emerged as a recommendation. The findings reveal how significantly affected the participants were by the catering and as previously discussed the catering in the residence made participants feel dehumanised because they were not having nutritional needs met which is a basic human need. Food insecurity can affect first year students

living in a residence as also stated by other scholars (Bruening et al., 2016; El Zein et al., 2019; Wagner 2021).

(ii) Improving the mentor programme

Secondly, some participants recommended that the university strengthen the mentor programme. The participants believe that the university should find mechanisms to ensure that the mentors fulfil their roles because they see the value of having a mentor. They also advised that the recruitment and selection of mentors are essential processes as this will determine who is appointed into this valuable role. They recommended that the mentor's commitment to the programme and reason for becoming a mentor should be assessed thoroughly by the selection committee. The participants further recommended that mentors receive regular training on how to mentor.

They should strengthen the mentorship programme because my mentor was telling me that a lot of people choose this mentorship thing just to get single rooms. So, I think they should make sure that they choose people who are committed to this mentorship thing because it is a very, very important thing for first year students.
-Zeez

Make each and every mentor better. Mine was ok but I don't know on other floors. My mentor came each and every Friday and asked me how is this week going, how is everything?
- Que

As previously mentioned in this chapter the mentor's symbolic role of an older sibling was a significant supportive factor for participants. The finding further highlights the important role that mentors play in student's adjustment to university life as supported by other authors (Chester et al., 2013; Means & Pyne, 2017; Akinla, Hagan & Atiomo, 2018).

4.3.4.2 Increased support for students

A number of participants recommended that the University of Cape Town offer more support to first years transitioning to residence life. Some participants indicated that while support was available, more support could be provided to assist with this transition. A few participants indicate that the orientation period alone does not offer enough support for all the adjustments that first year students must make, and they indicated that ongoing support in residences is needed after orientation. This support could be around adapting to the new residence environment, academic support, emotional support, and how to communicate with others.

I would say that they should implement more support to first years because first years really need it. Yes, first years need support. I think that they should implement more transformation support, adapting support and environment and housing support. How you can adjust to UCT.

-Que

For UCT I have a different recommendation that they should take it easy on the first years because it's very hard. For some of the first years they're not used to the constant pressure and everything. Moving from a village into a busy town like this in Cape Town it can be a lot for someone not used to using a computer. You also need to figure out the study methods because they are also different. You can't be studying like we did in high school. You also have to focus on the res and you also have to focus on adapting to the area and making new friends. So, it's just a lot so what I would say to UCT is that they should just take it easy, take it easy on the first years and let them adjust. I remember orientation, but it is not enough.

-Conation

This finding highlights the need for first year support with the transition to university and is underscored by authors who note that some South African students who enter university face multiple challenges adapting to university life, and they require more assistance with the transition (Rensburg, 2011; Chetty, Pather & Condy, 2015; Walker & Mathebula, 2020). This finding can be understood using Schlossberg's Transition Theory which states that when students undergo a significant transition, such as adjusting to living in a residence, they require supportive structures to assist with this (Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022). On a deeper level it can be noted that all the participants are Black South Africans who might have felt alienated when entering university and they may struggle to ask for the support that they need. Participants may also feel confused having left their home and communities and university support can provide a structure as they transition to residence.

In this theme participants made recommendations to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence and recommendations made included improvements and more support. Participants also made recommendations to incoming first years who are moving into a residence and this will be discussed as the final theme.

4.3.5 Theme 5: To determine what recommendations would the participants make to incoming first year students with regards to managing the transition to residence living.

Similar to the previous section participants had a range of recommendations, but three common recommendations were made in relation to this objective.

4.3.5.1 Accessing support services

Some participants recommended that incoming first years make use of residence support services. Seeking support was seen as an essential skill to ensure that students get the psychological, social, and academic support they need. It was interesting to note that retrospectively some of the participants realised how important accessing help is. In line with this, they recommended that first year students should ask for help where necessary.

Make sure that you do [ask for help] because I've seen in the first semester, we had 2 cases of people who tried to commit suicide. So, I feel people don't talk, don't want to talk about what they're struggling with. I feel like I would tell the first-year student that please reach out. So, you must reach out to those people, you must talk. You must make sure that you get the help that you need because the residence will provide you with the help that you need. Just make sure you utilize it.

-Zeez

So, it depends on how you are because sometimes it may be easy for you to adjust in res because in res it needs you to be social. It needs you to be able to talk to the other person because sometimes you cannot have that thing and you need it. You see, so you can just go to the other person like "No, I need this thing for now." And then he will help you with that. So, if you are a shy person, or if you are an introvert, it might be hard because you cannot say when you need help. If you need help you just have to shout, "I need help with this." and then someone will help you.

-Prince

This finding echoes the assertion of Denovan and Macaskill (2013) that support services are vital as a student adjusts to university life as this can help the student cope with stress and increase their wellbeing. The participants believed that incoming first year students should ask for help when needed and access university support services. The participants highlighted the importance of accessing mental health support because as mentioned previously they indicated that when they moved into a residence, they faced challenges in relation to their studies, loneliness and interacting with others causing them stress and impacting their wellbeing. High rates of mental illness among South African and international first year students is noted by Islam et al. (2022) and Bruffaerts et al. (2019), and accessing support around this is an important recommendation for students in first year as they adjust to residence life. As mentioned previously, Black South African students may find asking for help in an unfamiliar space to be challenging and it can be argued that this finding not only encourages students to ask for help but demonstrates that help can be provided to the students.

4.3.5.2 Prioritising studies

Some participants indicated that it was very easy to be distracted with other activities at university. Based on their experience they mentioned that it is essential for first year students to focus on and prioritise their studies because this will assist them to not fall behind with their studies. Their recommendations included having a study schedule, limiting socialising, increasing their study time, and acknowledging that university will be more academically challenging than high school.

They must keep their time and make sure that they don't get distracted at university. It is a must because it's easy to get distracted here, very easy and all of a sudden, you're like 2 to 3 chapters behind. So, they must not lose their way of studying in high school and apply it to university. They must stick to a routine. You must keep to that routine that made them get to university. Cause changing it will affect them very badly.

-Light

But also balance between fun and work, you know? And because, you hear these things like "You only live once. Enjoy your first year as much as you can." I feel like this advice is from people who really like to go out and just have party vibes all the time, which should not be the case because there's just as much fulfilment and fun in doing work.

-Emcee

It can be argued that this finding also highlights the structural inequalities in education in South Africa as there is a large gap between the services and facilities that many high schools can offer students. While some students may find that they are prepared for the academic challenges of university, others might feel underprepared based on their past schooling experiences. Mah and Ifenthaler (2018) as well as Atherton (2017) concur and posit that first-year students who enter university can often be academically unprepared for university.

4.3.5.3 Focus on self.

As mentioned previously, the participants found that one of the positive aspects of moving into a residence was that they had a sense of independence and freedom. It is thus interesting that when they were asked to make recommendations to first year students, they expanded on that theme. Many participants emphasised that part of the value of living in a residence was that this independence had a deeper psychological aspect to it which extended beyond being physically away from their families and communities. They therefore recommended that the residence is used as a space where first year students can be free to be themselves, experiment with new activities and enjoy the overall experience of living in a residence.

I'd just tell them to enjoy it [living in a residence]. Really it will be different every year. You know the group of people and I think anybody can adjust well here. Yeah, everyone is very friendly. So, it is quite nice. There's nothing negative about the staff or the people here. So yeah, it's a nice place. I'd tell them just to enjoy it and make the most of it.
-Zee

Just one thing, be yourself. Stay true to yourself. For a person like me who didn't feel safe from where they're coming from. When you get here, please be yourself. Please express yourself how you want to because no one cares. Yeah, like the people are minding their own business. So be yourself. Be happy.
-Ashley

It can be said that because the residence space is accepting, and non-judgemental participants felt that the residence essentially supports their development of self and gives participants the freedom to experiment with different behaviours or show a side of themselves that they did not feel safe to reveal at home. This finding concurs with research stating that the ability to live independently and with more freedom is a motivator for first year students as they adjust to university life (Lowe & Dotterer, 2018; Covarrubias et al., 2019). This finding also brings to light the developmental stage of the participants as young adults where according to theory a core part of their development is finding a sense of their identity (Winter, 2014; Stokes, Schultz & Alpaslan, 2018).

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings of the study, which demonstrate that moving into a residence was a complex process for the participants. There were several benefits that were presented in the chapter however there were also several challenges to living a residence. The chapter highlighted the importance of support for first year students transitioning into a residence which was also highlighted in the literature review. This chapter concludes with recommendation made by participants to the university in ways to support first years as they transition to a residence as well as incoming first year students on how best they could transition to residence life. The final chapter presents the conclusions of the study and the researchers' recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The final chapter presents the conclusions that are based on the findings and the researcher's recommendations. The conclusions are discussed under each research objective. The recommendations are made to the Department of Student Affairs at UCT and for future research.

5.2 Conclusions

The conclusions are presented below:

5.2.1 Objective One: To explore the participant's perceptions of the positive aspects of adjusting to living in a residence.

This study revealed that moving into a residence was a significant event in the lives of the participants. Moving into residence, encompassed several powerful positive and challenging experiences in relation to themselves and in relation to others.

It is evident that the convenience that residence provides was a key facilitator in promoting the other positive aspects that participants experienced. This convenience not only facilitated the participants' social adjustment but also facilitated their academic adjustment to university. The participants found it convenient that they did not have to leave residence to attend to their studies as the residence offered them these facilities. This meant that participants could easily attend to their studies at any time of the day in the comfort of their living space as they had all the resources at their disposal in residence to do so.

