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A Study of Academic Resilience Amongst First Generation
University Students in South Africa

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This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the
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Signature:

Date: 27 March 2013

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Chapter 1: Introduction

We have become experts at predicting who will fail and what kinds of programs will compensate for deficits. But to design effective interventions, we must understand how some students persist and succeed in school and later in life despite the overwhelming odds against them”

- (Winfield, 1994, 39)

1.1 Overview

This study adopts a sociological approach to the issue of academic resilience amongst first generation university students in a developing world context. As suggested in the opening quotation above, this study aims to generate insight in to the structural conditions of first generation students who have accessed higher education and to better define the “overwhelming odds” that are frequently deemed to be against them. More importantly perhaps, this study seeks to generate understanding about the manner in which these agents engage with their structural conditions and, in so doing, succeed in overcoming the effects of their natal conditions, or not. Margaret Archer’s (2003) theory of “modes of reflexivity”, the nexus between structure and agency, is utilised as the conceptual framework for this study.

This research project is therefore guided by the following 2 primary questions that, together with their related sub-questions, are motivated in more detail in Chapter 2 (refer to Section 2.8). All research questions will be featured in italics throughout this report.

1. *How do first generation university students in a developing world context engage with their socio-cultural conditions?*
 - 1b) *What are the distinctive aspects of the socio-cultural conditions of students in a developing world context?*
2. *Are some modes of reflexivity more conducive to academic resilience in undergraduate studies than others?*

2b) What kinds of interventions can be put in place to serve first generation university entrants better?¹

1.2 Rationale

Traditionally access to university has been regarded as a privilege of the elite, however there is growing pressure globally, and in South Africa, on governments and higher education institutions to “democratise higher education by opening (its) doors to a more diverse set of ‘non-traditional students’” (Christie, 2009, 124). As a result, many universities actively recruit and admit students from low socio-economic backgrounds and under-represented groups. Many of these students are first generation entrants who do not arrive with the appropriate social, economic, symbolic and cultural “capitals” (Bourdieu, 1986) that facilitate their transition and success in their new environment – potentially leading to their mobility into a new social class as well.

A study that investigates how those who are first in their families to access higher education are able to persist and succeed (and why others do not) is significant for a number of reasons that are motivated in the literature review that follows. In brief, these include:

- a. The construct of resilience has been weakly defined in the literature in ways that blur the boundaries between the disciplines of psychology and sociology in particular.
- b. As a result, studies on academic resilience are often ill-defined and those that have been conducted focus primarily on high school learners from ethnic-minority groups in the United States.
- c. There is little literature on academic resilience amongst first generation university students, internationally, and in South Africa in particular.

On a personal note, I am intrigued by the notion of academic resilience and by how some students succeed academically, despite what are often vaguely referred to as ‘the odds’ against them. The site of this study is my own workplace, the Tertiary School in Business Administration (TSiBA). TSiBA aims to enable access to higher education for those who are both financially and educationally disadvantaged and in particular to develop students’ leadership and entrepreneurial abilities. We therefore admit students whom traditional

¹ The answers to this sub-question will be inferred from the findings generated to answer the primary questions above.

universities would not (due to their low national senior certificate scores, their AARP scores² and their household's inability to fund their studies³) and provide successful applicants with a full tuition scholarship to study a bridging year. Upon successful completion of this year, students are awarded a second scholarship to study towards TSiBA's accredited 3 year Bachelor in Business Administration (BBA) degree in Entrepreneurial Leadership. In addition to providing scholarships, TSiBA seeks to develop students in a holistic manner by focusing on affective as well as cognitive issues and avails a range of additional interventions such as a compulsory mentorship programme for the first two years. Mentors from the corporate environment are trained by TSiBA and the mentees and mentors participate in selecting each other.

As a co-founder who was with the organisation when we opened our doors in 2005, I have been exposed to the broad range of significant challenges (including financial, domestic, academic, interpersonal, vocational, health and safety stressors) that students at TSiBA encounter on a daily basis and have been fascinated and humbled by those who persist and thrive.

1.3 Methods and Findings

Initially I was interested in conducting research on predictors of success at the point of admission into higher education. However, I realised that the findings of such a study would be likely to lead recommendations about cut-off criteria that would not ultimately serve TSiBA's mission of widening access. In this I concur with Winfield (1994), quoted at the beginning of this chapter, that, as educators, we need to resist the urge to predict who will fail and, conversely, who will succeed.

Thus, instead of conducting a large quantitative study amongst many students that would have sought to identify predictors of success, I chose rather to conduct an in-depth qualitative study amongst a smaller number of purposefully sampled senior students at TSiBA, and their peers who had left TSiBA prematurely. As described in Chapter 3, semi-structured interviews

² These tests are developed by the Alternative Admissions Research Project (AARP) as an alternative for the government's school leaving examinations. This project's tests have been replaced in recent years by the national benchmarking tests (NBT), which have been adopted by almost all public universities in South Africa.

³ Although the government's National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) prioritises provide funding the tertiary education of people from low income households this, in TSiBA's experience, is contingent on their academic performance (which is often hindered by the poor schooling that they have received) and not easy to access.

were conducted with each individual in the sample and the data were analysed interpretatively.

It is hoped that the findings of this study may be of interest to educators, particularly in higher education institutions in South Africa, who seek to understand what academic institutions can do to sustain resilience in students who display good coping abilities and how to enhance resilience in students who are not faring as well.

University of Cape Town

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter briefly introduces the literature that deals with the concepts of resilience and academic resilience. International and local literature related to the concept of academic resilience amongst university students in particular is considered. Margaret Archer's (2003) theory of structure, agency and modes of reflexivity is then introduced as a conceptual framework for understanding how agents, the first generation university students in this study, mediate their socio-cultural conditions.

2.1 The Development of Resilience as a Concept

The concept of academic resilience is based upon a body of research that emerged within the discipline of psychology 40 years ago. Early studies of severely mentally disordered patients in the field of developmental psychopathology focused on maladaptive behaviour and considered those with relatively adaptive patterns as atypical. It was Garmezy, the pioneer of this field, who first contended that the study of success is just as important as the study of failure and increasingly researchers began to engage in studies of the, "factors that result in adaptive outcomes in the presence of adversity" (Luthar et al., 2000, 543).

Initial studies (Garmezy and Rutter, 1983; Murphy and Moriarty, 1976; Werner and Smith, 1982 cited in Luthar et al., 2000) identified several personal variables that they related to resilience such as sensitivity, sociability, inner control, cooperativeness and cognitive superiority. These early studies focused particularly on the personal qualities, or internal attributes, of children who were deemed to be inherently resilient.

In the late 80's, researchers in the disciplines of sociology and anthropology also began to research the concept of resilience in the context of broader life events and structural conditions. In many instances though, interest from additional disciplines led to a blurring of the concept. For example, Luthar et al., sought to identify, "protective factors... which differentiated children with healthy adaption profiles from those who were comparatively less well adjusted" (2000, 544). This definition involves a combination of both psychological concepts (adjustment) with sociological constructs (protective factors) in a manner that is not sufficiently clear nor distinct.

As a result of the engagement of other disciplines, few researchers still refer to resilience as a fixed or inherent attribute, but rather as correlates or "protective factors that limit the negative

behaviours associated with stress and modify the individual's response to risk, resulting in adaptive outcomes even in the presence of adversity" (Waxman et al., 2003, 2). Pianta and Walsh make it clear that, "risk and resilience are...characteristics of a process involving the interaction of systems" (1998, 411). According to Winfield, researchers have recognised that, "resilience is an interaction between the characteristics of the individual and the environment," and that, "these correlates and protective processes are the factors over which adults working with children have considerable influence" (1994, 37)⁴.

Subsequent research has shown that a number of protective factors are present in the lives of resilient young people which serve to reduce the impact of negative events, help individuals avoid or resist problematic pathways, and promote positive and successful pathways. For example, supportive relationships with family members are often cited as a significant protective factor (Adams et al., 2006; Floyd, 1996; Masten et al., 1999; McMillan and Reed, 1994; Pianta and Walsh, 1998; Waxman et. al, 2003 and Winfield, 1994). Research has also shown that young people who lack resilience have a number of risk factors in their lives (Masten and Marsh, 2006).

This section highlights that resilience as a construct has been weakly defined, possibly because it is often located on the boundary between the disciplines of psychology and sociology and researchers seek to encompass both agential and structural factors. Developments in research on resilience have conflated the role characteristics of the environment (i.e. structural and cultural factors) and of the individual (agentic factors). This study will attempt to maintain a clear analytic distinction between these 2 sets of factors.

2.2 Defining Academic Resilience

According to Martin and Marsh, relatively little research has focused on academic resilience and the, "few studies that do are focused on ethnic-minority groups and extreme underachievers in high schools" (2006, 267). Of these, the majority have been limited in that they are qualitative studies conducted amongst small cohorts of high school students in minority groups in urban areas of the United States (e.g. Alva, 1991; Finn and Rock, 1997; Floyd, 1996; Gordon, 1995; McMillan and Reed, 1994 and Winfield, 1994).

⁴ Pianta & Walsh (1998, 413) motivate that schools and educational institutions can serve as an effective hub for community based services and interventions, if these are integrated.

As a result of the weak definition of the concept of resilience (discussed in Section 2.1), the construct of academic resilience has also been poorly conceptualised. Studies therefore operationalise academic (or educational) resilience as a broad set of variables and domains ranging from, “academic to family, peer, socio-demographic and psychological (Finn and Rock, 1997 cited in Martin and Marsh, 2006).

Martin and Marsh define academic resilience, as “students' ability to deal effectively with academic setbacks, stress, and study pressure” (2006, 268). However one of the broader and more widely used definitions is, “the heightened likelihood of success in school and other life achievements despite environmental adversities brought about by early traits, conditions and experiences” (Wang, Haertel and Walberg, 1994 cited in Waxman et al., 2003).

Academically resilient students are therefore considered to be those, “who sustain high levels of achievement, motivation and performance despite the presence of stressful events and conditions that place them *at risk* of doing poorly at school and ultimately dropping out of school” (Alva, 1991, 19) (*italics in original*).

Winfield raises the concern that the term ‘at risk’ has been used too liberally in education. She seems to be one of the few who make it explicit that this term is often, “applied to urban youth as a descriptor even though the term actually applies to the conditions of their lives – specifically ‘risk factors’ such as poverty and economic status” (1994, 37). Furthermore, she highlights that such labels have been used to infer a range of deficits (including cognitive, motivational, self-esteem and learning) in Black people in particular. Barbarin (1993) builds on this with the observation that, “rarely does one see the terms ‘competent’, ‘resourceful’, ‘aspiring’ or ‘motivated’ used to describe (poor African American students) or their performance in school” (cited in Floyd, 1996, 181). This research project deems these concerns to be significant and will return to them again in Section 2.4, which considers the motivation for an asset based perspective when studying students who come from low socio-economic contexts.

2.3 Research on Resilience at University Level

Winfield considers the transition from high school to college to be the final critical transition point in a young person’s educational career. She notes that many young people from families of low socio-economic status, where parents have typically not attended or graduated from higher education, are not adequately prepared because they have not been exposed to information or parental behaviours that support this transition (1994, 48). Research into

correlations between poor socio-economic circumstances and access to higher education in particular link this to students' internal attributes and their relational resources e.g. support from mothers in particular, teachers and peers (Wilson Sadberry, Royster and Winfield, 1991).

Whilst some quantitative studies have been conducted with regard to resilience (or related concepts) among university students, only a few qualitative research projects have been documented internationally and locally. The quantitative studies seem to focus on factors that correlate with access to higher education, while fewer investigate correlations between throughput and success. Although many universities world-wide have established Academic Development Units (or something akin to this) that offer a range of interventions to support students who are deemed to be disadvantaged and/or underprepared, few seem to have conducted rigorous summative evaluation and/or impact studies and shared their findings in formal academic forums. In South African universities especially, this paucity is chiefly due to the reality that most posts in Academic Development are filled by contract staff who are employed to teach rather than research.

Indeed Winfield's observation, which was quoted at the outset of this study, sets the tone and context for this research project. Although some insight, however blurred, has been gained regarding *what* factors (risk and protective factors) relate to resilience, we still lack a nuanced understanding of *how* the characteristics of an individual agent and factors in their structural environment interact⁵.

2.4 A Developing World Context

As this study takes place in a developing world context, it is important to describe the implications of this and related research in more detail. Pym and Kapp's (2011) research on a learning model that has effectively harnessed agency amongst South African undergraduate students in an Academic Development programme concurs with Christie et al. (2008) that it is essential that affective and psychological issues are addressed alongside academic issues. More precisely, in Lockett and Lockett's words, "preparing cohorts of professionals [in the new South African context]... entails negotiating shifts in consciousness, identity and modes of reflexivity related to severe contextual discontinuity" (2009, 480).

⁵ A definition of academic resilience that is deemed to be satisfactory is provided further on in this chapter in Section 2.7.