A key positive aspect of moving into residence was that the participants flourished personally and academically. Personal flourishing took place when participants experienced independence and freedom as they lived away from family for the first time and were free to manage their own lives and got to know their personalities better. Academic flourishing occurred when they developed skills that could help them with mastering their studies. Both personal and academic flourishing was further strengthened by participants' experiences of having a roommate, as several participants reported that they could engage with their roommates about a range of

topics including their studies and their wellbeing. One can argue that their roommate was seen as an ally who was experiencing the same transition as they were.

5.2.2 Objective two: To investigate the participant's perceptions of the challenging aspects of adjusting to living in a residence.

As mentioned previously, there were several challenging aspects that emerged for the participants in the transition to moving into a residence. Part of the challenge for participants was that they experienced difficult emotions such as loneliness which emerged clearly in the findings. This loneliness was often as a result of not having the support of their families.

It has previously been noted that for these young adult participants the ability to be independent was a powerful positive aspect of moving into a residence, so it is not surprising that the residence's regimented schedule was perceived as a challenge. This regimented schedule made the participants feel that they were being controlled and that they were not free to act independently.

Further challenges that participants experienced in relation to others was having to live with people who were not family members and having to accept that others live differently, for example that people have different standards of cleanliness. Even the catering in residences was a reminder that they were now having to live differently as manifested in them having to eat foods that differed from what was served at home. The catering had even deeper meaning, than merely just the physical aspects and not having access to nutritional food or experiencing food insecurity symbolised that their basic needs were not being prioritised.

5.2.3 Objective three: To examine what support participants have received with the transition to living in a residence.

It is noteworthy that even though participants valued independence and living apart from family, the emergence of a figurative family system occurred through support networks as sub-wardens, mentors and peers were identified as the main sources of support. Participants may have moved away from their biological family but the need for a surrogate family to offer support proved essential amongst participants. The sub-wardens acted as a parental figure to participants. They felt that because they were in a position of authority in the residence, they trusted the support that sub-wardens offered. Mentors in the residences were strongly highlighted by all participants as their main support system as they offered academic and

emotional support and had been through the experience of being a first year. In this way mentors played the role of an older sibling in their support to participants as they had been through the experience before and could advise participants with how to thrive in their transition to residence.

Lastly, support from peers was identified by participants as a source of support when adjusting to residence life. Peers generated feelings of acceptance and excitement in participants and helped participants to adjust as they could relate to each other and what they were facing as they adjusted. In many ways peers were able to walk alongside participants as they adjusted to residence and acted as a symbolic sibling sharing their transitional journey.

5.2.4 Objective four: To determine what recommendations would the participants make to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence.

The recommendations that the participants made to UCT to assist first years with their adjustment to residence all centred around a need for more support, further highlighting how significant the transition to living in a residence is. It can be concluded that ongoing support is required as students transition to residences. Participants felt supported during the orientation period and felt a loss when this support ceased. They indicated that this support should continue throughout the first year, with an emphasis on assisting first year students with adapting to the residence environment. Other forms of support that could assist with adapting to residence could include academic and emotional support as well as communication skills as this proved challenging for some participants.

Furthermore, the challenges around catering resurfaced and participants felt that the university should aim to improve this. Participants indicated that if the food in the residence was improved that this could help their transition to residence. This is evident from the findings as participants felt unseen when their nutritional needs were not met and to feel acknowledged by the university, the catering needed to be addressed. Lastly, as mentioned under support received, participants expanded on the value of having a mentor and suggested that the mentor programme be strengthened to ensure that the mentors fulfil their roles.

5.2.5 Objective five: To determine what recommendations would the participants make to incoming first year students with regards to managing the transition to residence living.

This study revealed that for these participants it was important that their university experience was not only an academic journey, but it was also about developing who they are as people. The participants believed that students should prioritise their studies while also prioritising self-growth whilst living in a residence. In terms of their studies, participants highlighted the importance of first year students prioritising their studies over other university activities. Self-growth could take place by using the residence as a space to be free to be themselves and to try new activities and find a sense of joy from the residence experience. Additionally, participants strongly recommended normalising help-seeking behaviour as they believed that asking for help formed part of first year student's self-growth. Emphasis was placed on first year students in residences making use of the services available to get help with the psychological, social, and academic support they need as the belief amongst participants is that this could aid in their self-development.

5.3 Recommendations

The recommendations are made to the university, and for future research in this field.

5.3.1 Recommendations to the University of Cape Town

From this study it is evident that catering is a key part of a student's experience in residence. The researcher therefore recommends that this area should constantly be under review. For example, one task that can be implemented in residences is for students to be asked monthly how they experienced the catering. This could take place in an anonymous suggestion box, or a student could be assigned to collect feedback on how students experience the catering. A catering committee could also be established to collect feedback which could be comprised of students, as students may feel more comfortable sharing with each other, and this would eliminate the costs of paying staff to do this task.

An area that emerged is that participants struggled with the scheduled mealtimes. One way that this could be addressed is to explore a buddy system where each student in the residence is paired with a buddy who can collect food for them should they be unable to get to the dining hall in time.

Several participants indicated that they struggled to manage the cleanliness of their bathrooms, common areas and communal kitchens. It is thus recommended that cleanliness continued to be monitored in residences. Student monitors could be selected to assign and oversee the cleanliness in the residences and students could be asked to sign a pledge to keep the residences clean. Students who are unable to uphold the cleanliness policies of the residences could be identified and assisted with their cleaning tasks by the student monitors.

Participants saw the value in having a mentor in residence, so a further recommendation is for the university to continue to ensure that this programme functions optimally. Recommendations are made around mentor recruitment and motivation for wanting to be a mentor could continue to be evaluated. The training that mentors receive should continue to educate them on how best to assist first year students. Mentors could form their own small peer support groups where they can share challenges or ask advice from other mentors. This could be done on various platforms (WhatsApp, Teams, or in-person) to make this more accessible.

Participants indicated that they wanted further support adapting to the new residence environment. One area that they identified was that they need more academic support as this could help them prioritise their studies. Students in residences could thus be linked with academic support already based on campus. This could include Student Wellness Services or the Writing Centre. Some support services on campus may even be willing to do talks around academic support at residences and if this is not possible, senior students in the residence could offer academic tips to first year students.

A need for further emotional support was also indicated by participants. UCT has several reduced rate or free counselling facilities such as Student Wellness Services, UCT Cares, UCT Student Care Line, ICAS On-The-Go Crisis App, Higher Health Counselling and The Office for Inclusivity and Change, to name a few and a recommendation could be continued referrals by mentors and staff to these facilities. Students may not be aware of these services so posters around the residences could also act as a reminder. These facilities may also be willing to do talks at the residences or if online talks are held, residences could be invited, and students encouraged to attend. Mentors or residence staff could also give first year students a handout with this information or could help them download the app or save important information and numbers on their phones for mental health support.

This study revealed the importance that participants placed on asking for help and they wanted to encourage incoming first years to do the same. Residences could thus continue to support the help-seeking behaviour of first year students. This could include regular talks normalising asking for help which could be facilitated by mentors, residence staff or more senior students. The abovementioned posters and handouts could act as a guide in terms of where and how students can access this help. Help-seeking behaviour can also be encouraged through social media and residences could consider posting this information on social media sites such as Instagram which enables direct links to each site making it easier for students to access support and there are no cost implications.

Loneliness was mentioned as a challenge for several participants especially around missing home and the support that families offered. It is recommended that the residences could incorporate more family engagement in the programmes for first years. Families could be invited to social events held at the residence. The researcher is aware that cost could be an issue and the university could consider approaching companies that deal with catering to sponsor the event in lieu of them receiving free advertising. The residences could also encourage students to reach out to families more often by suggesting that mentors address this with first years and there could be a dedicated time where all students in residences are encouraged to spend that time connecting with families in-person or online.

Loneliness as mentioned was also associated with a lack of peers and it is recommended that more events could be hosted by the residence to encourage socialising as it could help students meet peers. As mentioned above, to cover costs the university could consider approaching companies that deal with catering to sponsor the event in lieu of them receiving free advertising.

5.3.2 Recommendations for future research

With the increasing number of students entering higher education in South Africa, the need for residences will most likely increase. Further research in this area from a South African lens can help universities understand the experiences that first year students have as they enter the university space, and with this knowledge, could put measures in place to better support these students with the adjustment to residences.

As indicate in the literature review there was a wide body of literature that speaks to the support that universities can offer all first-year students with regards to the transition to university, but

minimal literature that addressed how universities can promote the adjustment to residence. Further research specifically focusing on the transition to residence would be valuable in determining how first year students are finding the transition to living in a residence. Future research can expand on this study with a larger number of participants and from different universities, as this could provide more data on the positive, challenging, and supportive aspects that assist students with the transition to residence.

The researcher is aware that in this study most of the participants lived outside of the Western Cape and a potential further comparative study could look at whether there is a difference between first year students who reside in the same province or reside in a different province in terms of how they adjust to living in residence.

A future study could specifically look at how female students experience the transition to living in a residence because there were very few female participants in this study. A comparative study could also explore whether identifying as male, female, or non-binary impacts how a first-year student adjusts to living in a residence.

This study revealed that participants felt lonely when separated from their families and a future study could explore how families manage when a young adult leaves home to live in a residence. If the family perspective was better understood families could then be better supported and would thus be able to better support the student as they adjust to residence.

Staff in residence were also identified as a source of support in this study and a further study could explore how the staff in a residence experience first year students as they are moving in. Positive aspects and challenging aspects of managing first years as they adjust could be explored as well as ways to best support the staff. Like families, if the staff are best supported, they could in turn be able to offer more support to the first-year students as they adjust.

Another source of support that emerged strongly from the study was mentors and the experience of mentors could be included as a further study. Mentors could identify positive and challenging aspects of supporting first years, especially as they adjust to living in a residence. Mentors could also be in the position to make recommendations to others around how best to support a first year as they are moving into residence as mentors work closely with first years from when they arrive at the residence.

A further recommendation for future research could include second year students as this study focused only on first years. One could explore whether second year students have adjusted to living in a residence and what supported or hindered this adjustment. A final recommendation for future research could include students who took a gap year after high school as this study focused only on students who entered university after high school. The coping and adjustment abilities of a student who has life experience after taking a gap year could be investigated in terms of how they transition to living in a residence.

5.4 Conclusion

Through the lenses of Ecological Systems Theory and Schlossberg's Transition Theory, this study has explored the perceptions of nineteen first year university students who transitioned to living in a residence at the University of Cape Town. Their responses have indicated the positive and challenging aspects of transitioning to a residence as well as the supportive aspects that assisted this transition. Participants made further recommendations to UCT around residence life and to incoming first years who would be moving into a residence. The conclusions reached by most participants, is that despite the challenges they encountered, they felt that transitioning to a residence was a beneficial and worthwhile experience and would recommend that incoming first years live in a residence. Recommendations were provided to address challenges with the transition to a residence and for future research.

REFERENCES

- Abdallah, A.R. & Gabr, H.M. 2014. Depression, anxiety and stress among first year medical students in an Egyptian public university. *International Research Journal of Medicine and Medical Sciences*. 2(1):11-19.
- Abdullahi, I. & Wan Yusoff, W.Z. 2018. Effect of the performance of physical and non-physical facilities on higher institutional facilities. *Journal of Facilities Management*. 16(4):374-386. DOI:10.1108/JFM-08-2017-0041.
- Abe, E., Chikoko, V. & Lubinga, S.N. 2021. The link between career outcomes expectancy and career decision-making self-efficacy of STEM students in a South African university. *Perspectives in Education*. 39(2):52-66. DOI:10.18820/2519593X/pie.v39.i2.5.
- Adonis, C.K. and Silinda, F. 2021. Institutional culture and transformation in higher education in post-1994 South Africa: a critical race theory analysis. *Critical African Studies*. 13(1):73-94.
- Ajani, O. A. & Gamede, B. T. 2020. Challenges of high school learners' transition into universities: a case of a South african rural university. *Gender & Behaviour*. 18(2):15803–15812. <https://doi.org/10.10520/ejc-genbeh-v18-n2-a60>
- Akinla, O., Hagan, P. & Atiomo, W. 2018. A systematic review of the literature describing the outcomes of near-peer mentoring programs for first year medical students. *Bmc Medical Education*. 18(1):98. DOI:10.1186/s12909-018-1195-1.
- Albertyn, C. 2019. (In)equality and the South African Constitution. *Development Southern Africa*. 36(6):751-766. DOI:10.1080/0376835x.2019.1660860.
- Albien, A.J. & Naidoo, A.V. 2017. Deconstructing career myths and cultural stereotypes in a context of low resourced township communities. *South African Journal of Education*. 37(4):1-12. DOI:10.15700/saje.v37n4a1476.
- Ali, S., Sarker, M.F.H., Islam, M.S., Islam, M.K. and Al Mahmud, R. 2021. Pursuing higher education: Adaptation challenges and coping strategies of rural students at urban universities in Bangladesh. *Tertiary Education and Management*. 27(2):91-106.
- Alim, S.A.H.M., Rabbani, M.G., Karim, E., Mullick, M.S.I., Al Mamun, A. & Khan, M.Z.R. 2015. Assessment of depression, anxiety and stress among first year MBBS students of a public medical college, Bangladesh. *Bangladesh Journal of Psychiatry*. 29(1):23-29. DOI:10.3329/BJPSY.V29I1.32748.
- Allison, R. & Risman, B.J. 2014. "It Goes Hand in Hand with the Parties": Race, Class, and Residence in College Student Negotiations of Hooking Up. *Sociological Perspectives*. 57(1):102-123. DOI:10.1177/0731121413516608.
- Amankwaa, L. 2016. Creating protocols for trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of cultural diversity*. 23(3):121-127.

Anderson, M.L., Goodman, J. & Schlossberg, N.K. 2012. *Counseling adults in transition: Linking Schlossberg's theory with practice in a diverse world, 4th ed.* New York, NY, US: Springer Publishing Company.

Arias-de la Torre, J., Fernández-Villa, T., Molina, A.J., Amezcua-Prieto, C., Mateos, R., Cancela, J.M., Delgado-Rodríguez, M., Ortíz-Moncada, R. et al. 2019. Psychological Distress, Family Support and Employment Status in First-Year University Students in Spain. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 16(7). DOI:10.3390/ijerph16071209.

Atherton, M. 2017. A comparison of student confidence levels in open access and undergraduate university courses. *Issues in Educational Research*. 27(1):19-30. DOI:10.3316/aeipt.219488.

Bangeni, B., Kapp, R., Klemencic, M. & Ashwin, P. 2017. *Negotiating learning and identity in higher education: Access, persistence and retention*. London Bloomsbury Publishing Place

Auerbach, R.P., Mortier, P., Bruffaerts, R., Alonso, J., Benjet, C., Cuijpers, P., Demyttenaere, K., Ebert, D.D. et al. 2018. WHO world mental health surveys international college student project: Prevalence and distribution of mental disorders. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*. 127(7):623.

Bantjes, J., Lochner, C., Saal, W., Roos, J., Taljaard, L., Page, D., Auerbach, R.P., Mortier, P. et al. 2019. Prevalence and sociodemographic correlates of common mental disorders among first-year university students in post-apartheid South Africa: implications for a public mental health approach to student wellness. *Bmc Public Health*. 19(1):1-12. DOI:10.1186/s12889-019-7218-y.

Barclay, S.R. 2017. Schlossberg's transition theory. In *College student development: Applying theory to practice on the diverse campus*. W.K. Killam and S. Degges-White, Eds. New York: Springer. 23-34.

Beiter, R., Nash, R., McCrady, M., Rhoades, D., Linscomb, M., Clarahan, M. & Sammut, S. 2014. The prevalence and correlates of depression, anxiety, and stress in a sample of college students. *Journal of Affective Disorders*. 173:90-96. DOI:10.1016/j.jad.2014.10.054.

Berger, R. 2015. Now I see it, now I don't: researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*. 15(2):219-234. DOI:10.1177/1468794112468475.

Berger, R. & Rosenberg, E. 2008. The experience of abused women with their children's law guardians. *Violence against Women*. 14(1):71-92. DOI:10.1177/1077801207311859.

Besthorn, F.H. 2013. Ecological approach. In *Social work theories and methods*. 2 nd ed. M. Gray and S. Webb, Eds. London: SAGE Publications. 173-182.

Bettinger, E.P., Boatman, A. & Long, B.T. 2013. Student Supports: Developmental Education and Other Academic Programs. *Future of Children*. 23(1):93-115. DOI:10.1353/foc.2013.0003.

Blimling, G.S. 2014. *Student learning in college residence halls: What works, what doesn't, and why*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Bowers, N.R. & Bowers, A. 2017. General systems theory. In *Social work treatment: Interlocking theoretical approaches*. 6th ed. F.J. Turner, Ed. New York: Oxford University Press. 240-247.

Box, E. & Moffat, M. 2019. students' experiences of a newly implemented first-year student support programme. *MedEdPublish*. 8(2):1-9. DOI:10.15694/mep.2019.000108.1.

Bridges, W. & Bridges, S. 2019. *Transitions: Making sense of life's changes*. USA: Hachette Book Group Inc.

Bronfenbrenner, U. 1979. *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. 1986. Ecology of the family as a context for human development: research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology*. 22(6):723-742. DOI:10.1037/0012-1649.22.6.723.

Brooman, S. & Darwent, S. 2014. Measuring the beginning: a quantitative study of the transition to higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*. 39(9):1523-1541. DOI:10.1080/03075079.2013.801428.

Bruening, M., Brennhof, S., van Woerden, I., Todd, M. & Laska, M. 2016. Factors Related to the High Rates of Food Insecurity among Diverse, Urban College Freshmen. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*. 116(9):1450-1457. DOI:10.1016/j.jand.2016.04.004.

Bruffaerts, R., Mortier, P., Auerbach, R.P., Alonso, J., De la Torre, A.E.H., Cuijpers, P., Demyttenaere, K., Ebert, D.D. et al. 2019. Lifetime and 12-month treatment for mental disorders and suicidal thoughts and behaviors among first year college students. *International Journal of Methods in Psychiatric Research*. 28(2). DOI:10.1002/mpr.1764.

Bushe, B. 2019. The causes and impact of business failure among small to micro and medium enterprises in South Africa. *Africa's public service delivery and performance review*. 7(1):1-26. DOI:10.4102/apsdpr.v7i1.210.

Butler, J. & Kern, M.L. 2016. The PERMA-Profil: A brief multidimensional measure of flourishing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*. 6(3):1-48. DOI:10.5502/ijw.v6i3.526.

Cairney, P. & St Denny, E. 2015. What is qualitative research (Bloomsbury). *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. 18(1):117-125. DOI:10.1080/13645579.2014.957434.

Cairns, M.R., Ebinger, M., Stinson, C. & Jordan, J. 2020. Covid-19 and human connection: Collaborative research on loneliness and online worlds from a socially-distanced academy. *Human Organization*. 79(4):281-291. DOI:10.17730/1938-3525-79.4.281.

Charness, G., Samek, A. & van de Ven, J. 2022. What is considered deception in experimental economics? *Experimental Economics*. 25(2):385-412. DOI:10.1007/s10683-021-09726-7.

Chester, A., Burton, L.J., Xenos, S. & Elgar, K. 2013. Peer mentoring: Supporting successful transition for first year undergraduate psychology students. *Australian Journal of Psychology*. 65(1):30-37. DOI:10.1111/ajpy.12006.

Chetty, R., Pather, S. & Condy, J. 2015. Challenges in higher education in South Africa. In *Telling Stories Differently: Engaging 21st century students through digital storytelling*. J. Condy, Ed. Stellenbosch: Sun Press. 1-6.