The discontinuities that first generation university entrants from low socio-economic backgrounds in the democratic South Africa need to navigate as they seek to make their way in the middle class environment of higher education are extreme. Bloch (2009) and Bray et al. (2010), cited in Pym and Kapp (2011), identify the, “dislocation of conventional family structures, the breakdown of the culture of learning and teaching in schools and the violence and conflict in the society around them” as significant risk factors that have wrought this transition all the more challenging for Black working class and rural learners in South Africa.

The disjuncture between the harsh reality of their world and the allure of a middle class lifestyle is experienced keenly by working class youth in contemporary South Africa because the advent of democracy and a globalising world exposes them to previously unheard of opportunities and possibilities of rapid upward mobility (Pym and Kapp, 2011; Soudien, 2007). This highlights the profound contradiction, noted by Njabulo, that, “youth today are discovering who they are in a world that is dramatically different but also frustratingly similar to the world constructed under apartheid” (cited in Soudien, 2007, vii).

The vast majority of young Black South Africans are not able to access higher education due the significant continued inequalities in the country’s educational and economic systems. As a result, the participation rate for African and Coloured students in 2008 was 13 percent, compared to over 50 percent for Whites (National data for 2000 - 2008, Higher Education Information System, South African Department of Higher Education and Training cited in Fisher and Scott, 2011). Fisher and Scott explain that, “this low participation rate needs to be understood in the context of a poorly performing school system, where high dropout and attrition rates are compounded by poor academic achievement” (2011, 2). In particular the structural factors that act as a barrier to both access and success in higher education in South Africa include “poor teaching at the school-level; lack of articulation between school and university; difficulties with the medium of instruction; poor career guidance and lack of bursary support” (Pym and Kapp, 2011, 3).

The working class families of young people who are able to achieve grades that secure them a place at university often struggle to access finance to pay for their studies⁶ and related subsistence costs, and to bear the opportunity cost of having a member of working age not contribute to the household income. The few Black first generation students who succeed in enrolling in higher education are, “pushing against race, class, gender and cultural

⁶ This despite the government’s attempts to improve NSFAS. Refer to footnote 3.

constraints” (Luckett and Luckett, 2009). Without the requisite economic, social, cultural and symbolic “capitals” (Bourdieu, 1986), they are left, to quote the title of Ramphele’s (2002) qualitative study of resilience amongst young South Africans, to “steer by the stars”.

It is therefore not surprising that, although almost two-thirds of higher education enrolments are African students, only 5 percent of African youth succeed in any form of higher education (Scott, Yeld, and Hendry, 2007, 19). Fisher and Scott conclude that, “despite significant progress in expanding access since 1994, higher education in South Africa remains a ‘low participation–high attrition’ system” (2011, 1).

Though this context may seem grim, some South African researchers seek to draw attention to how the socio-cultural conditions of first generation students are also positive in that their conditions foster the acquisition of essential coping skills. Recent work by South African researchers who are seeking to foster agency and resilience amongst university students attempts to reframe the deficit based paradigm that informs much of the literature on students who are traditionally regarded as being ‘at risk’. Citing Swanson’s (2002) study of the construct of ‘disadvantage’, Marshall and Case highlight how social difference is constructed first as ‘disadvantage’ and then re-contextualised as ‘pedagogic disadvantage’ such that, “poor socio-economic backgrounds become conflated with (inherent) low academic ability” (2010, 492-3). They argue that young people from poor socio-economic backgrounds bring with them coping strategies and other useful assets that could help them to succeed in higher education. One of the protective factors that South African researchers (Luckett and Luckett, 2009; Marshall and Case, 2010) have identified for example, are students’ well-developed spiritual resources.

Their international counterpart, Winfield, would concur. She asserts that educators should view resilience as something that is fostered throughout students’ development by creating conditions that are conducive to academic resilience. Winfield contends that the task of developing talent in poor areas is made harder because of the prevailing attitudes and beliefs of adult educators⁷. “We need,” she writes, “to change our approach from one that emphasises risks, deficits and psychopathology to one that capitalises on protection, strengths and assets” (1994, 39). Gaining insight into the socio-cultural conditions, strengths and assets that are operative in the lives of first generation South African students is one of the aims of this study.

⁷ As per the preceding paragraph, this statement of Winfield’s may not apply in South Africa.

2.5 The Mediatorial Role of Reflexivity

In their research in to the development of agency in first generation learners in higher education, Lockett and Lockett propose a view of learning that involves “deep transformation of cognitive structure, identity and social structure” (2009, 470) and present Archer’s notion of reflexivity as the means by which individuals engage in this transformation as active agents. They suggest that “support programmes for undergraduate financially disadvantaged learners must ensure that they first develop a sense of personal identity and social agency as a precondition for succeeding academically” (2009, 469). They also posit that such programmes should avail, “supportive relationships that offer learners recognition and status”, as first generation students in particular are often, “not in a position to receive appropriate support and social and cultural capital from their homes and primary socialisation” (2009, 470) and, “need assistance in realising their full properties and powers as agents” (2009, 476)⁸.

Lockett and Lockett (2009) draw on Archer’s social realist theory of agency and reflexivity (2003), which highlights the role of an individual’s internal conversations when accounting for how structure is mediated by agency. At the heart of the social realist perspective that Archer employs is the notion that, “the causal power of social forms is mediated through social agency” (Bhaskar, 1989, 26) and Archer’s theory of reflexivity attempts to analyse the mediatory process that the word ‘through’ alludes to. In particular, Archer seeks to unpack the notion of social conditioning by firstly specifying, “*how* structural and cultural powers impinge on agents, and secondly *how* agents use their own personal powers to act ‘so rather than otherwise’ in such situations” (2003, 3). This section attempts to provide an overview of Archer’s (2003) theorisation of the relations between structure, culture and agency.

With regard to the manner in which structural and cultural powers impinge on agents, Archer advocates that structural and cultural conditions can be understood as an environment of constraints and enablements which are transmitted by shaping the situations in which agents, “find themselves, such that some courses of action would be impeded and others would be facilitated” (2003, 4). This, in turn, alludes to the existence of agential powers for,

⁸ Lockett and Lockett (2009) assume here that all first generation university learners come from families with low socio-economic status. Whilst some do come from wealthy backgrounds, in South Africa the majority do not and this study will focus on first generation university students who come from low socio-economic status environments.

If, *per impossibile*, no agent ever entertained any course of action they would neither be constrained nor enabled. Only because people envisage particular course of action, can one speak of their constraint or enablement, and only because they may pursue the same course of action from different social contexts, can one talk of being differently constrained and enabled (Archer, 2003, 4).

Archer goes on to specify that constraints and enablements are not pre-existing entities but potential causal powers that only come in to effect when in relationship with something that can be impeded or facilitated, namely the courses of action or the projects that agents adopt. The projects that agents choose are related to their concerns, which in turn are shaped by their natal or objective circumstances. This is summarised in the following 3 stage model.

1. *Structural and cultural properties objectively shape the situations that agents confront involuntarily, and inter alia possess generative powers of constraint or enablement in relation to*
2. *Subject's own constellations of concerns, as subjectively defined.*
3. *Courses of action are produced through the reflexive deliberations of subjects who subjectively determine their practical projects in relations to their objective circumstances.*

Box 1: Archer's 3-Stage Model (2007, 17)

Archer turns to reflexivity to account for how agents use their personal powers to act, “so rather than otherwise” (2003, 3). She defines this as “the regular exercise of the mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their social contexts and vice versa” (2007, 4) and maintains that reflexivity’s subjective powers mediate the role that objective structural and cultural powers play in influencing social action and are thus “indispensable to explaining social outcomes” (2007, 5). In other words, “when confronted with structural constraints (or enablements), agents deliberate reflexively through internal conversation and decide how to respond or react to objective circumstances that are not of their own making” (Lockett and Lockett, 2009, 471).

Based on the premise that both agency and structure have irreducible causal powers, Archer’s theory insightfully captures the dialectic between these in the internal conversation. The following model depicts how agents interact with their structural conditions and position in society over time (T).

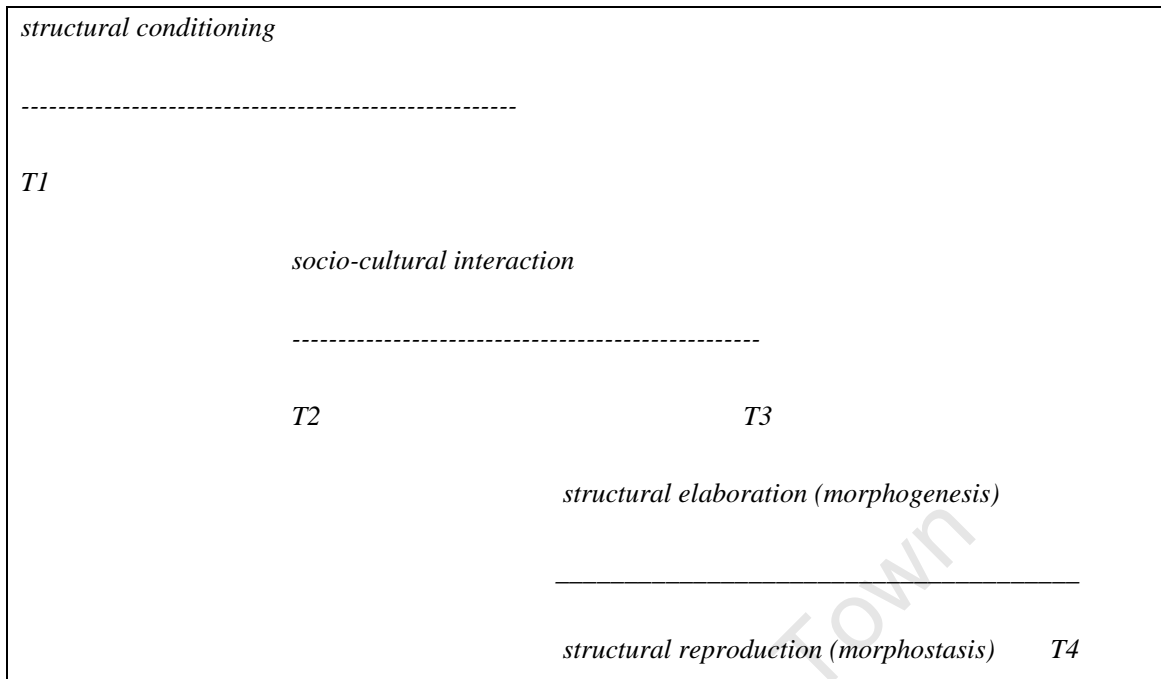


Figure 1. Archer's morphogenetic approach (1995, 157 cited in 2003, 3)

In Figure 1 above, Archer depicts structural conditions and agential activity (socio-cultural interactions) as separate strata of reality and shows that social forms (conditions) are mediated through agency in such a way that structural conditions are either maintained or transformed. From this model it is clear that interaction between agents and their socio-cultural conditions results in either structural reproduction (maintenance) or structural elaboration (transformation) and Archer contends that an understanding of different modes of reflexivity can account for the variability in social outcomes. Her search for a, "proper understanding of personal deliberations (that) accounts for agential evaluations of their situations in the light of their concerns, and their evaluation of their projects in the light of their situations"⁹ yielded 4 different modes of reflexivity or internal deliberation. Whilst they readily concedes that all people do not fall neatly into only one category, they maintains that most do "fall into predominantly one category at any one time in their lives" (Luckett and Luckett, 2011, 477). The following table provides a definition for each of Archer's modes.

⁹ <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/sociology/staff/emeritus/archer/msarcher/research/latest/>
 Accessed 03 February 2013

<i>Communicative reflexives</i>	<i>Those whose internal conversations require completion and confirmation by others before resulting in courses of action</i>
<i>Autonomous reflexives</i>	<i>Those who sustain self-contained internal conversations, leading directly to action.</i>
<i>Meta-reflexives</i>	<i>Those who are critically reflexive about their own internal conversations and critical about effective action in society</i>
<i>Fractured reflexives</i>	<i>Those whose internal conversations intensify their distress rather than leading to purposeful courses of action</i>

Table 1: Definitions of Archer's 4 Modes of Reflexivity (Archer, 2007, 93)

Based on the definitions that Archer provides, one can extrapolate what the distinctive decision making (or deliberation) style of each mode is.

<i>Communicative reflexives</i>	<i>Need to consult others before making decisions and committing to courses of action. May procrastinate about moving to action.</i>
<i>Autonomous reflexives</i>	<i>Do not need to consult others in order to arrive at decisions. Employ instrumental rationality when making decisions. Move swiftly to action.</i>
<i>Meta-reflexives</i>	<i>Do not need to consult others in order to arrive at decisions. Make decisions in the light of values and principles and pursue effective action.</i>
<i>Fractured reflexives</i>	<i>Struggle to make decisions at all and to link these to action. No consistent criteria employed in decision making.</i>

Table 2: Researcher's Summary of the Decision Making Styles of Archer's 4 Modes of Reflexivity

In *Making Our Way Through The World*, Archer explains that her guiding hypothesis is that “the interplay between people's nascent ‘concerns’ (the importance of what they care about) and their ‘context’ (the continuity or discontinuity of their social environment) shapes the mode of reflexivity that they regularly practise” (2007, 96). Hence, she once again presents, “the general formula ‘contexts + concerns’... as the key to what guided the reflexive process,

accounted for its outcomes and indeed shaped the mode of reflexivity employed” (Archer, 2012, 42). According to her 3 stage model (see Box 1), the structural contexts in which agents involuntarily find themselves influence the constellation of concerns that agents adopt. The process by which this happens will be described in more detail in the next section.