Chickering, A.W. & Schlossberg, N.K. 2002. *Getting the most out of college*. 2nd. USA: Pearson College Division

Cooper, D. 2001. South Africa's New National Plan. *International Higher Education*. (25).

Council on Higher Education. 2013. *A proposal for undergraduate curriculum reform in South Africa: The case for a flexible curriculum structure (Report of the Task Team on Undergraduate Curriculum Structure)*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education

Council on Higher Education (CHE). 2023. Available: www.che.ac.za.

Covarrubias, R., Valle, I., Laiduc, G. & Azmitia, M. 2019. You never become fully independent: Family roles and independence in first-generation college students. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. 34(4):381-410. DOI:10.1177/0743558418788402.

Creswell, J.W. & Creswell, J.D. 2018. *Research design : qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. 5th edition. International student edition. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Dagnew, B. & Dagne, H. 2019. Year of study as predictor of loneliness among students of University of Gondar. *Bmc Research Notes*. 12(1):240. DOI:10.1186/s13104-019-4274-4.

De Jesús, M.P., Rodríguez, E. & Anaya, G. 2021. Systems Theory: The Case of Esperanza. In *Discovering Theory in Clinical Practice: A Casebook for Clinical Counseling and Social Work Practice*. R. Peterson Dealey and M.R. Evans, Eds. Switzerland: Springer 163-178.

Deakin, H. & Wakefield, K. 2014. Skype interviewing: reflections of two PhD researchers. *Qualitative Research*. 14(5):603-616. DOI:10.1177/1468794113488126.

DeAndrea, D.C., Ellison, N.B., LaRose, R., Steinfield, C. & Fiore, A. 2012. Serious social media: On the use of social media for improving students' adjustment to college. *The Internet and Higher Education*. 15(1):15-23. DOI:10.1016/j.iheduc.2011.05.009.

Denovan, A. & Macaskill, A. 2013. An interpretative phenomenological analysis of stress and coping in first year undergraduates. *British Educational Research Journal*. 39(6):1002-1024. DOI:10.1002/berj.3019.

Department of Education. 2001. *National Plan for higher education in South Africa*. Pretoria: Republic of South Africa. Available: [https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Legislation/Gov%20Not/National%20Plan%20for%20Higher%20Education%20\(GG22329%20Notice%20466\).pdf?ver=2008-07-02-145856-603](https://www.education.gov.za/Portals/0/Documents/Legislation/Gov%20Not/National%20Plan%20for%20Higher%20Education%20(GG22329%20Notice%20466).pdf?ver=2008-07-02-145856-603) [2022, January 31].

Department of Higher Education and Training. 2013. *White paper for post-school education and training: Building an expanded, effective and integrated post-school system*. Pretoria: Department of Higher Education and Training.

Department of Higher Education and Training. 2015. *The policy of the minimum norms and standards for student housing at public universities*. Pretoria: Department of Higher Education and Training.

Diehl, K., Jansen, C., Ishchanova, K. & Hilger-Kolb, J. 2018. Loneliness at universities: determinants of emotional and social loneliness among students. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 15(9):1865. DOI:10.3390/ijerph15091865.

Dixon, S. & Quirke, L. 2018. What's the harm? The coverage of ethics and harm avoidance in research methods textbooks. *Teaching Sociology*. 46(1):12-24. DOI:10.1177/0092055X17711230.

Dube, F. 2020. The South African Constitution as an instrument of doing what is just, right and fair. In *Die Skriflig: Tydskrif Van Die Gereformeerde Teologiese Vereniging*. 54(1):6. DOI:10.4102/ids.v54i1.2601.

Dykes, G. & Green, S. 2015. Learning profiles of social work students: Who are you and how should this influence my teaching? *Social Work*. 51(4):577-598. DOI:10.15270/51-4-486.

Ede, C., Jili, N. & Vezi-Magigaba, F. 2022. An Analysis of Higher Education Policy Act 101 of 1997. *International Journal of Higher Education*. 11(7):1-64. DOI:10.5430/ijhe.v11n7p64.

El Zein, A., Shelnutt, K.P., Colby, S., Vilaro, M.J., Zhou, W.J., Greene, G., Olfert, M.D., Riggsbee, K. et al. 2019. Prevalence and correlates of food insecurity among US college students: a multi-institutional study. *Bmc Public Health*. 19(1):660. DOI:10.1186/s12889-019-6943-6.

Elliott, M.R. & Valliant, R. 2017. Inference for nonprobability samples. *Statistical Science*. 32(2):249-264. DOI:10.1214/16-STS598.

Elphinstone, B., Whitehead, R. & Bates, G. 2020. 'Letting go' and flourishing in study: An investigation of the indirect relationship between nonattachment and grades via psychological wellbeing. *Learning and Individual Differences*. 78. DOI:10.1016/j.lindif.2020.101847.

Engel, R.J. & Schutt, R.K. 2017. *The practice of research in social work*. 4th ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications Inc.

English, T., Davis, J., Wei, M. & Gross, J.J. 2017. Homesickness and Adjustment Across the First Year of College: A Longitudinal Study. *Emotion*. 17(1):1-5. DOI:10.1037/emo0000235.

Erickson, B.L., Peters, C.B. & Strommer, D.W. 2009. *Teaching first-year college students*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Evans, N.J., Forney, D.S., Guido, F.M., Patton, L.D. & Renn, K.A. 2009. *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Eynon, R., Fry, J. & Schroeder, R. 2017. The ethics of online research. *The SAGE handbook of online research methods*. 2:19-37. DOI:10.4135/9781473957992.

Fataar, A. 2018. Placing students at the centre of the decolonizing education imperative: Engaging the (mis) recognition struggles of students at the postapartheid university. *Educational Studies*. 54(6):595-608. DOI:10.1080/00131946.2018.1518231.

Fink, J.E. 2014. Flourishing: Exploring Predictors of Mental Health Within the College Environment. *Journal of American College Health*. 62(6):380-388. DOI:10.1080/07448481.2014.917647.

Fox, J., Murray, C. & Warm, A. 2003. Conducting research using web-based questionnaires: Practical, methodological, and ethical considerations. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. 6(2):167-180. DOI:10.1080/13645570210142883.

Garlick, R. 2018. Academic Peer Effects with Different Group Assignment Policies: Residential Tracking versus Random Assignment. *American economic journal. Applied economics*. 10(3):345-369. DOI:10.1257/app.20160626.

Gbadegesin, J., Marais, L., Denoon-Stevens, S., Cloete, J., Venter, A., Rani, K., Lenka, M., Campbell, M. et al. 2021. Studentification and governance in South Africa: Dependencies and conflicts. *Land use policy*. 109:105639. DOI:10.1016/j.landusepol.2021.105639.

Gbogbo, S. 2020. Early motherhood: voices from female adolescents in the Hohoe Municipality, Ghana-a qualitative study utilizing Schlossberg's Transition Theory. *International journal of qualitative studies on health and well-being*. 15(1):1716620-1716620. DOI:10.1080/17482631.2020.1716620.

Gershenfeld, S. 2014. A Review of Undergraduate Mentoring Programs. *Review of educational research*. 84(3):365-391. DOI:10.3102/0034654313520512.

Gestsdottir, S., Gisladdottir, T., Stefansdottir, R., Johannsson, E., Jakobsdottir, G. & Rognvaldsdottir, V. 2021. Health and well-being of university students before and during COVID-19 pandemic: A gender comparison. *PloS one*. 16(12):e0261346-e0261346. DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.0261346.

Gist-Mackey, A.N., Wiley, M.L. & Erba, J. 2018. "You're doing great. Keep doing what you're doing": socially supportive communication during first-generation college students' socialization. *Communication education*. 67(1):52-72. DOI:10.1080/03634523.2017.1390590.

Goodday, S.M., Rivera, D., Foran, H., King, N., Milanovic, M., Keown-Stoneman, C., Horrocks, J., Tetzlaff, E. et al. 2019. U-Flourish university students well-being and academic success longitudinal study: a study protocol. *BMJ Open*. 9(8):e029854.

Gopal, N. & van Niekerk, C. 2018. Safety in student residences matters! *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 32(3):172-188. DOI:10.20853/32-3-2524.

Grady, C. 2015. Enduring and Emerging Challenges of Informed Consent. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 372(9):855-862. DOI:10.1056/NEJMra1411250.

Graham, P.A., Hurtado, S.S. & Gonyea, R.M. 2018. The Benefits of Living on Campus: Do Residence Halls Provide Distinctive Environments of Engagement? *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*. 55(3):255-269. DOI:10.1080/19496591.2018.1474752.

Graven, M.H. 2014. Poverty, inequality and mathematics performance: the case of South Africa's post-apartheid context. *ZDM*. 46(7):1039-1049. DOI:10.1007/s11858-013-0566-7.

Gray, M. & Webb, S.A. 2013. *Social work theories and methods*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE Publications Inc.

Gray, R., Vitak, J., Easton, E.W. & Ellison, N.B. 2013. Examining social adjustment to college in the age of social media: Factors influencing successful transitions and persistence. *Computers and education*. 67:193-207. DOI:10.1016/j.compedu.2013.02.021.

Greeff, M. 2011. Information collection: interviewing In *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 4th ed. A.S. De Vos, H. Strydom, C.B. Fouché and C.S.L. Delpont, Eds. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers Pretoria. 341-375. Available: <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1243048>.

Grobler, A.A., Lacante, M. & Grossen, S. 2017. Repeated retention or dropout? Disputing Hobson's choice in South African township schools. *South African Journal of Education*. 37(2):1-11. DOI:10.15700/saje.v37n2a1367.

Gulliver, A., Wysoke, T., Calcar, A.L. & Farrer, L.M. 2022. Factors Associated with Engagement in University Life, and Help Seeking Attitudes and Behaviour in First Year Undergraduate Students. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 20(1):120. DOI:10.3390/ijerph20010120.

Hammersley, M. & Traianou, A. 2016. *Ethics in qualitative research : controversies and contexts*. London: SAGE Publications Inc.