Archer observes that in the modern, and possibly only a developed world context, where traditionalism is waning and authoritative sources of normativity are increasingly absent, “young people are increasingly thrown back upon reflexively assessing how to realise their personal concerns in order to make their way through the world” (2012, 97). She contends that they employ “relational reflexivity¹⁰” to tackle the 2 main tasks that they are confronted with, namely;

- (i) the *necessity of selection* in a world of increasing variety and,
- (ii) the *shaping a life*, such that one’s personal concerns dovetail in a way that is satisfying and sustainable.

Indeed, she contends, “socialisation is reconceptualised as the process of tackling these two tasks” (2012, 98) (*italics added*).

In our reflexive pursuit of a good life, Archer describes how each of us,

“survey(s) constraints and enablements, under our own descriptions (which is the only way we can know anything); we consult our projects which we deliberately defined to realise our concerns; and we strategically adjust them into those practices which we conclude internally (and always fallibly) will enable us to do (and be) what we care most about in society. Thus the progressive specification of concrete courses of action, which involves the trajectory concerns > projects > practises is accomplished through internal conversations” (2003, 133)

¹⁰ Archer provides the following definition of relational reflexivity; “(s)uch reflexivity consists in orientating the subjects to the reality emergent from their interactions by taking into consideration how this reality is able (by virtue of its own powers) to feedback on to the subjects (actors/agents) since it exceeds their individual as well as aggregated personal powers” - Donanti cited in Archer (2012, 117n)

Defining and dovetailing one's	Developing concrete courses of action as	Establishing satisfying and sustainable
CONCERNS > > >	PROJECTS > > >	PRACTICES
(Internal goods)	(Micro-politics)	(<i>Modus vivendi</i>)

Table 3: The reflexive pursuit of the good life (Archer, 2012, 108)

As agents engage in an internal conversation that seeks to answer the questions ‘what do I want?’ and ‘how do I go about getting it?’, a personal identity emerges “that leads to ‘a unique pattern of commitments’” (Archer, 2000 cited in Luckett and Luckett, 2009, 474). Archer calls the distinctive manner in which agents with a particular dominant mode tend engage with/confront structural factors - such as opportunities, enablements and constraints – “stances” (2007, 98) and these are detailed in the sections that follow.

At this point it must be made explicit that this section, and those that follow, seek only to present key concepts from body of Archer’s theories that are deemed to be appropriate for the purpose of this study. Thus, for the sake of brevity and focus, important concepts of Archer’s (such as structural and cultural emergent properties) are intentionally not introduced here.

2.6 Modes of Reflexivity and University Students

Archer’s most recent book (2012) is based on the proposition that it is imperative upon all who live in the most developed parts of the world in particular to be reflexive because the rapid changes in structural and cultural orders that high modernity has wrought are shaping a variety of novel contexts which agents have to confront, and select amongst, as we shape our lives in the absence of social/relational guidelines. Furthermore, she contends that, “the general intensification of reflexivity (and the different modes of internal conversations through which it is practised) is directly related to mutually reinforcing changes in cultural and social structures.” (2012, 3-4).

In her book, *The Reflexive Imperative in Late Modernity*, Archer describes how university students in England engage with relational resources, structural and cultural properties and the “situational logic of opportunity” (2012, 249) in particular, and presents how their contexts, concerns, projects and practices vary¹¹. The following diagram summarises much of what is detailed in the broad overview that follows.

¹¹ As per Section 2.5, Archer acknowledges that all do not fall neatly into any 1 of only 4 categories/modes of reflexivity (Luckett and Luckett, 2009, 477).

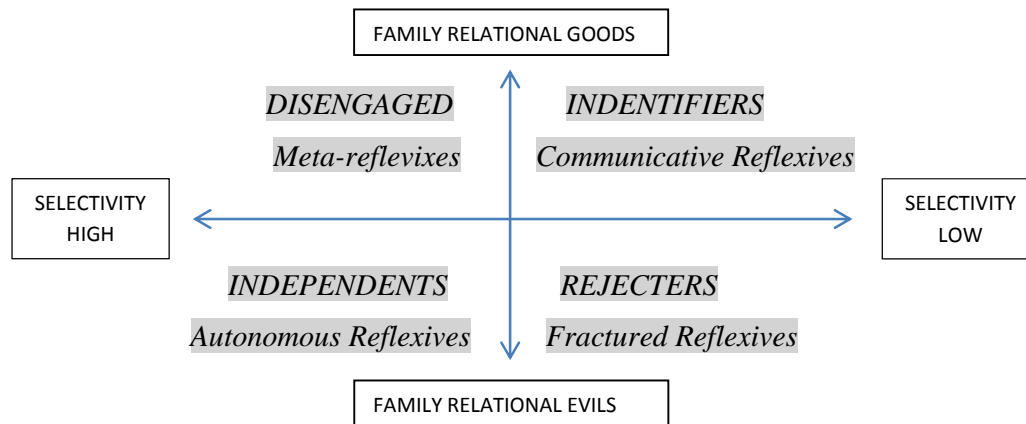


Figure 2: Family relational goods and necessary selection (Archer, 2012, 102)

2.6.1 Communicative Reflexives

2.6.1.1 Context

Archer found that communicative reflexives often possess a, “biography of contextual continuity” (2003, 169). In other words their parents were either still married, or they had a single mother who ensured that there was stability, and their home environment was characterised by “normative consensus” (2012, 99).

Their relationships with those from their natal background are either dense and/or intense and typically also characterised by a high degree of reciprocity. These young people are therefore the recipients of high “relational goods” which Archer also defines as, “internal goods... such as love, reliance, caring and trust”... (that are) deemed highly worthwhile in themselves” (2012, 99).

Communicative reflexives want to live up to contextual expectations and they are anxious about knowing what is expected from them. Archer terms therefore these people “identifiers” (2012, 100) in relationship to their natal backgrounds as they remain deeply embedded in their natal social context and express the desire of “having a family much like their own” (2012, 154). For this reason, the necessity of selection for these students is “significantly curtailed” (2012, 99–100) and parents and friends are, for example, often very much involved in the decision to go to university.

2.6.1.2 Concerns and Projects

It follows that the primary concern of communicative reflexives are their family and friends and the maintenance of harmonious relationships with them. According to Lockett and Lockett they, “prioritise self-worth in relation to their social order” (2009, 478). As a result, all other concerns, including those that are career related, are dovetailed in favour of this and for this reason, it is less likely that communicatives come to university with a clear project in mind beyond passing their degree and getting a job that is stable. Careers are sought that will contribute to stability and solidarity and their options are often gleaned amongst the examples of their family members.

2.6.1.3 Practices and Stance

Archer highlights that this communicative mode of thought and talk with “similar and familiars” (2012, 127) is relationally formed and needs to be relationally sustained. Young people from close families typically also respect the relational goods that they inherited and take care to preserve and prolong these. She explains that communicative reflexives therefore actively maintain their relationships with family and home friends while at university and this acts as a filter, “sifting friendships, social activities and leisure pursuits to ensure congruity with their families’ normativity” (2012, 99).

As a result of this filtering process described, communicative reflexives are typically not voracious for new experiences and they make active attempts to maintain their existing social world. Indeed, Archer (2012) observes that the work of intergenerational replication of family relationships, and the evasion of novel possibilities, can be strenuous (particularly for young people who are pursuing a project as ambitious as that of being a first generation university entrant) and should be regarded as an act of agency on their part.

For communicative reflexives, contentment and stability are the key to a satisfying life and they are unlikely to formulate projects beyond the horizons of their current circumstances as these may well require contextual discontinuity. Their projects therefore do not evoke/test societal constraints and enablements, but rather they, “adopt an evasive stance towards society, often characterised by self-sacrifice for the sake of family and friends, that leads to social immobility and social reproduction” (Lockett and Lockett, 2009, 478).

Although being a first generation university student is definitely an example of a project that is beyond their current horizon, the communicate reflexives’ motivation to pursue such a

project is not to leave their context or change it for, in Archer's words, "society places no obstacles in the way of those wishing to found a family and maintain a friendship network, especially when this is coupled to a commitment to providing for them, without any aspirations to social advancement" (2003, 202). We can therefore presume that should they attempt to leave or change their natal context or no longer seek to provide for their family, constraints would be evoked.

In conclusion, communicative reflexives do not typically 'stick their head above the parapet', so to say. Their approach is therefore regarded as traditional and their response to the situational logic of opportunity is to reject it. In Archer's words, they deal, "with the necessity of selection by turning their backs on it and endorsing what had been given them" (2012, 101) and for this reason their mode is not well equipped to confront the reflexive imperative.

2.6.2 Autonomous Reflexives

2.6.2.1 Context

According to Archer, autonomous reflexives generally come from backgrounds that are characterised by "contextual discontinuity" (2003, 229) and disruptive influences. Their contexts are marked by an absence of relational goods and may be tinged with negativity. They may have moved often and are likely to have been parented by 2 individuals rather than a couple. Parents are often more pre-occupied with their own interests than that of the family and are likely to convey mixed messages to their children, who are therefore forced to confront the necessity of selection early on. Furthermore they may have been required to take on adult duties, like household responsibilities and raising siblings, at a young age.

Autonomous reflexives are less likely than communicative reflexives to grow up with reliable interlocutors and, as a result, have to develop a self-sufficient internal dialogue early on. Their relational goods have atrophied and by university they are unlikely to be close to family or home friends. Hence intergenerational replication or identification is not an option. Archer therefore refers to this subgroup as "independents" (2012, 100) in relation to their natal background and she notes with interest that these young people are typically non-judgemental with regard to their parents.

2.6.2.2 Concerns and Projects

Autonomous reflexives prioritise success in their careers and independence. They, “find fulfilment in skilful performance” (Lockett and Lockett, 2009, 478) and do not dovetail their concerns in favour of maintaining harmonious social relations as the communicative reflexives do. Unlike the communicative reflexives, they also have, “no intention of returning home (and assuming a)... role as family mainstay after university” (2012, 173). Accordingly, “Archer observes that as autonomous reflexives projects take them away from their social backgrounds, they tend to lose their net of close interpersonal relations (and) are forced to become more self-reliant” (Lockett and Lockett 2009, 478). This observation is particularly interesting, and seemingly contrary to, the findings that were briefly alluded to in Section 2.3, namely that relational resources such as mothers in particular, teachers and peers are a significant protective factor that facilitate access to higher education and, by extension, success therein.

Contrary to the communicative reflexives, careers are not sourced from family examples and are typically sought in financial and public services. Archer maintains that autonomous reflexives choose these avenues for upward mobility and that they are uncritically enthusiastic about employment in the corporate sector. When making decisions she says they employ “instrumental rationality” (2012, 166) – a mode of decision making and risk taking that is based on a careful strategic evaluation of costs and benefits. We can therefore surmise that entrepreneurship may appeal, because of the independence that it promises, but that autonomous reflexives are likely to first want to build a career base and secure material benefits, such as a house and a car.

2.6.2.3 Practices and Stance

Driven by a desire for independence, autonomous reflexives carefully plan how they will achieve their aims in the light of their understanding of society’s sanctions. According to Lockett and Lockett, they;

- take full responsibility for their own lives
- plan ahead
- like to be in control,
- have self-confidence in their own deliberations, and...
- (display) individualism and self-discipline (2009, 478).

They respond to the situational logic of opportunity with an eye to competitive advantage and regard opportunity as something to be seized and “fallibly exploited” (Archer, 2012, 249). According to Archer, autonomous reflexives adopt a “strategic” stance towards constraints and enablements as they, “seek to avoid society’s ‘snakes’ and to climb its ‘ladders’” (2007, 98).

2.6.3 Meta-reflexives

2.6.3.1 Context

Meta-reflexives typically grow up in environments of “contextual incongruity” (Archer, 2012, 246). Though Archer’s findings indicate that they are typically in possession of high relational goods, they have also been the recipients of mixed messages and have developed a critical stance with reference to their natal background as a result. Their selective and critical faculties are unintentionally honed by their family lives about which, their subjective evaluation, has concluded that, “there must be better than this” (Archer, 2012, 101).

In other words they are critically detached from families based on negative evaluation - which is different from the independence that is enforced upon the autonomous reflexives. They are dissatisfied with their family’s *modus vivendi* and there is almost nothing that they seek to replicate from their natal backgrounds. For this reason, Archer refers to them as “contextually unsettled” (2007, 98) and “disengaged” (2012, 101) and growing up they are often regarded as loners.

2.6.3.2 Concerns and Projects

The primary concern of meta-reflexives is integrity and alignment with their values or a cultural ideal. Aware of and concerned about their impact on society, they are typically on the lookout for a vocation, as opposed to a job or means of making money. Often, Archer observes, they have already formed “proto-commitments” (which are early exercises in social critique) in school and come to university with “vocations in the making” (2012, 207). Meta-reflexives’ concerns are self-transcendental and, as such, they seek a cause that they believe will lead to better lives than their domestic role models and seem indifferent to a career that will enable them to enjoy an expensive lifestyle or experience status acclaim. Instead they aspire to a career where they believe they can promote change.

In addition, they regard learning as an end in itself – not an obstacle to be overcome to gain credentials or a way to get a lucrative job. In this they differ from autonomous reflexives who strive for competent performance for its own sake and are the antithesis of the communicatives who want to live up to contextual expectations.

2.6.3.3 Practices and Stance

Meta-reflexives tend to transcend society's constraints and enablements, in that they don't seem to pay these much heed. They, "do not necessarily respond to objective opportunities for advancement" (Luckett and Luckett, 2009, 478) and are unique in that they are typically immune to group pressure and indifferent to group expectations. Archer contends that, as a result, meta-reflexives develop a distinctively "volatile" (2007, 98) pattern of social mobility and she associates this mode of internal deliberation most closely with nascent morphogenesis i.e. social change. She observes that their "antipathy for both of (modernity's) Leviathans - the market and the state" (Archer, 2012, 245), has the effect of undermining modernity itself.

Meta-reflexives embrace the situational logic of opportunity as to them it represents a, "new horizon of novel possibilities" (2012, 249). They therefore search for otherness and are responsive to variety. They also reflect on their context critically and take responsibility for their past.

In contrast to the communicative and autonomous reflexives who dovetail their concerns, meta-reflexives seek to align their concerns consistently in accord the value or ideal that they hold dear. Archer therefore refers to the stance towards social properties and powers that meta-reflexives adopt as "subversive" because of their willingness to "pay the price" of social constraints and to "forfeit the benefits" of social enablements in their self-transcendent quest to realise their ideal (2003, 274).

2.6.4 Fractured Reflexives

2.6.4.1 Context

According to Archer, fractured reflexives are born in to a context of "relational evils" (2012, 99). They have typically experienced various severely disruptive occurrences and have received no directional guidance from their natal background. They have been unable to

reconcile the traumatic events that they have experienced and their response is to flee their natal background, leaving their family and home friends behind them.

For this reason they have not grown up with reliable interlocutors but, unlike the autonomous reflexives, they have not developed a consistent mode of internal dialogue that is functional and productive. The necessity for selectivity is nevertheless low for them as their rejection of their background is wholesale and this determines the choices that they make. Thus Archer refers to them as “rejecters” (2012, 100) in relationship to their natal background.

Archer does not regard fractured reflexivity as a homogenous category and details 3 particular sub-groups (*italics added*):

- i) *Expressives* have an under-developed reflexivity and are therefore unable to, “diagnose (fallibly, of course) the relationship between their personal concerns and social circumstances, as is necessary for designing constructive courses of action”. Hence they rely primarily on emotion and their “gut” to make impulsive decisions (2012, 250).
- ii) *Displaced reflexives* “previously exercised a dominant mode of reflexivity until adverse circumstances led to the suspension of this personal power” (2012, 251).
- iii) *Impeded reflexives* “show some bent towards the practise of a particular mode and share a similar relational background to its proficient practitioners” but have not, “developed a mode of reflexivity to the point where it could be exercised to converse internally about relations between self and society” (2012, 252).

2.6.4.2 Concerns and Projects

As fractured reflexives have an inconsistent mode of internal conversation that is not capable of dealing with the necessity of selection, it follows that their concerns and career choices are disparate and fleeting too. According to Archer, their concerns are based on affect and hard to identify. As a result of being unable to define their concerns clearly, fractured reflexives are also unable to prioritise or dovetail between their concerns, and as a result they are unable to develop concrete courses of action or projects. Rather a career is sought for ephemeral appeal and it is therefore uncertain too.

2.6.4.3 Practices and Stance

In Archer's words, "whilst 'opportunity' represents the possibility of life being different.... they are so often preoccupied by the traumatic events that they have experienced that they focus on the immediate needs of survival and this precludes reflexive deliberation about more extended forms of purposeful action" (2012, 249). She continues by positing that, "*all fractured subjects are primarily expressive*, wounded and regretful, without being able to design a course of action that will ameliorate their situation" (2012, 249, author's italics). Their self-talk does not lead to action and rather only serves to intensify the strong emotions that they feel.

Those who demonstrate this mode are therefore uniquely unable to match outcomes to concerns, make decisions and define courses of action and they invariably express frustration and regret at the mess they have made of things and their inability to realise social mobility. In the face of structural enablements and constraints, fractured reflexives typically respond in a passive manner and there is little coherence to the manner in which they respond to opportunities. According to Archer, *expressives* in particular, "impulsively seize (instead of intentionally pursue) a series of appealing opportunities *seriatim*" (2012, 250).

For reasons that are dissimilar to those of the communicative reflexives, they are therefore also not well equipped to confront the reflexive imperative and thus Archer refers to them as, "modernity's victims" (2012, 291).

2.7 The Relationship Between Academic Resilience and Modes of Reflexivity

So far 2 key concepts, namely academic resilience and mode of reflexivity, have been discussed in detail. Section 2.1 motivated that the construct of resilience, and by extension that of academic resilience, has been weakly defined because it does not distinguish adequately between psychological (agentic) and sociological (structural) factors and maintain a clear analytical distinction between these. Initially this led to the 'psychologising' of resilience as an inherent attribute of individuals. Subsequent research has led to the identification of multiple protective and risk factors but little insight has been generated into *how* the attributes of individual agents and their structural environments interact in such a way that academic resilience is promoted or hindered. The literature review has highlighted that it could be beneficial to investigate the manner in which agents who formulate projects that aim to realise social mobility and social change (for example, obtaining a degree) engage

A Study of Resilience Amongst First Generation University Students in South Africa

The author sought to generate insight into the manner in which first generation students in a developing world context engage with their socio-cultural conditions and to investigate the relationship between reflexivity and academic resilience. The study therefore adopted a sociological approach to the issue of academic resilience amongst first generation university students in a developing world context and utilised Archer's theory of modes of reflexivity (2003) as a conceptual framework.

A qualitative research method was adopted and semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior students at the Tertiary School in Business Administration (TSiBA), as well as students who had left the institution prematurely. Thus a purposeful sample (as opposed to a random sample) was used. Using the formula 'contexts + concerns' (Archer, 2012, 42) the transcripts were analysed in order to determine the participants' dominant mode of reflexivity. Thereafter the transcripts of all interviewees who were deemed to demonstrate the same dominant mode were reviewed in an interpretative manner with a view to identifying similarities and differences with Archer's framework particularly with regard to their contexts, concerns, projects and practices - as well as other themes that could be gleaned. Finally, the themes that emerged from the transcripts of interviewees in the 'left TSiBA' cohort were compared with those from the 'still at TSiBA' cohort who shared the same dominant mode of reflexivity, with a view to identifying differences between the two groups.

The findings of the study served to highlight the weight of the factors (most notably severe contextual discontinuity, the prevalence of traditionalism, the expectations of their family members to provide for them and a lack of positive role models and guidance) that constrain and sometimes thwart the attempts of first generation students in the developing world to successfully complete their projects of obtaining an undergraduate degree. However the results also seem to indicate that, in some contexts, contextual dissonance can serve to develop practices and coping strategies that are enabling; such as independence, the capacity to make decisions on one's own and to self-motivate.

Furthermore, although a weak relationship was identified between modes of reflexivity and academic resilience, the study showed that students who demonstrate all four modes are capable of completing an undergraduate degree (although this is less likely for those adopting a communicative or fractured mode). These findings are will be welcomed by those who seek to provide access and differentiated interventions to support students from poor socio-

economic backgrounds whom, to date, have typically been crudely and generically deemed to all be 'at risk'.

The study demonstrates that if an analytical distinction between structure and agency and contexts and practices is maintained, then academic resilience can be understood as effect of the quality of an agent's 'internal conversation'. The key theoretical contribution of the study is therefore the conceptualisation of academic resilience as emergent from the interplay between an individual's agentic powers and their socio-cultural conditions whereas, in most literature to date, academic resilience is conflated with contexts and/ or with psychological traits.

University of Cape Town

Appendix D: Examples of Data Analysis In Order To Categorise Participants' Mode of Reflexivity

A: Mode	B: Context	C: Concerns	D: Decision Making
Communi- cative	Characterised by continuity. Parents still together or single mother figure very present. Close to family and home friends. Identifies with natal background.	Family & friends. Harmonious relationships. Contentment.	Needs to consult others. May procrastinate.
Auto- Nomous	Characterised by discontinuity. Disruptive influences in past. No longer close to family or home friends. Independent from natal background.	Career & independence. Skillful performance.	Makes decisions on own. Employs instrumental rationality. Moves swiftly to action.
Meta- Reflexive	Characterised by incongruity. Disruptive influences in the past. Does not have same values as family and home friends. Reflects on context and takes responsibility for past. Disengaged from natal background.	Values & integrity. Improving society.	Do not need to consult. Decisions are informed by values and principles. Pursues effective action.
Fractured	Characterised by severely disruptive occurrences that they have been able to reconcile. Rejects natal background.	Disparate. Unable to identify.	Struggles to make decisions at all and to link these to action. No consistent criteria employed.

Extracts from Table 4: Researcher's Summary of the Distinctions between Archer's Modes of Reflexivity

Bobby: A third year student at TSiBA. Dominant mode = COMMUNICATIVE

Although there were significant tensions in Bobby's household as he grew up, his parents have remained together and, together with their extended family, provided a stable and supportive context for him. Bobby's family and his extensive circle of friends are an important source of motivation and guidance to him. A self-described "jock", Bobby played club rugby directly after high school until an injury put paid to his sporting career for a while. As a result he applied to TSiBA very late in the year. Upon completion of his degree he hopes to play rugby professionally again, and then go in to business with his father.

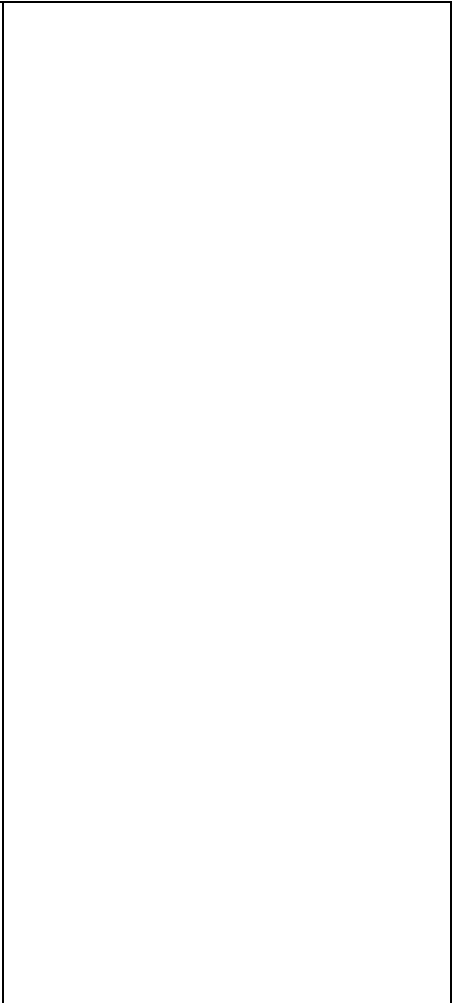
Context – COMMUNICATIVE	Concerns – COMMUNICATIVE	Decision Making - COMMUNICATIVE
I have a mother, a father, a sister, me and then my	So after high school I was passionately into rugby and	one day my Dad said – we are

father has two extra children... I only met my sister when I was about 10 and my brother I met when I was 14.... It is my older sister and then the two, the brother and then sister and then me. My older sister from my Daddy's side is seven days older than me. So that was very strenuous on my mother and my father's relationship and obviously they worked it through. There were a lot of like arguments and going through talking sessions, and I didn't understand what was going on. I was like very confused but as time grew on I started to understand what it was all about. The main thing is growing up I didn't judge my parents, so that is my childhood. Then when I was 14 my mother and my father split up for a bit, just to get some space because it was really strenuous on their relationship and the house also. We moved and my Dad moved; we were separated but I saw him. He was a father figure for me but he wasn't there for that latter of the night part when I would be, 'Okay Daddy I need help with this Maths sum' etc.; so there our relationship lacked a bit. But my mom stepped in and she was almost like the mother and the father.... Up until Standard 8 they sorted things out and went for counselling and everything was good. They decided to get back together and from my end part of high school I was again in my family. My sister was at home, she studied Educare at that time, so she got her degree on Educare, and there was my family again.... I always joked with her all the time and said mom

high school came, I was selected from say out of all the students in South Africa, there was Academy RPC (Rugby Performance Centre) and I was selected out of all the students – 45 were selected... that (not getting a contract to go professional) toughened me up a bit, that set my path not to think of just rugby as a career because at school I was almost a glamour boy... that showed me that there is something beyond; you must open your eyes and look for another direction where you may fall on to. That was a big turning point in my life.... so I thought, 'Okay I am out here, I have six months to recover from this injury. Let me study and see where it goes; you have a bridging here where I can get into a degree so if this is not for me then after the year then I can go back into the rugby.' Then that was just my big turning point.... because I really wanted to go into rugby first, and then afterwards go into the studies; my plan was set for Stellenbosch but then when that thing came through it was like my whole path shifted to the rugby RPC institution....I still play in the Boland region, it takes me an hour to get there and an hour to practice and an hour to get back.... Well I want to get my degree done and then after that I would want to take a few years, like two or three years, and go and play rugby abroad. I have a place where I want to go in France; so that is my plans.... Obviously start my own business; going into my Dad's business. He wants to start almost an institution for young kids in all sports academies. So whether you do rugby, cricket, soccer, tennis, anything; so he wants to start that and I would like to work with him on that and get it started...