Hashim, I.H.M. & Khodarahimi, S. 2012. Loneliness and the Development of Social Relationships in Malaysian University Students. *Social behavior and personality*. 40(2):227-238. DOI:10.2224/sbp.2012.40.2.227.

Hendriksen, P.A., Garssen, J., Bijlsma, E.Y., Engels, F., Bruce, G. & Verster, J.C. 2021. COVID-19 Lockdown-Related Changes in Mood, Health and Academic Functioning. *European journal of investigation in health, psychology and education*. 11(4):1440-1461. DOI:10.3390/ejihpe11040103.

Hepworth, D.H., Rooney, R.H. & Rooney, G.D. 2017. *Direct social work practice: theory and skills*. Boston Cengage Learning.

Hernandez, P.R., Bloodhart, B., Barnes, R.T., Adams, A.S., Clinton, S.M., Pollack, I., Godfrey, E., Burt, M. et al. 2017. Promoting professional identity, motivation, and persistence: Benefits of an informal mentoring program for female undergraduate students. *PloS one*. 12(11):e0187531-e0187531. DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.0187531.

Higher Education Act No.101 of 1997. 1997. Republic of South Africa: Government Gazette

Higher Education South Africa. 2014. *South African Higher Education in the 20th Year of Democracy: Context, Achievements and Key Challenges*. HESA, March 2014. [2023, February 20].

Hirshberg, M.J., Colaianne, B.A., Greenberg, M.T., Inkelas, K.K., Davidson, R.J., Germano, D., Dunne, J.D. & Roeser, R.W. 2022. Can the Academic and Experiential Study of Flourishing Improve Flourishing in College Students? A Multi-university Study. *Mindfulness*. 13(9):2243-2256. DOI:10.1007/s12671-022-01952-1.

Howitt, D. 2019. *Introduction to qualitative research methods in psychology*. UK: Pearson.

Islam, S., Akter, R., Sikder, T. & Griffiths, M.D. 2022. Prevalence and Factors Associated with Depression and Anxiety Among First-Year University Students in Bangladesh: A Cross-Sectional Study. *International journal of mental health and addiction*. 20(3):1289-1302. DOI:10.1007/s11469-020-00242-y.

Ives, J. & Castillo-Montoya, M. 2020. First-Generation College Students as Academic Learners: A Systematic Review. *Review of educational research*. 90(2):139-178. DOI:10.3102/0034654319899707.

Janghorban, R., Roudsari, R.L. & Taghipour, A. 2014. Skype interviewing: The new generation of online synchronous interview in qualitative research. *International journal of qualitative studies on health and well-being*. 9(1). DOI:10.3402/qhw.v9.24152.

Jones, B., Coetzee, G., Bailey, T. & Wickham, S. 2008. *Factors that facilitate success for disadvantaged higher education students: An investigation into approaches used by REAP, NSFAS and selected higher education institutions*. Cape Town, South Africa: Rural Education Access Programme (REAP).

Available:http://www.reap.org.za/pieces/reports/pdf/tracking_reports/2008_June_factors_that_facilitate_success.pdf [2021, September 15].

Kamanzi, A. & Romania, M. 2019. Rethinking confidentiality in qualitative research in the era of big data. *American Behavioral Scientist*. 63(6):743-758. DOI:10.1177/0002764219826222.

Kapp, R., Badenhorst, E., Bangeni, B., Craig, T.S., Janse van Rensburg, V., le Roux, K., Prince, R., Pym, J. et al. 2014. Successful students' negotiation of township schooling in contemporary South Africa. *Perspectives in Education*. 32(3):50-61.

Katsumoto, S. & Bowman, N.A. 2021. Changes in Psychological Well-Being Among International Students in the US: The Role of Interactions With Peers, Faculty, and Staff. *Journal of college student development*. 62(3):345-350. DOI:10.1353/csd.2021.0029.

Kerpen, D., Dorgeist, M. & Zantis, S. 2018. Intersecting the Digital Maze. Considering Ethics in Cloud-Based Services' Research. *Research Ethics in the Digital Age: Ethics for the Social Sciences and Humanities in Times of Mediatization and Digitization*. 143-152.

Keyes, C.L.M. & Lopez, S.J. 2002. Toward a science of mental health: Positive directions in diagnosis and interventions. In *Handbook of positive psychology*. New York, NY, US: Oxford University Press. 45-59.

Kılınc, G., Aylaz, R., Güneş, G. & Harmancı, P. 2020. The relationship between depression and loneliness levels of the students at the faculty of health sciences and the factors affecting them. *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*. 56(2):431-438. DOI:10.1111/ppc.12452.

- Knoesen, R. & Naudé, L. 2018. Experiences of flourishing and languishing during the first year at university. *Journal of Mental Health*. 27(3):269-278. DOI:10.1080/09638237.2017.1370635.
- Kobakhidze, M.N., Hui, J., Chui, J. & González, A. 2021. Research disruptions, new opportunities: Re-imagining qualitative interview study during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 20:16094069211051576. DOI:10.1177/16094069211051576.
- Kralik, D., Visentin, K. & Van Loon, A. 2006. Transition: a literature review. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. 55(3):320-329. DOI:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2006.03899.x.
- Kunanithaworn, N., Wongpakaran, T., Wongpakaran, N., Paiboonsithiwong, S., Songtrijuck, N., Kuntawong, P. & Wedding, D. 2018. Factors associated with motivation in medical education: a path analysis. *Bmc Medical Education*. 18:1-9. DOI:10.1186/s12909-018-1256-5.
- L'Ange, I. 2017. *Ministerial Committee for the review of the provision of student housing at South African universities*. Republic of South Africa. Available: <https://www.justice.gov.za/commissions/FeesHET/hearings/set5/set05-d2-JudicialCommission.pdf>.
- Labrague, L.J., De los Santos, J.A.A. & Falguera, C.C. 2021. Social and emotional loneliness among college students during the COVID-19 pandemic: The predictive role of coping behaviors, social support, and personal resilience. *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*. 57(4):1578-1584. DOI:10.1111/ppc.12721.
- Larnyo, E., Dai, B., Nutakor, J.A., Ampon-Wireko, S., Appiah, R., Larnyo, A., Akey-Torku, B. & Nkrumah, E.N.K. 2021. Assessing the impact of social media use on everyday emotion in health crises: a study of international students in China during COVID-19. *Healthcare*. 9(8):1011. DOI:10.3390/healthcare9081011.
- Lavee, E. & Itzchakov, G. 2023. Good listening: A key element in establishing quality in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*. 23(3):614-631. DOI:10.1177/14687941211039402.
- Leidenfrost, B., Strassnig, B., Schütz, M., Carbon, C.-C. & Schabmann, A. 2014. Impact of Peer Mentoring on Mentee Academic Performance: Is Any Mentoring Style Better than No Mentoring at All? *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*. 26(1):102-111.
- Li, Y., Shelley, M.C. & Whalen, D.E. 2005. Contributors to Residence Hall Student Retention: Why do Students Choose to Leave or Stay? *Journal of College and University Student Housing*. 33(2):28-36.
- Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. 1999. *Naturalistic inquiry*. California SAGE Publications Inc.
- Liversage, L., Naudé, L. & Botha, A. 2018. Vectors of identity development during the first year: black first-generation students' reflections. *Teaching in higher education*. 23(1):63-83. DOI:10.1080/13562517.2017.1359159.

Lobe, B., Morgan, D. & Hoffman, K.A. 2020. Qualitative Data Collection in an Era of Social Distancing. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 19:160940692093787. DOI:10.1177/1609406920937875.

Long, L.D. 2014. Does It Matter Where?? College Students Live? Differences?? in Satisfaction and Outcomes as a Function of Students' Living Arrangement and Gender. *Journal of College and University Student Housing*. 40(2):66-85. Available: <http://ezproxy.uct.ac.za/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1049876&site=ehost-live>
<http://www.acuho-i.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1007>.

Low, K.G. 2011. Flourishing, Substance Use, and Engagement in Students Entering College: A Preliminary Study. *Journal of American College Health*. 59(6):555-561. DOI:10.1080/07448481.2011.563432.

Lowe, K. & Dotterer, A.M. 2018. Parental Involvement During the College Transition: A Review and Suggestion for its Conceptual Definition. *Adolescent Research Review*. 3(1):29-42. DOI:10.1007/s40894-017-0058-z.

Lowton, K. 2018. He Said, She Said, We Said: Ethical Issues in Conducting Dyadic Interviews. In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research Ethics*. R. Iphofen and M. Tolich, Eds. UK: SAGE Publications Inc. 133-147.

Mabokela, R.O. & Mlambo, Y.A. 2017. Access and Equity and South African Higher Education: A Review of Policies after 20 Years of Democracy. *Comparative education review*. 61(4):780-803. DOI:10.1086/693913.

Mah, D.K. & Ifenthaler, D. 2018. Students' perceptions toward academic competencies: The case of German first-year students. *Issues in Educational Research*. 28(1):120-137. DOI:10.3316/aeipt.223858.

Maila, P. & Ross, E. 2018. Perceptions of disadvantaged rural matriculants regarding factors facilitating and constraining their transition to tertiary education. *South African Journal of Education*. 38(1):1-12. DOI:10.15700/saje.v38n1a1360.

Malmqvist, J., Hellberg, K., Möllås, G., Rose, R. & Shevlin, M. 2019. Conducting the Pilot Study: A Neglected Part of the Research Process? Methodological Findings Supporting the Importance of Piloting in Qualitative Research Studies. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 18:160940691987834. DOI:10.1177/1609406919878341.

Maphumulo, W.T. & Bhengu, B.R. 2019. Challenges of quality improvement in the healthcare of South Africa post-apartheid: a critical review. *Curationis (Pretoria)*. 42(1):1-9. DOI:10.4102/curationis.v42i1.1901.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G.B. 2016. *Designing qualitative research*. California: SAGE Publications Inc

Matsolo, M.J., Ningpuanyeh, W.C. & Susuman, A.S. 2018. Factors Affecting the Enrolment Rate of Students in Higher Education Institutions in the Gauteng province, South Africa. *Journal of Asian and African studies*. 53(1):64-80. DOI:10.1177/0021909616657369.

- Matthews, S. 2023. Decolonising while white: Confronting race in a South African classroom. In *Possibilities and Complexities of Decolonising Higher Education*. Routledge. 227-235.
- Matthies, A.-L. & Närhi, K. 2018. Ecological theories. In *Social work theory and methods: the essentials*. N. Thompson and P. Stepney, Eds. New York: Routledge. 202-214. DOI:10.4324/9781315210223.
- Mayet, R. 2016. Supporting At-Risk Learners at a Comprehensive University in South Africa. *Journal of student affairs in Africa*. 4(2):1-12. DOI:10.14426/jsaa.v4i2.1527.
- McDonald, S.M. 2012. Perception: A Concept Analysis. *International journal of nursing knowledge*. 23(1):2-9. DOI:10.1111/j.2047-3095.2011.01198.x.
- McGhie, V. 2017. Entering university studies: Identifying enabling factors for a successful transition from school to university. *Higher education*. 73(3):407-422. DOI:10.1007/s10734-016-0100-2.
- McKay, T. 2019. The geography of education: From race to class apartheid? *The Geography of South Africa: Contemporary Changes and New Directions*. 159-167.
- McMillan, W. 2013. Transition to university: the role played by emotion. *European Journal of Dental Education*. 17(3):169-176. DOI:10.1111/eje.12026.
- McMillan, W. 2015. Identity and attribution as lenses to understand the relationship between transition to university and initial academic performance. *African journal of health professions education*. 7(1):32-38. DOI:10.7196/AJHPE.356.
- McMillan, W.J. & Barrie, R.B. 2012. Recruiting and retaining rural students: evidence from a faculty of dentistry in South Africa. *Rural and remote health*. 12(1):1855-1855. DOI:10.22605/RRH1855.
- Means, D.R. & Pyne, K.B. 2017. Finding My Way: Perceptions of Institutional Support and Belonging in Low-Income, First-Generation, First-Year College Students. *Journal of college student development*. 58(6):907-924. DOI:10.1353/csd.2017.0071.
- Messer, N. 2013. *Flourishing: health, disease, and bioethics in Theological Perspective*. Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Modiri, J.M. 2018. Conquest and constitutionalism: first thoughts on an alternative jurisprudence. *South African journal on human rights*. 34(3):300-325. DOI:10.1080/02587203.2018.1550939.
- Molotja, T.W. 2020. An exploration of the academic reading strategies of first year English Education students at a South African university. *Journal of African Education*. 1(2):103-123. DOI:doi:10.31920/2633-2930/2020/1n2a5.
- Montgomery, K.A. 2017. Supporting Chinese Undergraduate Students in Transition at U.S. Colleges and Universities. *Journal of International Students*. 7(4):963-989. DOI:10.5281/zenodo.1029727.

Mostert, K., de Beer, L.,T. & de Beer, R. 2023. *Psychometric properties of the Flourishing Scale for South African first-year students*. African Journal of Psychological Assessment. 5:130.

Motala, M. & Van Wyk, J.M. 2021. Professional experiences in the transition of Cuban-trained South African medical graduates. *South African family practice*. 63(1):e1-e8. DOI:10.4102/safp.v63i1.5390.

Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: a South African guide and resource book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Mpungose, C.B. 2020. Emergent transition from face-to-face to online learning in a South African University in the context of the Coronavirus pandemic. *Humanities & social sciences communications*. 7(1):1-9. DOI:10.1057/s41599-020-00603-x.

Mudhovozi, P. & Chireshe, R. 2012. Socio-demographic Factors Influencing Career Decision-making among Undergraduate Psychology Students in South Africa. *Journal of Social Sciences*. 31(2):167-176. DOI:10.1080/09718923.2012.11893025.

Mzangwa, S.T. 2019. The effects of higher education policy on transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. *Cogent education*. 6(1):1592737.

Neal, J.W. & Neal, Z.P. 2013. Nested or Networked? Future Directions for Ecological Systems Theory. *Social development (Oxford, England)*. 22(4):722-737. DOI:10.1111/sode.12018.

Nosisana, P.M. 2021. Family Support for First-Year Students. *The international journal of learning in higher education*. 28(1):139. DOI:10.18848/2327-7955/CGP/v28i01/139-150.

Nowell, L.S., Norris, J.M., White, D.E. & Moules, N.J. 2017. Thematic analysis: striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 16(1):1-13. DOI:10.1177/1609406917733847.

O'Keeffe, P. 2013. A Sense of Belonging: Improving Student Retention. *College student journal*. 47(4):605-613.

O'Mathúna, D. 2018. The Dual Imperative in Disaster Research Ethics. In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research Ethics* R. Iphofen and M. Tolich, Eds. UK: SAGE Publications Inc. 441-454.

Oke, A.E., Aigbavboa, C.O. & Raphiri, M.M. 2017. Students' satisfaction with hostel accommodations in higher education institutions. *Journal of engineering, design and technology*. 15(5):652-666. DOI:10.1108/JEDT-04-2017-0036.

Owusu-Ansah, C.M., Arthur, B., Yebowaah, F.A. & Amoako, K. 2021. The Use of Social Media among First-Year Student Groups: A Uses and Gratifications Perspective. *International journal of knowledge content development & technology*. 11(4):7-34. DOI:10.5865/IJKCT.2021.11.4.007.

Pace, K., Silk, K., Nazione, S., Fournier, L. & Collins-Eaglin, J. 2018. Promoting Mental Health Help-Seeking Behavior Among First-Year College Students. *Health communication*. 33(2):102-110. DOI:10.1080/10410236.2016.1250065.

Padgett, D. 2016. *Qualitative methods in social work research*. 3rd ed. USA: Sage Publications Inc.

Palinkas, L.A., Horwitz, S.M., Green, C.A., Wisdom, J.P., Duan, N. & Hoagwood, K. 2015. Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Administration and policy in mental health and mental health services research*. 42(5):533-544. DOI:10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y.

Pather, S. & Dorasamy, N. 2018. The Mismatch between First-Year Students' Expectations and Experience alongside University Access and Success: A South African University Case Study. *Journal of student affairs in Africa*. 6(1). DOI:10.24085/jsaa.v6i1.3065.

Payne, M. 1991. *Modern social work theory: a critical introduction*. Chicago, Illinois Lyceum Books

Petersen, N.F. & Arends, D. 2018. The role of first-year experience excursion in promoting social integration at university: student teachers' views. *South African journal of childhood education*. 8(1):1-9. DOI:10.4102/sajce.v8i1.543.

Peterson Dealey, R. & Evans, M.R. 2021. *Discovering theory in clinical practice: a casebook for clinical counseling and social work practice*. Switzerland: Springer.

Piaget, J. 2013. *The mechanisms of perception*. UK: Routledge

Pineteh, E.A. 2014. The Academic Writing Challenges of Undergraduate Students: A South African Case Study. *International Journal of Higher Education*. 3(1):12-22. DOI:10.5430/ijhe.v3n1p12.

Pleshkan, V. & Boykins, A.D. 2022. Cognitive preceptorship: An emerging nurse practitioner role transition to practice model. *Journal of professional nursing*. 39:194-205. DOI:10.1016/j.profnurs.2022.02.002.

Protection of Personal Information Act, No. 4 of 2013, 2013. Available: <https://popia.co.za/> [2022, February 10].

Pu, S., Yan, Y. & Zhang, L. 2020. Peers, Study Effort, and Academic Performance in College Education: Evidence from Randomly Assigned Roommates in a Flipped Classroom. *Research in higher education*. 61(2):248-269. DOI:10.1007/s11162-019-09571-x.

Pym, J. & Kapp, R. 2013. Harnessing agency: towards a learning model for undergraduate students. *Studies in Higher Education*. 38(2):272-284. DOI:10.1080/03075079.2011.582096.

Quinn, D.M., Canevello, A. and Crocker, J.K. 2023. Understanding the role of depressive symptoms in academic outcomes: A longitudinal study of college roommates. *Plos One*. 18(6):e0286709.

Räisänen, M., Postareff, L. & Lindblom-Ylänne, S. 2021. Students' experiences of study-related exhaustion, regulation of learning, peer learning and peer support during university studies. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*. 36(4):1135-1157. DOI:10.1007/s10212-020-00512-2.

Reñosa, M.D.C., Mwamba, C., Meghani, A., West, N.S., Hariyani, S., Ddaaki, W., Sharma, A., Beres, L.K. et al. 2021. Selfie consents, remote rapport, and Zoom debriefings: collecting qualitative data amid a pandemic in four resource-constrained settings. *Bmj Global Health*. 6(1). DOI:10.1136/bmjgh-2020-004193.

Rensburg, I.L. 2011. *Report on the ministerial committee for the review of the provision of student housing at South African universities*. Pretoria: Department of Higher Education and Training.

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C.M. & Ormston, R. 2013. *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. London: SAGE Publications Inc.

Roostenburg, W., Strydom, H. & Fouché, C. 2021. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human services professions*. 5th ed. Pretoria Van Schaik Publishers.

Rosenthal, L. & Levy, S.R. 2016. Endorsement of Polyculturalism Predicts Increased Positive Intergroup Contact and Friendship across the Beginning of College. *Journal of social issues*. 72(3):472-488. DOI:10.1111/josi.12177.

Rossmann, G.B. & Rallis, S.F. 2012. *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research*. 3rd ed. California SAGE Publications Inc.

Rousseau, K.L., Thompson, S., Pileggi, L.A., Henry, M. and Thomas, K.G. 2021. Trends in the prevalence and severity of depressive symptoms among undergraduate students at a South African University, 2016-2019. *South African Journal of Psychology*. 51(1): 67-80.