Afrikaans and he said (in Afrikaans, Mr, what are you going to do next year? Are you going to study? This injury is going to keep you out and you must get something behind your name). That was almost like confirmation because I was thinking about it, and I agreed. So that is when I told him about TSiBA and he was like cool, let's do that. He came here, he did the research, he phoned Vuyokazi, got the numbers and details and came here first to look and then brought me here and that was it.... Also my over friendliness, or being too playful – I would say that can also be a downfall for me, sometimes it has in the past and when I am actually busy with stuff I am like, 'Oh damn this is actually more than I thought and then I have to hustle to get it done'....

you are not just my mom, you are basically my friend as well.... We (my dad and I) are on par, we can talk about anything, and he is almost like the same person as my mom.... always looks for the benefit for me and he always motivates me. 'You can do better' (even when I am doing great), he tells me. 'You are doing good but I know what lies in you and you must get it out there'.... I have had a whole line of support from family; we were connected. You would see everybody go here and there and always in a big bunch together so it's good.... My parents, both of them. I can't pick one over the other. I just think both of them were like wow, really tremendous.... I would like to be a mixture of my mom and my dad.... you get friends and then you get great friends. The friends would be just the people who you end up with when you look at your call log and you see oh I am the only one calling here. There are no callbacks, but a great friend would be constantly at your house and asking you what are you doing now, how are you and what is going on in your life etc. So I am one of the lucky ones who has had great friends; almost most of my friends are like great friends. Sometimes I don't know where to go – everyone needs attention. So my friends are great support for me, they encourage me, they tell me what I must do...



Kylie: Left after one and a half years at TSiBA. Dominant mode = FRACTURED

Kylie grew up alienated from her mother and father and felt bereft after her grandmother passed away at the time that she was entering high school. She is also alienated from her childhood friends and has only recently begun to reflect on her past with the aid of a counsellor. Her interests are disparate (creativity, graphic design, art, thrill-seeking, Islam) and, as a result, to date she has been unable to define a project that she is committed to. After leaving TSiBA, she struggled to find work and began experimenting with drugs. At the time of the interview, she was engaged in a rehabilitation programme that seemed to be having positive outcomes and held the promise of being something that she could, for the first time, see through.

Context – FRACTURED	Concerns – FRACTURED	Decision Making - FRACTURED
<p>I am an only child with one parent. My father hasn't been around... I don't really have a good mother daughter relationship, it's always been difficult. I spoke more to my grandmother and when she passed everything went down the drain. I didn't know how to communicate with my mommy so it made studying and all of that difficult. There is no communication and I don't feel comfortable talking to my mommy about anything really. The rest of my family; I can't choose my family but I choose to dislike them because they are difficult a lot of times and I don't really keep in touch with them all the time.... and my father's side I don't know anything about them... My last year of primary school and ever since then going to high school and all of that, I had no one to share my secrets with because I don't share with my mommy. So, she wasn't there for the big days like my matric ball and it has been difficult... we fight a lot and I see it in her and she irritates me because of that,</p>	<p>Finding work, that is a big challenge all the time... Studying at TSiBA was also a challenge. That's the only tertiary studying that I have done. It was an interesting subject but wasn't also for me; it was more for my mommy so the difficulty for me was to focus and actually do it and I couldn't at the end of the day, I just couldn't do it anymore.... I wasn't doing it for myself, I was doing it for someone else. That was the major difficulty in my life. It was tough for me to do it every day, I had no enthusiasm about anything and I really got depressed and it wasn't a great year or couple of years; until I told my mommy that I can't carry on like this.... (If I had been) choosing subjects I would have liked to study; my life probably would have been different. I would have been more focused and committed to it. I didn't have that commitment; but if I had to have done something that I wanted to study I probably would have had that commitment. I think it would have turned out differently and I think I would have been more responsible. I think if I hadn't have met my ex-boyfriend and I didn't experiment with</p>	<p>I am constantly doing things to please everyone else but myself... I actually allowed him (my ex-boyfriend) to control my life</p>

because we are so alike we fight constantly.... You get those mothers who go out with their friends all the time and my mommy used to be like that. I didn't enjoy it at the time, so I would say my grandmother raised me until she passed away.... when he's there it's like he is the perfect father but other than that, he doesn't feature. With this programme my mother called him to come and help because I was terrorizing her and we were fighting and arguing; and I started the programme and I told him that he needs to follow through with this and not keep on making empty promises. So I told him this is something I want to do and I don't care about anything else, honestly this is something that you really need to follow through with because if you don't then I will lose all my courage and I don't want to do that. Because that is all that he does, empty promises... Some of them (school friends) wanted to study further, some of them couldn't study further and ended up working; but I don't see them at all anymore because after last year everything was gone. I am not sorry but I do tend to miss them now and then...

drugs, I think I would have been further in my life now and not stuck behind all the time.... I am a person that actually wants to please everyone and I can never be myself. I don't know what it is, they always say it's bad but I seek approval all the time and it's one of my downfalls. Because I am constantly doing things to please everyone else but myself.... I actually like being immature but I have made a decision that I need to grow up in life.... I have always enjoyed designing, either graphic designing, normal art or anything in design and I admire him (my cousin) for what he has done. He went to study overseas and everything. Now he is successful and owns his own architectural business. He does well for himself and he actually designs very nicely; so I admire him and how far he has come in his life. I wouldn't mind having a life like that, studying and going on to do what he wanted to do.... I always wanted to study design as well as creative things. I am a creative person and I can't sit back and just be tied down with books and that, I have always wanted to go and study but it has been difficult to go on and still have my mommy disagree with it. But I think once I get to a point where I am going to do this for myself and be a bit selfish and not allow anyone else to dictate what I must do with my life. Then I do still want to go and study.... that I need to be focused and I have a mind that wanders off very quickly and I lose track of what I am doing. I want to train myself to being committed to something then I would study further because that would help; if I don't have that then I won't be able to make it anywhere. Even at work, I find in the beginning I am enthusiastic

but later on I will be so bored and think I'm not into this, this is not me and I don't know why. I don't have a good attention span and that is how it is with anything that I do. It must be for the moment... personally for me it (studies at TSIBA) became down to say there wasn't a lot of practical for me and creativity; it was more the fact of learning all the time. So that's what I expected from the business side, a lot of books and that, that's why it wasn't for me really.... and I am still sitting at home today. Besides the programme that I am on, other than that I would sit at home and do nothing, just lay around. I looked for work but I was so – I started a lot of nonsense and then I just lost interest in even looking for work so I didn't even get to do what I planned to do when I left (TSiBA).... Now I realize maybe I should have just stuck it out and seen how far I would have gotten; and if I would have changed whereas doing my work was concerned. Now I actually realize that maybe I could have done better with myself in that way.... I like to seek a thrill and that gets me into trouble all the time because then I get caught up in the world's nonsense which I shouldn't be doing and that is one of my weaknesses. I seek that adrenalin rush and it's really bad. I enjoy it but it actually gets me into trouble a lot.... I would like to be actually on my feet, stable financially, working and hopefully starting to study. I know it will take a while for me to study; I just want to be where my mind is at a mature level because right now it is still in an immature phase. I want to have made something of myself in five years' time and something to show for my ability of taking on all the

	<p>trouble and putting it behind me. Just living a positive lifestyle and a healthy life....Right now I am still converting to Islam so I haven't found the right time yet to do it, but I am thinking of doing it. I am actually building myself up spiritually; so I pray now and then and all of that stuff but other than that religion hasn't been playing a big role and that's why a lot of bad things have happened to me because I don't seek help or strength from God or something like that. But I am slowly and surely regaining my spirituality.... I am not getting any younger and I am not getting anywhere in life; I am just stuck in a hole all the time and I need to get out of it. That's why I am trying to change and everything....</p>	
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Appendices

A: Interview Schedule

B: Selected Data from Participants' Academic Records

C: Sample Transcripts Coded

C1: Transcript of Bobby's Interview - Coded

C2: Transcript of Kylie's Interview - Coded

D: Examples of Data Analysis In Order To Categorise Participants' Mode of Reflexivity

E: An Adapted Version of Archer's Internal Conversations Indicator for Students in a
Developing World Context

F: Sample Consent Forms

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Appendix A: Interview Schedule

Part A – Participants' Context

- 1) Please tell me about yourself. How would you describe yourself?
- 2) Please tell me about your family and childhood years?
- 3) Where do you fall in your family? Are you the eldest/ the youngest child?
- 4) Do you have children?
- 5) Who raised you?
- 6) Please tell me more about you mother and your relationship with her.
- 7) Please tell me more about your father and your relationship with him.
- 8) Who else has been a significant caregiver/ guardian in your life?
- 9) Through all your challenges and your successes, who has been an important source of support and encouragement to you?
- 10) Please tell me about any significant/ important teachers or friends in your life, in the past or now? And why?
- 11) When you were in high school did you have a plan to get to university?
- 12) What about your friends at high school, what were they planning to do after school?
- 13) Do you know where they are now?

Part B – Participants' Decision Making Style

- 14) As you look back on your life so far, what are some of the greatest challenges that you have faced?
- 15) Who helped you to get through these challenges? How did they do this?
- 16) What helped you to get through these challenges?
- 17) What have been some of the key turning points in your life, what things that changed you and the course of your life?
- 18) At these turning points in your life, how did you decide what to do next?

Part C – Participants' Perceptions of TSiBA

- 19) How would you describe TSiBA to someone who does not know about the TSiBA? And why?
- 20) What do you think about the quality of education that TSiBA offers?
- 21) Do you/ did you enjoy studying at TSiBA?
- 22) What do/did you enjoy most about your studies?
- 23) When you are/were in the classroom, where do/did you sit in the class?
- 24) What would your friends at TSiBA say about how you took/ take part in your classes? Do/did you ask questions during the class? Did/ do you answer questions?
- 25) Do/ Did any lecturers or staff at TSiBA show a personal interest in you? How did this help?
- 26) Do/did you feel like you belong(ed) at TSiBA? Please explain.
- 27) What clubs and societies are/ were you involved in at TSiBA?
- 28) What did you gain from participating in these activities?
- 29) Do you have a group of friends at TSiBA whom you feel comfortable with?

30) Outside of TSiBA and your schoolwork, how else do/ did you spend your time?

Part D: Participants' Concerns

31) Who do you admire? Who would you like to be like one day?

32) Why do you think you have been successful in your studies so far?/ What were your reasons for leaving TSiBA? Why did you deregister?

33) What are your personal strengths?

34) What are your personal weaknesses, or areas for development?

35) What are your dreams for your future? Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

36) What role has religions played in your life?

37) Is there anything else that you would like to say or add?

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Appendix B: Selected Data from Participants' Academic Records

B.1 Students Still At TSiBA

Pseudonym	Year of Enrolment	Progression	PTEEP Score	Academic Average
Natalie	2008	Final year	32.3	65
Farrah	2007	Final year	30.3	62
Sandla	2005	Final year	24.2	54
Jabulile	2009	Third year	29.2	60
Tsepo	2009	Third year	29.8	54
Thabiso	2009	Third year	29.8	58
Bobby	2009	Third year	30.4	60
Siyabonga	2009	Third year	31.5	52
Beicks	2009	Third year	24.5	64
Rashaad	2009	Third year	35.1	63
AVERAGE			29.7	59

B.2 Students Who Have Left TSiBA

Pseudonym	Year of Enrolment	PTEEP Score
Danga	2009	56.0
Faith	2008	54.2
Veronica	2009	58.3
Leasha	2009	57.7
Rihanna	2008	55.4
Cherise	2008	54.8
Pule	2009	63.4
Kylie	2008	54.8
AVERAGE		56.8

Appendix C: Sample Transcripts Coded

C1: Transcript of Bobby's Interview - Coded

Audio Title: Bobby Interview
DURATION OF AUDIO FILE: 57.04 minutes
DATE: 14 November 2011

Leigh:

Bobby my first question would be tell me about yourself; how would you describe yourself?

Bobby:

That is quite a difficult question; a lot of things go through my mind if someone asks me to describe myself. I see myself as a strong independent person that goes the extra mile and just looks for the positive in life. I think a lot of negatives that are there, I don't look at the negatives I will see the positives in life. I am a positive person then.

Leigh:

Can you tell me a little bit about your family and about your childhood years?

Bobby:

I have a mother, a father, a sister, me and then my father has two extra children. When I started my life it was me, my mother, my father and my sister was staying with my grandparents because one was with him and they wanted to look after her so she then lived with them and they had their life until the age of 14 when she started high school. They were situated in Stellenbosch, so she came to Cape Town and we lived in Elsie's River at that time. Then she schooled with us and stayed with us. Until that time my mother, my father and me were together almost like a normal happy-go-lucky family. I only met my sister when I was about 10 and my brother I met when I was 14.

Leigh:

Are they older or younger than you?

Bobby:

It is my older sister and then the two, the brother and then sister and then me. My older sister from my Daddy's side is seven days older than me. So that was very strenuous on my mother and my father's relationship and obviously they worked it through. There were a lot of like arguments and going through talking sessions, and I didn't understand what was going on. I was like very confused

but as time grew on I started to understand what it was all about. The main thing is growing up I didn't judge my parents, so that is my childhood. Then when I was 14 my mother and my father split up for a bit, just to get some space because it was really strenuous on their relationship and the house also. We moved and my Dad moved; we were separated but I saw him. He was a father figure for me but he wasn't there for that latter of the night part when I would be okay Daddy I need help with this Maths sum etc.; so there our relationship lacked a bit. But my mom stepped in and she was almost like the mother and the father.

Up until Standard 8 they sorted things out and went for counseling and everything was good. They decided to get back together and for my end part of high school I was again in my family. My sister was at home, she studied Educare at that time, so she got her degree on Educare, and there was my family again. So after high school I was passionately into rugby and high school came, I was selected from say out of all the students in South Africa, there was Academy RPC (Rugby Performance Center) and I was selected out of all the students – 45 were selected. So I was drafted into RPC, it was still Prudential RPC. So Prudential took them over and when we were in that part of my life, fresh out of high school, that whole financial scandal scenario came up. We were like three months into it, March already, and they just said no we don't have finances for you. So you can just think what went through my mind at the time; it was March already and no institution was going to take me for the year. I was hoping and hoping and another two weeks went past, and then we were drafted from that performance into a Boland institution from Wellington and we were housed there. We were drafted into club rugby and they gave us stipends and for the following two years I was there.

In that first year or second year I injured my shoulder quite badly and at the end of my second year it was really bad. My shoulder cuff was injured and it popped out the whole time, and then they had to operate. But this meant as I was ending 21 I was becoming a senior, so there was a contract in the line of becoming a senior so when I went for the op they said they can't give me the contract due to this; so professionalism is where they lacked. So my shoulder kept me back; but in that year I decided to send in my application forms to CPUT in Wellington to study accounting. I was listening to the radio station and I heard about TSiBA and I thought well it is just around the corner, why don't I go. So after my op then I came here and this was deep in November so I was the only one at that time that was writing. She told me that I was the last to make it through; and I thought okay I can write this. I wrote it and she first asked me if I can come back later because she saw that I was injured; and I said no I can write. Then my life journey at TSiBA started the year after that and it went good the first year. Struggled a bit the second year, got distracted like for two seconds but got back on it. Then I had my third second year at TSiBA, and it is great. So that is basically my life story.

Leigh:

Lovely summary! So if I understand correctly, in your family including all your brothers and sisters you are the fourth child and you are the youngest?

Bobby:

Yes.

Leigh:

Like you said you grew up with your parents your whole childhood life which answered my questions. Can you tell me a little bit more about your mother and your relationship with her; you have spoken about it how particularly in your teenage years she kind of stepped in as both the mother and the father; but how is it now?

Bobby:

I always joked with her all the time and said mom you are not just my mom, you are basically my friend as well. At that time I mentioned at my 21st birthday party, family member of ours were there and I told them normally children say thank you mom but I am saying thank you friend; so we get along very well. Sometimes in friendships there is that quarrel that can't come out, but we talk, we argue from time to time, we get back on it and she is a strong woman. Doesn't take nonsense from anybody, and she stands for what is right, a bit stubborn and well your visionary, very very good person. Always looking out for other people and no matter what you do wrong she will always always go back and help you out, so that is very good qualities of her. That is basically my mom.

Leigh:

Sounds like a special woman. I saw from the questionnaire that you filled out before that she studied beyond matric. What did she do or did I misunderstand that?

Bobby:

No no it was my daddy that studied.

Leigh:

So how far did your mommy get in school?

Bobby:

Standard 8. She went into the police; she is a senior clerk currently, but she also studied further. They send you on courses in the police to further your education. So she went on courses continuously. At the moment she is the top clerk so doing well.

Leigh:

Impressive. Tell me about you and your dad and your relationship with him now?

Bobby:

We are on par, we can talk about anything, and he is almost like the same person as my mom. Strong, tough, giving to others, the qualities that I like and dislike of him for example is I would have a problem and someone else would have a problem and then he would first sort out the other person's problem before he looks at my problem. Sometimes it can be a strong value that the person has but sometimes it can be negative as well; so maybe he wouldn't see my problem as big as the other person's problem. I think you must also understand the type of person he is – that is where I learnt not to judge him. He has been through a lot in terms of work related stress and

hijacking; he is also in the police. It is not that he just goes and sits in the corner, he gets out of it and moves forward, always looks for the benefit for me and he always motivates me. You can do better, even when I am doing great; he tells me you are doing good but I know what lies in you and you must get it out there.

Leigh:

And he has got his matric?

Bobby:

Yes.

Leigh:

And has studied further – what did he study?

Bobby:

Yes, social services. He studied for two years at UWC and he didn't make it. Then he had to join the police; and in the police force they also send him for further studies and he also completed that.

Leigh:

Besides your mommy and your daddy has there been anyone else in your life who has been a significant caregiver or guardian?

Bobby:

Yes; I would say my grandmother. She has been like a caregiver to me and my past grandpa from my mommy's side.

Leigh:

Is that who your sister went to live with?

Bobby:

Yes. My daddy's mommy and father and my uncle. I have had a whole line of support from family; we were connected. You would see everybody go here and there and always in a big bunch together so it's good.

Leigh:

As you look back on your life so far, what would you say have been some of the greatest challenges that you faced?

Bobby:

The greatest challenge for me was there was a time in my life that I went to this whole ordeal, so it put a bit of strain on my studies and I couldn't focus. I had a – I won't say a disease – but I couldn't focus. I can't get to the name now what it is called; but I went to psychologists and they worked

with me. So I think that was the roughest time in my life; where I had to go through a process and they had to rework my brain so that I can focus and give more attention to my work because I just wanted to play. Nothing about school work was even in my mind.

Leigh:

When was that?

Bobby:

That was between the age of 10 and 12 or 13; that was when I was seeing the psychologist.

Leigh:

What do you think helped you get through that time?

Bobby:

Both my mother and my father like I said; my mom would have been there for the latter part of the day and my dad would pick me up because my mom can't drive. He was the transporter so anywhere, everywhere I needed to go he would take me if my mom and I didn't travel. Because the psychologist was so far he had to take us. Then he had to pick me up and he was like looking for extra people to get me through this. My mom was there for the guidance and working with me throughout it all; if I had work to do she was the one that worked with me and went on with the worksheets and worksheets and worksheets.

Leigh:

So between your parents they really helped you through.

Bobby:

Yes they helped me through it.

Leigh:

What have been some of the key turning points in your life; things that maybe changed you or changed the direction of your life? Have there been points like that?

Bobby:

There have been lots of points like that; with the rugby when I didn't get the professional contract. That was my chance and I think mostly in life as I was in two years or rugby of almost professionalism but senior professional, you train hard, it is almost like schoolwork. You train hard, you do the best that you can but at the end it is just you don't read that last question right and you fail the paper completely. It is just that you trained so hard, you put in all that extra effort that you could and then the coach decides no you are not in my plans. I had a few of those and that toughened me up a bit, that set my path not to think of just rugby as a career because at school I was almost a glamour boy.

Leigh:

One of the jocks?

Bobby:

Yes! Standard 8 already in the first team, Standard 9 first team and matric first team captain; so you can see I was like okay I am already here. I wasn't that working hard type, okay I was the working hard type but I couldn't differentiate between studies and my rugby. I was more focused on the rugby part and that showed me that there is something beyond; you must open your eyes and look for another direction where you may fall on to. That was a big turning point in my life.

Leigh:

Yes it sounds like it.

Bobby:

Like I said I see the good and the bad; so I thought okay I am out here, I have six months to recover from this injury. Let me study and see where it goes; you have a bridging here where I can get into a degree so if this is not for me then after the year then I can go back into the rugby. Then that was just my big turning point.

Leigh:

At a moment like that, how did you decide what to do next? How did you go about that decision making process?

Bobby:

Obviously it is a lot of thinking; I was home alone and for the months of November, December and January. So in November I had the operation, December was really like okay I can't go anywhere I must just stay in the house, get my strength up, get my shoulder going, practice with my shoulder and that got me thinking what is there beyond rugby. It was almost like planning okay so if I go back and get the contract after the six months and then play for two years. In professional rugby they only give two year contracts; so if they give me a two year contract, I play 35% of the games and then because rugby is so competitive you must think of the new talent, younger, faster, stronger etc. and that just made me see that that is not going to be the right path for me. Out of all the rugby players in South Africa only 5% of them make it professionally. So that was also like okay you can't just depend on that, you must educate yourself going forward. Before I did a 6 to 8 month course in sports administration, so that almost gave me a sort of direction like I have something, but I am not only going to make it with this. I must get more. So that hunger for sport came back to me, that hunger to get educated.

Leigh:

Did someone sort of point this out to you or did you arrive at these conclusions by sort of sitting by yourself alone at home and thinking about these things as you say?

Bobby:

I was thinking about it but I never shared it with anybody, and just one day my Dad said – we are Afrikaans and he said (in Afrikaans, Mr, what are you going to do next year? Are you going to study? This injury is going to keep you out and you must get something behind your name). That was almost like confirmation because I was thinking about it, and I agreed. So that is when I told him about TSiBA and he was like cool, let's do that. He came here, he did the research, he phoned Vuyokazi, got the numbers and details and came here first to look and then brought me here and that was it.

Leigh:

I think you have answered this question already but I am just going to ask it again maybe in a different way; through all your challenges and your successes in your life, who has been the most important source of support and encouragement to you?

Bobby:

My parents, both of them. I can't pick one over the other. I just think both of them were like wow, really tremendous.

Leigh:

I guessed you would say that but I thought well let me just check. Other than your parents or people in your family, if you look back on your life, have there been significant teachers or friends in your life; people who have inspired you, supported you, made a difference in your life somehow?

Bobby:

My friends; you get friends and then you get great friends. The friends would be just the people who you end up with when you look at your call log and you see oh I am the only one calling here. There are no callbacks, but a great friend would be constantly at your house and asking you what are you doing now, how are you and what is going on in your life etc. So I am one of the lucky ones who has had great friends; almost most of my friends are like great friends. Sometimes I don't know where to go – everyone needs attention. So my friends are great support for me, they encourage me, they tell me what I must do, we talk about anything; when I have lots of work they say stick it out buddy you must really do it. Also my college friends; because we are in the same situation we have that connection of studying and going through the same stuff. We have that bond and we encourage each other throughout.

Leigh:

That is great! Who do you admire? Who would you like to be like one day?

Bobby:

I would like to be a mixture of my mom and my dad. Only the best parts of course, the parts I like (laughing). Strong, take no nonsense, driven, soft on the other hand, gentle, caring and those are

just a few of the qualities that they have. Leadership; my dad is ecstatic over young children and getting them on the right path, and I would also like to be like them.

Leigh:

Lovely! I think I know the answer to this question too but maybe I am wrong; when you were in high school did you have a plan to go to University?

Bobby:

Yes I did. At that time there was a lot of opportunities coming my way. University of Stellenbosch, UCT, they all gave bursaries out.

Leigh:

Like sports scholarships?

Bobby:

Yes sports scholarships, and I was going to study accountancy at Stellenbosch. I sent through my application and my forms and all of that stuff, almost everywhere I did that. It was an option but because I really wanted to go into rugby first, and then afterwards go into the studies; my plan was set for Stellenbosch but then when that thing came through it was like my whole path shifted to the rugby RPC institution.

Leigh:

What about your friends at high school, what were they planning to do after school?

Bobby:

They were all maybe planning to study, like that was in the circle that I was in, the study circles and some people went for jobs. Some people went to go and study tourism because that was the subjects they took. Some people went into accounting, business; so just the subjects that they had and talking about wanting to be this or that.

Leigh:

Do you know where they are now?

Bobby:

Yes we are in contact, I stayed close to them and we still have that bond. That is why sometimes I think okay who must I go to visit now. **[end of tape]**

Some are finished studying already, some are still studying and doing their finals and so forth. I would say most of them are working.

Leigh:

Moving on to TSIBA now; how would you describe TSIBA to someone who doesn't know TSIBA?

Bobby:

I would say this is a platform for opportunity. There is a lot of stuff going on that I don't even think most of the students know all the things that goes on here. This is not for child's play; if you are hardworking step right up, if you are not and you want to come and have some fun this is not for you. I talk to a lot of students and they say oh this place is not fun, and I say well we are not here for fun, we are here to learn, move on, give a little back, give a lot back and then we make this place somewhere where we give opportunity where opportunity is needed. Fun you can have whenever but not when you are busy, you must see this as your job. You have to pass and you have to have this under your belt, you have to be focused to be here at TSiBA.