Ryff, C.D. 1989. Happiness Is Everything, or Is It? Explorations on the Meaning of Psychological Well-Being. *Journal of personality and social psychology*. 57(6):1069-1081. DOI:10.1037/0022-3514.57.6.1069.

Ryff, C.D. 2019. Entrepreneurship and eudaimonic well-being: Five venues for new science. *Journal of business venturing*. 34(4):646-663. DOI:10.1016/j.jbusvent.2018.09.003.

Schiavone, V. & Gentry, D. 2014. Veteran-Students in Transition at a Midwestern University. *The Journal of continuing higher education*. 62(1):29-38. DOI:10.1080/07377363.2014.872007.

Schirmer, W. & Michailakis, D. 2019. *Systems theory for social work and the helping professions*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Schlossberg, N.K. 1981. A model for analyzing human adaptation to transition. *The Counseling Psychologist*. 9(2):2-18. DOI:10.1177/001100008100900202.

Schlossberg, N.K. 2008. *Overwhelmed: coping with life's ups and downs*. 2nd ed. USA: M. Evans & Company.

- Schlossberg, N.K. 2011. the challenge of change: the transition model and its applications. *Journal of Employment Counseling*. 48(4):159-162. DOI:10.1002/j.2161-1920.2011.tb01102.x.
- Seligman, M.E.P. 2011. *Flourish : a new understanding of happiness and well-being--and how to achieve them*. London: Nicholas Brealey Pub.
- Shamsuddin, K., Fadzil, F., Ismail, W.S.W., Shah, S.A., Omar, K., Muhammad, N.A., Jaffar, A., Ismail, A. et al. 2013. Correlates of depression, anxiety and stress among Malaysian university students. *Asian journal of psychiatry*. 6(4):318-323. DOI:10.1016/j.ajp.2013.01.014.
- Shelton, L. 2018. *The Bronfenbrenner Primer: A guide to develecology*. New York: Routledge. DOI:10.4324/9781315136066.
- Shumba, A. & Naong, M. 2012. Factors Influencing Students' Career Choice and Aspirations in South Africa. *Journal of Social Science*. 33(2):169-178. DOI:10.1080/09718923.2012.11893096.
- Sikhwari, T.D., Dama, N.G., Gadisi, A.M. & Matodzi, T.C. 2020. A Comparative Study of the Academic Performance of Resident and Non-resident Students at a Rural South African University. *Journal of student affairs in Africa*. 8(1):1-12. DOI:10.24085/jsaa.v8i1.3468.
- Silveyra, G., Rodríguez-Aceves, L., Charles-Leija, H. & Saiz-Álvarez, J.M. 2021. Human flourishing: an enabler of entrepreneurial intention in Latin American students. *European business review*. 33(6):999-1018. DOI:10.1108/EBR-11-2020-0283.
- Simpeh, F. & Shakantu, W. 2020. On-campus university student housing facility services prioritisation framework. *Facilities*. 38(1):20-38. DOI:10.1108/F-10-2018-0129.
- Simpson, G. 2018. *The National Plan for Higher Education (2001) targets: Have they been met?*. Available: <https://www.che.ac.za/index.php/file/6455/download?token=2NSQii-O> [2023, March 27].
- Simpson, D.B. & Burnett, D. 2019. Commuters Versus Residents: The Effects of Living Arrangement and Student Engagement on Academic Performance. *Journal of College Student Retention : Research, Theory & Practice*. 21(3):286-304. DOI:10.1177/1521025117707516.
- Sitar-Taut, D.-A., Mican, D., Frömbling, L. & Sarstedt, M. 2023. Digital Socialligators? Social Media-Induced Perceived Support During the Transition to the COVID-19 Lockdown. *Social science computer review*. 41(3):748-767. DOI:10.1177/08944393211065872.
- Songca, R.N., Ndebele, C. & Mbodila, M. 2021. Mitigating the Implications of Covid-19 on the Academic Project at Walter Sisulu University in South Africa: A Proposed Framework for Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning. *Journal of student affairs in Africa*. 9(1):41-60. DOI:10.24085/jsaa.v9i1.1427.
- Stake, R.E. 2010. *Qualitative research : studying how things work*. New York: Guilford Press.

Statistics South Africa. 2016. *South African community survey 2016. Statistical release P0301*. Available: <http://cs2016.statssa.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/NT-30-06-2016-RELEASE-for-CS-2016-Statistical-releas-1-July-2016.pdf> [2022, February 2].

Stebbins, R.A. 2001. *What is Exploration?* Thousand Oaks SAGE Publications Inc.

Stebbleton, M.J., Soria, K.M. & Huesman, R.L. 2014. First-Generation Students' Sense of Belonging, Mental Health, and Use of Counseling Services at Public Research Universities. *Journal of college counseling*. 17(1):6-20. DOI:10.1002/j.2161-1882.2014.00044.x.

Stephens, N.M., Hamedani, M.G. & Destin, M. 2014. Closing the Social-Class Achievement Gap: A Difference-Education Intervention Improves First-Generation Students' Academic Performance and All Students' College Transition. *Psychological science*. 25(4):943-953. DOI:10.1177/0956797613518349.

Stephenson-Abetz, J. & Holman, A. 2012. Home is Where the Heart is: Facebook and the Negotiation of "Old" and "New" During the Transition to College. *Western journal of communication*. 76(2):175-193. DOI:10.1080/10570314.2011.654309.

Stokes, M., Schultz, P. & Alpaslan, A. 2018. Narrating the journey of sustained recovery from substance use disorder. *Substance abuse treatment, prevention and policy*. 13(1):35-35. DOI:10.1186/s13011-018-0167-0.

Strydom, H. & Delpont, C.S.L. 2011. Sampling and pilot study in qualitative research. In *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. 4th ed ed. A.S. De Vos, H. Strydom, C.B. Fouché and C.S.L. Delpont, Eds. Pretoria Van Schaik Publishers. 390-396.

Thaba-Nkadimene, K.L. 2020. Editorial: COVID-19 and e-learning in higher education. *Journal of African Education*. 1(2):5-12. DOI:10.31920/2633-2930/2020/1n2a0.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. 2009. 7th ed. Cape Town: Juta Law. Available: <https://books.google.co.za/books?id=wh86AQAAAJ>.

Thomas, L., Orme, E. & Kerrigan, F. 2020. Student Loneliness: The Role of Social Media Through Life Transitions. *Computers and education*. 146:103754. DOI:10.1016/j.compedu.2019.103754.

Tinto, V. 2017. Through the Eyes of Students. *Journal of college student retention : Research, theory & practice*. 19(3):254-269. DOI:10.1177/1521025115621917.

Tolman, S. 2017. The effects of a roommate-pairing program on international student satisfaction and academic success. *Journal of International Students*. 7(3):522. DOI:10.5281/zenodo.570013.

Tudge, J.R.H., Payir, A., Merçon-Vargas, E., Cao, H., Liang, Y., Li, J. & O'Brien, L. 2016. Still Misused After All These Years? A Reevaluation of the Uses of Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory of Human Development. *Journal of family theory & review*. 8(4):427-445. DOI:10.1111/jftr.12165.

- Utter, M. & Deangelo, L. 2015. Lateral transfer students: The role of housing in social integration and transition. *Journal of College and University Student Housing*. 42(1):178-193.
- Vainio, A. 2013. Beyond research ethics: anonymity as 'ontology', 'analysis' and 'independence'. *Qualitative Research*. 13(6):685-698. DOI:10.1177/1468794112459669.
- van der Merwe, L.J., Botha, A. & Joubert, G. 2020. Resilience and coping strategies of undergraduate medical students at the University of the Free State. *The South African journal of psychiatry*. 26:1-8. DOI:10.4102/sajpsychiatry.v26i0.1471.
- Van der Walt, S., Mabaso, W.S., Davids, E.L. and De Vries, P.J. 2020. The burden of depression and anxiety among medical students in South Africa: A cross-sectional survey at the University of Cape Town. *South African Medical Journal*. 110(1):69-79
- Van Heugten, K. & Gibbs, A. 2015. *Social Work for sociologists: Theory and practice*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- van Rooij, E.C.M., Jansen, E.P.W.A. & van de Grift, W.J.C.M. 2018. First-year university students' academic success: the importance of academic adjustment. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*. 33:749-767.
- van Schalkwyk, F. 2021. Reflections on the public university sector and the covid-19 pandemic in South Africa. *Studies in Higher Education*. 46(1):44-58. DOI:10.1080/03075079.2020.1859682.
- Vandeyar, S. & Mohale, A. 2017. Shifting perceptions of black students in a South African university residence. *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 31(5):263-276. DOI:10.28535/31-5-1559.
- Velasquez-Garcia, Z. & Garcia, J.A. 2016. On-Campus Living Experiences among Filipino University Students. 18(1):30-45.
- Visser, M. & Law-van Wyk, E. 2021. University students' mental health and emotional wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing lockdown. *South African Journal of Psychology*. 51(2):229-243. DOI:10.1177/00812463211012219.
- Volstad, C., Hughes, J., Jakubec, S.L., Flessati, S., Jackson, L. & Martin-Misener, R. 2020. "You have to be okay with okay": experiences of flourishing among university students transitioning directly from high school. *International journal of qualitative studies on health and well-being*. 15(1). DOI:10.1080/17482631.2020.1834259.
- Vuckovic, M., Riley, J.B. & Floyd, B. 2019. The First Year Colloquium: Creating a Safe Space for Students to Flourish. *The journal of scholarship of teaching and learning*. 19(2). DOI:10.14434/josotl.v19i1.23517.
- Wadams, M. & Park, T. 2018. Qualitative Research in Correctional Settings: Researcher Bias, Western Ideological Influences, and Social Justice. *Journal of forensic nursing*. 14(2):72-79. DOI:10.1097/JFN.000000000000199.