Leigh:

This is a tough question to ask you particularly because of my role in TSiBA but to answer as honestly as possible bearing in mind that I am here as a researcher; but what do you honestly think about the quality of education that TSiBA provides?

Bobby:

Some subjects I feel that I don't know what is it about why we have to do it, but at the end of the year when you look back and reflect on the year, then you think okay I saw this subject as unnecessary but looking back at the year you see it really helped. I take Entrep and the LSD 2 together, the deep democracy; and when I look at business school we worked for a group for the whole year. So you must understand sometimes there are frustrations and a lot of 'nos' and everybody's frustrations are building up and building up. Then at a time they would just snap and go off at everybody and then LSD ties in again and how to solve conflict, deep democracy, listening to the no, why do they say this, and then you understand it was really well researched – all of these subjects and that is how they tie together. So the quality of education here is really good.

Leigh:

And I hear you saying it kind of makes sense as you go along, maybe in the beginning it doesn't but later you go oh that is why they planned that?

Bobby:

Yes.

Leigh:

What do you think about the quality of support that TSiBA provides?

Bobby:

There is a lot of good support, I can call you the Dean and at a big University you wouldn't normally have the opportunity to see the Dean; to talk like maybe just walking past, just having a nice meaningless conversation, just how are you – you don't have that at other Universities and that always inspires you. Wow the Dean is talking to me and these little things that makes a student feel like really really driven and helps them perform at what they do.

Leigh:

You have spoken about TSiBA being hard work and I agree with you, do you enjoy studying at TSiBA or is enjoyment not a part of it?

Bobby:

I really enjoy it; at first it was just okay come in, do my thing, go; but really as you go on in years you see how the classmates come together. We form great bonds and that just makes a student's life very happy because you have a real bond with friends who are almost like in the same industry as you. I told my one friend the other day you know it is not your school friends and your outside friends that is good friends, but the friends that are forever are almost like the people who are in the same industry as you because you talk the same, you are just on that level and I think wow that is awesome that we are each other's great support system. Just the stuff that you do at TSiBA also brings you closer.

Leigh:

Through all the challenges and the projects and the ups and downs?

Bobby:

Yes and also the fun things like Mankind, the unexpected; but when we came back we were like wow why did it take so long for us to realize this. So it is really really good to study here.

Leigh:

What do you enjoy most about your studies?

Bobby:

The things that I most enjoy about my studies is the deadlines.

Leigh:

What?

Bobby:

Yes, I like the rush of the deadlines. I am not a person that freaks over this and that; I am a planner and a doer. So I will plan like from 10am to 2pm I would be busy with this, and from that time to that time I will get my research done and that is how I do my stuff. So I am very planned, I get my deadlines and I balance it out.

Leigh:

So I would be able to come to you and say Bobby show me your diary or so me your plan for the week and would it be a plan that you have drawn out or is it a plan in your head; how do you go about this planning?

Bobby:

You would think I have a plan in my diary but I have no plan in my diary. It is all in my head; because there is a lot of stuff that I must do. I must practice still, I must get my gyming right, there is a lot of must must must so I have it in my head and it is okay I am doing this but I am thinking of that. So rather than doing nothing about it I would rather get it done and tick it off in my head. Sometimes I do write it down when it is like heavy crunch times, then I do jot things down and everything is there for me.

Leigh:

When you are in class where do you sit?

Bobby:

At the back.

Leigh:

Why?

Bobby:

I don't really know why. I think when I sit at the back I normally scan throughout and when I am not jotting down notes then I differentiate between what people see is important as the lecture goes on. Okay this one jots something down and this one didn't, and you look at the trends of what is important.

Leigh:

So from the back you can see the lie of the land.

Bobby:

Yes.

Leigh:

What would your friends say about how you participate in class? Do you ask questions, do you answer questions or do you talk much?

Bobby:

I would say it is on par; when it is needed then I will talk when a question is asked. In our class there are a lot of people who are eager to ask questions that you have in your mind; so before you put up your hand and ask it, it is already asked. But when the question isn't asked and obviously I have the need to know, then I would ask it.

Leigh:

Okay cool. Do any of the lecturers at TSiBA show a personal interest in you?

Bobby:

Yes they do; they are very supportive, the lecturers that you have class with the Maths, the entrepreneurship, management, BCM, even LSD, they ask you all the time; how you are doing, how is the assignment coming along and do you know what is going on. Or they will tell you wow I really enjoyed the piece that you put in for this and that is a good insight; they don't just put it on paper and give it back. They give you verbal feedback.

Leigh:

Do you feel like you belong at TSiBA?

Bobby:

I would say yes; I have worked hard for this. I see myself here, I wouldn't put myself out. So honestly I can say that I belong here.

Leigh:

Because you have worked hard or because?

Bobby:

No, no because obviously the people that don't belong here wouldn't be here; so if you feel constantly that you don't want to be here, then no one is forcing you to stay here so if you don't belong here you can go; but I feel that I belong here.

Leigh:

Cool. What clubs and societies are you involved in at TSiBA?

Bobby:

I am in the touch rugby club and that is the only club that I am in. I have signed up on SIFE after years and years of asking me they said you are almost like a magnet so wherever you go you would almost see the people follow you. They do presentations and all of that but they don't come directly to a person and explain what the concept is about them and so I think most of the people don't really understand what all of these societies are about. Like the BMF; so that is what I shared with them and I told them that they must almost like make an arrangement and give that me to you presentation so that the person can understand it. Even though I haven't been part of it, I always asked the BMF and stuff what are you guys busy with now and showed an interest in it; but now that I have joined I am obviously more hands on.

Leigh:

And what would you say you gain from being a part of these extra things; particularly I guess touch rugby which you have been involved in; what do you get from it?

Bobby:

A sense of belonging to a team and that is in your studies. You need a team structure when you are down to lift you up, just like come buddy let's go. To stand alone; I don't think anybody should go through that in standing alone. So whether you are in foundation, BB1 or BB3, when you are in a team set up and you are outside of that team you would always ask the person, what are you doing, do you need help. So it is a sense of okay I am lifting you up to come to my level or you are lifting them up, just that extra support. When you are at your lowest, maybe you are not at home, you are here at TSiBA and your friends give you support all the time – if you look down a friend will come up to you and say smile buddy you are with me and I am here for you; just press on my button and I am here.

Leigh:

So it is like an extension of your friendship network?

Bobby:

Yes.

Leigh:

Which leads well into the other question, and I think you have answered it, but do you have a group of friends at TSiBA who you feel comfortable with?

Bobby:

I really feel comfortable with everybody because I am not a person that cuts myself when I have my friends out of my friends. I see okay you have your closest friends, and then you have your other friends; and I see everybody as a connection to me. If you didn't do anything to harm me, then I see you as a friend. I will always be open, ask you how you are doing and just have that connection; because you don't know what that could do for another person.

Leigh:

And outside of TSiBA and your schoolwork how do you spend your time?

Bobby:

It is really split up; I have about three to four hours after school work when I have to do exercises and all of that, gym and running and all of that; then after that I would relax for not more than an hour and also do my schoolwork. So I would say my day is really packed.

Leigh:

Sounds like it, especially with fitting in so much exercise too.

Bobby:

Yes; I still play in the Boland region, it takes me an hour to get there and an hour to practice and an hour to get back.

Leigh:

Wow, that is demanding!

Bobby:

Yes.

Leigh:

Why do you think that you have been successful in your studies so far?

Bobby:

Like I said, coming from my school years and the rugby, I think mostly the rugby formed me as a person. Getting the right stuff, winning and that almost forms you; and then you get the disappointment and it is how you take the disappointment that makes you as a person. So you can take it as oh I am worth nothing or wait man I can do better. I can live my life and get back on that; so it is all about I don't need you now - but then I am going to show you okay I can do more than what is really needed.

Leigh:

So what would you say rugby taught you and continues to teach you? What does rugby give you?

Bobby:

Determination, vision and strength those are the core qualities that it has given me. Sports in a sense.

Leigh:

And you have kind of taken that and applied that to your studies is that what you are saying?

Bobby:

Yes.

Leigh:

Which leads to the next question, probably similar; what are your personal strengths?

Bobby:

My personal strengths are that I don't give up easily, I see the positive in the negative – so here would be the negative and I would see the positive in it, because what is the point on dwelling on the negative. You can only look at it as the positive and get it done efficiently and move along. I have a vision which is also strength of mine.

Leigh:

So when things don't go your way, how do you deal with it? What do you do and how do you get through?

Bobby:

Firstly I would sit and think why, and then I would say okay I have made my decision and then I would look at a possible solution. For example I didn't do so well in my marketing this year, and when I got my results the second semester schools was put out in a way that in order the NUM and the business law clashed. So they told us that business law we could only do next year, so I thought I didn't make marketing so now next year I can do business law and marketing together. So that is how I take my failures and put it into the positive.

Leigh:

And that thinking that you do – is it thinking you do together with another person, do you kind of talk your way through it, or is it thinking that you do on your own quietly first?

Bobby:

No I don't do it quietly; I would watch maybe a bit of TV and then not knowingly, not actually watch TV but switch off a bit and just think okay now I need to do this, that or that in order for me to succeed. That is how I go about it.

Leigh:

It sounds like it is an internal process, a conversation you are almost having with yourself?

Bobby:

Yes.

Leigh:

You do something to take your mind off it like watch TV, but then your first step is not to talk it through with someone else. You will first sort of think about it yourself?

Bobby:

Exactly.

Leigh:

Nearly at the end; what are your personal weaknesses or areas for development?

Bobby:

My weakness would be not jotting things down, I think that is a weakness that I have. Sometimes when you don't jot stuff down you have it in your mind but you forget about it; that can become problematic. Also my over friendliness, or being too playful – I would say that can also be a downfall

for me, sometimes it has in the past and when I am actually busy with stuff I am like oh damn this is actually more than I thought and then I have to hustle to get it done.

Leigh:

What are your dreams for your future? Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

Bobby:

Well I want to get my degree done and then after that I would want to take a few years, like two or three years, and go and play rugby abroad. I have a place where I want to go in France; so that is my plans.

Leigh:

Interesting, I didn't know that, now I know. And beyond that?

Bobby:

Obviously start my own business; going into my Dad's business. He wants to start almost an institution for young kids in all sports academies. So whether you do rugby, cricket, soccer, tennis, anything; so he wants to start that and I would like to work with him on that and get it started. Obviously he saw in my life that sport can either make or break you, it is how you take it, and what you get from sport is that added support and that belonging like I said before. So I want to give that to other people as well.

Leigh:

Very interesting! Second last question; does religion play a role in your life and if so, how?

Bobby:

I am Roman Catholic, and religion does play a role in my life. I would do my prayers, go to church and obviously do what is morally right and not to do bad.

Leigh:

Those are actually all my questions; so my last question really is, is there anything else that you would like to say or add? If you think back on this whole conversation we have had, is there anything about yourself that you think I should know about or that you want to say in completion? Or do you feel like you have sort of shared your story?

Bobby:

I feel that I have shared my story and obviously nothing else that is not in the interview that I can think of. I also feel that for a student it is not just about getting the stuff on the paper, it is about more than that like they must get their mind off all the schoolwork and partake in sports just to get that edge off. That is what I feel made me the person that I am to preserve so well in class; you must get that failure on another level so that you can succeed on another level.

Leigh:

So you think that failure is an important part of success; am I understanding you correctly?

Bobby:

Yes it really is. I agree with that; one of my friends was also like one of the jocks. He had a provincial contract with the Lions and University of Johannesburg, and at the end of this year he had a contract for four years, and after this year it was like sorry sir we don't need your services anymore. He studied for this year, but now at the end looking back he never had that failure in his life so he is kind of lost in a way; but obviously he has good support with him that can carry him. It is good to have failures as you grow up to make you a strong person and get you going.

Leigh:

That is a fascinating insight; I would agree with that and few people see it like that, so it is interesting that you had that early in your life and can appreciate it; and how that changed the direction of your life for the good. Bobby it has been fabulous, thank you so so much.

END OF TAPE

University of Cape Town

C2: Transcript of Kylie's Interview - Coded

Audio Title: Interview of Kylie
DURATION OF AUDIO FILE: 45.07 minutes
DATE: Saturday 31 March 2012

Leigh:

Kylie how would you describe yourself?

Kylie:

That is a very difficult question; I would describe myself as shy but sociable, friendly and I think I have a nice personality but at times I can be very rude and harmful to other people; but other than that I don't know myself that much. That's it.

Leigh:

That's a good start; can you tell me a bit about your family and your childhood years?

Kylie:

I am an only child with one parent. My father hasn't been around so our relationship is a good daughter and father relationship when he's there, but other than that he doesn't feature in my life really. That caused a lot of problems with me, but my childhood years have been great. I don't really have a good mother daughter relationship, it's always been difficult. I spoke more to my grandmother and when she passed everything went down the drain. I didn't know how to communicate with my mommy so it made studying and all of that difficult. There is no communication and I don't feel comfortable talking to my mommy about anything really. The rest of my family; I can't choose my family but I choose to dislike them because they are difficult a lot of times and I don't really keep in touch with them all the time.