- Wagner, F., Kaneli, T. & Masango, M. 2021. Exploring the Relationship between Food Insecurity with Hunger and Academic Progression at a Large South African University. *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 35(5):296-309. DOI:10.20853/35-5-4099.
- Walker, M. & Mkwanzani, F. 2015. Challenges in accessing higher education: A case study of marginalised young people in one South African informal settlement. *International journal of educational development*. 40:40-49. DOI:10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.11.010.
- Walker, M. & Mathebula, M. 2020. Low-income rural youth migrating to urban universities in South Africa: opportunities and inequalities. *Compare*. 50(8):1193-1209. DOI:10.1080/03057925.2019.1587705.
- Wall, P., Fetherston, C. & Browne, C. 2018. Understanding the enrolled nurse to registered nurse journey through a model adapted from Schlossberg's transition theory. *Nurse education today*. 67:6-14. DOI:10.1016/j.nedt.2018.04.017.
- Wallace, S., Schuler, M.S., Kaulback, M., Hunt, K. & Baker, M. 2021. Nursing student experiences of remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Nursing forum*. 56(3):612-618. DOI:10.1111/nuf.12568.
- Watson, M.B. 2019. Career maturity assessment in an international context. In *International handbook of career guidance*. J.A. Athanasou and H.N. Perera, Eds. UK: Springer Cham. 639-653.
- Wertheim, S.S. 2014. Can we become friends? Students' cross-racial interaction in post-apartheid South African higher education. *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa*. 2(1):35-54.
- Weiss, R.S. 1987. Reflections on the present state of loneliness research. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*. 2(2):1-16.
- Whitley, B.E., Kite, M.E. & Adams, H.L. 2013. *Principles of research in behavioral science*. New York: Routledge.
- Whitmore, C.B. & Dunsmore, J.C. 2014. Trust Development: Testing a New Model in Undergraduate Roommate Relationships. *The Journal of genetic psychology*. 175(3):233-251. DOI:10.1080/00221325.2013.869533.
- Wiles, R. 2012. *What are Qualitative Research Ethics?* Huntingdon: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Wiles, R., Crow, G., Heath, S. & Charles, V. 2008. The Management of Confidentiality and Anonymity in Social Research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. 11(5):417-428. DOI:10.1080/13645570701622231.
- Wilson-Strydom, M. & Walker, M. 2015. A capabilities-friendly conceptualisation of flourishing in and through education. *Journal of moral education*. 44(3):310-324. DOI:10.1080/03057240.2015.1043878.
- Windham, M.H., Rehfuss, M.C., Williams, C.R., Pugh, J.V. & Tincher-Ladner, L. 2014. Retention of First-Year Community College Students. *Community college journal of research and practice*. 38(5):466-477. DOI:10.1080/10668926.2012.743867.

Winter, K. 2014. Understanding and Supporting Young Children's Transitions into State Care: Schlossberg's Transition Framework and Child-Centred Practice. *The British journal of social work*. 44(2):401-417. DOI:10.1093/bjsw/bcs128.

Worsley, J.D., Harrison, P. & Corcoran, R. 2021. The role of accommodation environments in student mental health and wellbeing. *Bmc Public Health*. 21(1):573-573. DOI:10.1186/s12889-021-10602-5.

Yomtov, D., Plunkett, S.W., Efrat, R. & Marin, A.G. 2017. Can Peer Mentors Improve First-Year Experiences of University Students? *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*. 19(1):25-44. DOI:10.1177/1521025115611398.

Young, L. & Tsoi, L. 2013. When Mental States Matter, When They Don't, and What That Means for Morality. *Social and personality psychology compass*. 7(8):585-604. DOI:10.1111/spc3.12044.

Zhang, L. & Pu, S. 2017. It takes two shining lights to brighten the room: Peer effects with random roommate assignments. *Education economics*. 25(1):3-21. DOI:10.1080/09645292.2016.1203867.

Zilioli, S., Slatcher, R.B., Chi, P., Li, X., Zhao, J. & Zhao, G. 2017. The impact of daily and trait loneliness on diurnal cortisol and sleep among children affected by parental HIV/AIDS. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*. 75:64-71. DOI:10.1016/j.psyneuen.2016.10.012.

APPENDIX A

Consent to participate in research

Title of research project:	“The transition to living in a university residence: first year students’ perceptions in this regard.”
Researcher:	Carima Adams
Research supervisor:	Fatima Williams
Department:	University of Cape Town - Social Development
Qualification:	MSocSci Clinical Social Work

You have been selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a first-year student at the University of Cape Town and are living in a residence. Kindly read through the following information detailing this research study.

1. Purpose and benefits of the study

The purpose of this research is to explore the perceptions you have as a first-year student who is transitioning to living in a residence. This will include your perceptions of the positive factors of the transition to living in a residence as well as the challenges, and supportive factors that have helped you with your transition to living in a residence. You will be asked to make recommendations to the university that could assist students with the transition to living in a residence and to make recommendations to incoming first year students who will be living in a residence.

2. Procedures

If you choose to participate in this study, the following will be requested from you:

- Participation in an in-person or online interview which will be approximately 60 minutes in length. The interview will be at a time which is most convenient for you, and a place of your choosing.

- The interview will be recorded and transcribed.
- Should you choose to meet in-person, you will be asked to disclose any symptoms that could be associated with COVID-19 on a screening form.
- Should you choose to meet in-person, all COVID-19 protocols will be adhered to. Sanitiser will be provided.
- If the researcher has any symptoms, she will inform you before the interview and will reschedule the interview to an alternative time that best suits you.
- Should you choose to meet online, you will be given the choice of using Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

3. Potential risks and discomforts

In-person interviews carry a risk of contracting COVID-19, even with safety measures in place but every effort will be made to protect both parties. Some of the questions may evoke strong feelings for you. At the end of the interview, the researcher will spend some time with you to ensure that you can discuss these feelings. She will refer you to UCT Student Wellness Services for further assistance if necessary. What is required is an honest reflection of your experience as a first-year student who is transitioning to living in a residence.

4. Confidentiality and protection of participants

All the information in association with this study will remain confidential. This will be ensured by removing your name and any identifying information from the research data. A pseudonym will be assigned to you. As previously mentioned, all information will be recorded and transcribed. All research studies are published on the UCT OpenAccess platform and is thus made available to the public. The findings of this study will be shared with the Department of Student Affairs at UCT. A report summarising the findings will be made available to you.

5. Participation and withdrawal

Participation in this study is voluntary and should you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time. You are also able to decline answering any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering.

6. Contact details

Researcher: Carima Adams 063 6722 750 carimabehardien@gmail.com / bhrcar002@myuct.ac.za

Supervisor: Fatima Williams fatima.williams@uct.ac.za

DECLARATION AND SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT

Your signature on this form indicates that you fully understand the above study, what is being asked of you as a participant in this study, and that this is being signed by you voluntarily. If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to ask them now or at any other time throughout the study.

Name of participant:	
Signature:	
Date:	

DECLARATION AND SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

I declare that I explained the information provided in this document to _____ [name of participant]. [He/she/they] was encouraged to ask any questions that they might have.

Signature:	
Date:	

APPENDIX B

Semi-structured interview schedule

Name: Carima Adams

Student number: BHRCAR002

Project title: “The transition to living in a university residence: first year students’ perceptions in this regard.”

Degree: MSocSci (Clinical Social Work)

Course: SWK5001W Minor Dissertation

Semi-structured interview schedule

Demographic details

- Which residence do you live in?
- What is your current age?
- If you feel comfortable sharing, which gender do you identify with?
- What are you studying?
- Where are you from?

Research question one: What have been the positive aspects of adjusting to living in a residence?

- What was living at home like?
- Tell me a bit about how you made the decision to come to university.
- What lead you to choose to study at UCT?
- What lead you to choose to live in a residence?
- What did you imagine living in a residence would be like?
- When you arrived at UCT, what were your first impressions of the residence?
- At this stage, do you feel that you have adjusted to living in a residence?
- If yes, how long do you feel it took you to adjust to living in a residence?
- If no - move to the next research question on challenges.
 - What have been some of the positive aspects around settling into a residence?
 - What, if any, positive things did you learn about yourself as you settled into living in a residence?
 - When you arrived how, if at all, did the residence staff help you to settle into living in a residence?

- When you arrived how, if at all, did the way the residence operates help you to settle into living in residence?
- Overall, what did you enjoy the most while adjusting to living in a residence?

Research question two: What have been the challenging aspects of adjusting to living in a residence?

- What were some aspects that you imagined would be challenging about moving into a residence?
- What have been some of the challenges around adjusting to living in a residence?
- What, if any, other challenges did you feel you struggled with while settling into living in a residence?
- When you arrived what, if any, aspects relating to the way the residence operates did you find challenging?
- Overall, what did you find most challenging while settling into living in a residence?
- Who, if anyone, could you discuss these feelings with?

Research question three: What support have students received with the transition to living in a residence?

- What were the kinds of support you felt you needed when arriving at the residence?
- What, if any, of this support do you feel you didn't get while settling into living in a residence?
- While settling into living in a residence, what do you feel has most supported you?
- Who do you feel provided the most support to you while settling into living in a residence?

Research question four: What recommendations would the participants make to the university to assist students with the transition to living in a residence?

- What recommendations would you make to your current residence in terms of how first year students can be assisted with transitioning to living in a residence?
- What recommendations would you make to the university in terms of how first year students can be assisted with transitioning to living in a residence?

Research question five: What recommendations would the participants make to incoming first year students with regards to managing the transition to residence living.

- If a first-year student were to ask you for advice on what accommodation they should opt for, what advice would you give them?
- What would the reasons for this be?
- What recommendations would you make to incoming first-year students who are moving into a residence?

End of interview

- How did you find the interview?
- Are there any questions that you have at this point?