Leigh:

Is this your mommy's side of the family?

Kylie:

Yes and my father's side I don't know anything about them. But yes that's it about my family.

Leigh:

When did your granny pass away?

Kylie:

My last year of primary school and ever since then going to high school and all of that, I had no one to share my secrets with because I don't share with my mommy. So, she wasn't there for the big days like my matric ball and it has been difficult but it's okay, I carry on and do my thing.

Leigh:

Shame you must miss her so much.

Kylie:

I do yes a lot, because I have no one to share happy experiences with.

Leigh:

So you said you are the only child in your family and you don't have children hey?

Kylie:

No, not yet.

Leigh:

So who would you say raised you?

Kylie:

My grandmother. Yes my mommy has been around, she oversees and she fed me and everything, but my grandmother raised me throughout primary school. You get those mothers who go out with their friends all the time and my mommy used to be like that. I didn't enjoy it at the time, so I would say my grandmother raised me until she passed away.

Leigh:

You have told me a bit about your relationship with your mother; you say it's okay but it's not that great. She went out a lot and you didn't feel that you could tell her things or talk to her?

Kylie:

I still don't feel I can talk to her; it's difficult for me. We have a lot of similarities and we fight a lot and I see it in her and she irritates me because of that, because we are so alike we fight constantly. But it's okay.

Leigh:

It shows good insight to be able to understand why at least, you know?

Kylie:

But now this programme that I am doing, it helps me to find out... I speak to a psychologist and they work out relationship problems and find the missing link so to say. So I think at the end of the

programme I might be a bit open with my mommy and allow her to come in and we'll see how it goes.

Leigh:

It sounds like you are very committed to it?

Kylie:

I am actually because I really need it after the year that I had; you wouldn't have recognized me if you had to see me a couple of months before. I was so bad, I was in such a bad space and I'm so glad I have got out of it.

Leigh:

You said last year, was that this year now that has just passed 2011?

Kylie:

Yes; when I stopped going to college everything went down for me. Yes I got work but honestly I was experimenting and it got heavy with experiments; so I lost track of time and work and I didn't want to do anything. I in November last year, but it has been difficult because it was a habit and now I am trying to get out of the habit. I got so angry all the time, it was terrible. So I went for anger management and with that I am working on everything else.

Leigh:

What led you to decide to stop because that is a big decision?

Kylie:

I felt things were getting way too bad and I would rather stop before I lost everything and disappointed my mommy even more than what I had done. I am glad that I had my mommy's help all the time, even if I treated like dirt all the time, she was always there. I actually feel bad now for doing that to her.

Leigh:

Have you said that to her?

Kylie:

That I feel bad?

Leigh:

Yes?

Kylie:

No because I have difficulty in apologizing, but I'm building up the courage to do it.

Leigh:

It sounds like you are. You have also spoken a bit about your relationship with your dad which you said doesn't really exist?

Kylie:

It doesn't really exist no; because when he's there it's like he is the perfect father but other than that, he doesn't feature. With this programme my mother called him to come and help because I was terrorizing her and we were fighting and arguing; and I started the programme and I told him that he needs to follow through with this and not keep on making empty promises. So I told him this is something I want to do and I don't care about anything else, honestly this is something that you really need to follow through with because if you don't then I will lose all my courage and I don't want to do that. Because that is all that he does, empty promises.

Leigh:

And how has he been; has he followed through on this?

Kylie:

Yes he has.

Leigh:

Really?

Kylie:

I'm glad; I would never have told him that he makes empty promises but I actually felt that I told him, and my mommy tried and she left him messages – so I was like I can't keep on saying nothing to people even though I'm hurting; and I just allow him to do it. So I felt that I needed to tell him.

Leigh:

It sounds like it has been a really positive time for you?

Kylie:

I would say it is, I'm actually doing ok right now.

Leigh:

And it sounds like your relationship with your dad is a bit better and your mommy slowly slowly too?

Kylie:

Yes it is getting there but everything takes time.

Leigh:

It does and one doesn't need to rush these things. So it sounds like other than your parents your granny really was the most significant caregiver in your life?

Kylie:

Yes; I could tell her all my problems and share how my day was. I never ever spoke to my mommy about anything.

Leigh:

If you look back on your life so far what have been your greatest challenges?

Kylie:

Finding work, that is a big challenge all the time; but my matric year was also a challenge for me. I think it was a challenge for everyone though. Studying at TSiBA was also a challenge. That's the only tertiary studying that I have done. It was an interesting subject but it wasn't also for me; it was more for my mommy so the difficulty for me was to focus and actually do it and I couldn't at the end of the day, I just couldn't do it anymore.

Leigh:

You didn't really enjoy it?

Kylie:

Yes because I wasn't doing it for myself, I was doing it for someone else. That was the major difficulty in my life. It was tough for me to do it every day, I had no enthusiasm about anything and I really got depressed and it wasn't a great year or couple of years; until I told my mommy that I can't carry on like this.

Leigh:

What helped you or how did you get through these challenging times?

Kylie:

My mommy because no matter what I do or say to her or how I treat her, she is the only one that actually helped me through all my problems and supported me in everything. I don't know how she got me through all of those times.

Leigh:

That's fabulous; everyone needs someone to root for them. I'm glad it's your mommy! When you look back on your life what have some of the key turning points been? So like your life was going in this direction and then something happened and it went in another direction; if that thing hadn't happened your life would have been different?

Kylie:

Obviously choosing subjects I would have liked to study; my life probably would have been different. I would have been more focused and committed to it. I didn't have that commitment; but if I had to have done something that I wanted to study I probably would have had that commitment. I think it would have turned out differently and I think I would have been more responsible. I think if I hadn't have met my ex-boyfriend and I didn't experiment with drugs, I think I would have been further in my life now and not stuck behind all the time.

Leigh:

So tell me about making those decisions; you say you chose to come and study at TSiBA because your mommy wanted you to, so do you often find that your decisions are influenced by other people?

Kylie:

Yes all the time; I am a person that actually wants to please everyone and I can never be myself. I don't know what it is, they always say it's bad but I seek approval all the time and it's one of my downfalls. Because I am constantly doing things to please everyone else but myself.

Leigh:

Was it the same with your ex-boyfriend?

Kylie:

Yes.

Leigh:

Wanting his approval and letting him make decisions for you?

Kylie:

Yes; I actually allowed him to control my life so to say and it made me a very closed up; but now I am becoming a woman.

Leigh:

I can see you are; like I said when I saw you for the first time you are looking different, you are looking mature like a woman.

Kylie:

Because I actually like being immature but I have made a decision that I need to grow up in life.

Leigh:

It's good for you. You said that through all your challenges and things the person who has been the most support to you has been your mommy?

Kylie:

Yes, definitely my mother.

Leigh:

Looking back on your life, you have spoken about your mommy and your granny being a strong source of support; outside of your family if you look back on your life have you had any significant teachers in your life who have inspired you or friends that have supported you? Who has made a difference in your life?

Kylie:

I have one best friend and through primary school and high school she has always been there. She supported me a lot; but once we finished high school and we weren't at the same school, studying at different places and meeting new people we grew apart slightly. We didn't lose contact but she lives her life; I can always count on her and I can always phone her. She will always be my best friend no matter what, she can live her life and we don't really see each other; but the minute we do it's like everything is back to normal again. There is no separation or anything.

Leigh:

That is a sign of a special friendship.

Kylie:

Yes; and I think she really supported me a lot. She actually made me feel good about myself and you don't find people like that anymore; they'd rather put you down.

Leigh:

Or they are selfish. So are you still in touch with her?

Kylie:

Yes; our mothers are also friends so I see her every now and then passing by or something and we chat and that. I saw her last night and I told her we need to get together because I want to let her know exactly where I am and what has been going on. I doubt she knows everything; she probably knows stuff from my mother but I doubt she knows everything. So I want to tell her; if I can get her back in my life that would be great because she has a positive influence on my life.

Leigh:

Bring her back in.

Kylie:

Yes.

Leigh:

Who do you admire or who do you want to be like one day?

Kylie:

I haven't thought about that really. At the moment I haven't been looking for a role model that I admire; but I have always looked at my cousin who is an architect. I have always enjoyed designing, either graphic designing, normal art or anything in design and I admire him for what he has done. He went to study overseas and everything. Now he is successful and owns his own architectural business. He does well for himself and he actually designs very nicely; so I admire him and how far he has come in his life. I wouldn't mind having a life like that, studying and going on to do what he wanted to do.

Leigh:

That is admirable.

Kylie:

I admire my cousin a lot for that and I look up to him, even though I don't have a relationship with him; the way he has come up from having nothing to having a lot is something that I admire.

Leigh:

Tell me when you were in high school did you have a plan to go to University?

Kylie:

Yes I did; what I wanted to study my mother doesn't like and she always kept telling me they don't earn a lot of money, there is not much of a career in that and everything. But I always wanted to study design as well as creative things. I am a creative person and I can't sit back and just be tied down with books and that, I have always wanted to go and study but it has been difficult to go on and still have my mommy disagree with it. But I think once I get to a point where I am going to do this for myself and be a bit selfish and not allow anyone else to dictate what I must do with my life. Then I do still want to go and study.

Leigh:

One of the things that I should have said at the beginning of this interview is the reason why I chose you is because I could see from your test results that you are intelligent. You should go and study at some point; find something you love. But it will be a pity if you don't because you have got the brains.

Kylie:

It is more that I need to be focused and I have a mind that wanders off very quickly and I lose track of what I am doing. I want to train myself to being committed to something then I would study further because that would help; if I don't have that then I won't be able to make it anywhere. Even at work, I find in the beginning I am enthusiastic but later on I will be so bored and think I'm not into this, this is not me and I don't know why. I don't have a good attention span and that is how it is with anything that I do. It must be for the moment and I don't know why I am like that because my mommy isn't like that. She always plans and commits.

Leigh:

Maybe like you say finding something that you are really interested in will help. What about your friends at high school, what were they planning to do?

Kylie:

Some of them wanted to study further, some of them couldn't study further and ended up working; but I don't see them at all anymore because after last year everything was gone. I am not sorry but I do tend to miss them now and then; but a lot of them studied and most of them started working and didn't even get to study. I think they decided to take a break and then just ended up working all the time because it's hard to get back into studying. I also wanted to take a gap year and for some odd reason it didn't work so I planned to go and study. But I now realize that if I had to take a gap year I wouldn't have wanted to go back and study at all. But if I really wanted to pursue it then I would've but no one can come back from working for a year, it is difficult and you get lazy.

Leigh:

And you get used to the money. So the next part of the questions that I have are all about TSiBA; so when you answer them you mustn't think about me as a Director, just think about me as a student and someone who is learning so don't tell me the answer you think I want to hear. How would you describe TSiBA to someone who doesn't know TSiBA?

Kylie:

I would describe TSiBA like a family, everyone is together and comfortable but there is no excitement. If you go to TSiBA you just see a building with students walking around. I would say that if you want to study whatever it is then do it, but if you are looking for more than the studies then TSiBA has that. That is how I would describe it to someone.

Leigh:

That's fair. What do you think about the quality of education that TSiBA offers?

Kylie:

The quality of education is good; the curriculum was fair and everything but personally for me it became down to say there wasn't a lot of practical for me and creativity; it was more the fact of learning all the time. **[end of tape 1]** So that's what I expected from the business side, a lot of books and that, that's why it wasn't for me really.

Leigh:

You wanted to do something more creative?

Kylie:

Yes.

Leigh:

What about the quality of support that TSiBA offers?

Kylie:

Support in what way?

Leigh:

Like Student Support and all those kinds of things; mentorship etc?

Kylie:

From what I noticed they were very caring most of the time and if you looked down they would notice that you looked down and that there's something wrong, and they help you to speak and share and not build it up inside. They tell you that you can lean on them in times of trouble and they won't judge you or anything like that. So the support is really good I must say; I appreciated that in that sense.

Leigh:

One of my questions is did you enjoy studying at TSiBA and it doesn't sound like you did?

Kylie:

No; the people I enjoyed but because I wasn't enthusiastic about what I was studying made me not enjoy the time at all. But being around everyone else was fine, it was just myself that wasn't enjoying the topic of studying and that's why I didn't enjoy my time there. Other than that it was great.

Leigh:

When you were in a classroom where did you sit in the class?

Kylie:

At the back but sometimes in front if it was a lecturer that I got along with, but most of the time at the back.

Leigh:

Fair enough. What would your friends say about your participation in class? Did you ask questions, did you answer questions or did you not really engage much in the class?

Kylie:

At times I would have that urge to just ask questions and answer them, but other than that I didn't engage much I just listened. I spoke a lot to the people in the class yes.

Leigh:

While the lecturer was talking! Did any of the lecturers show a personal interest in you? Did they notice you and know who you were?

Kylie:

Actually all of the lecturers were like that except the one that would come in from the outside; they wouldn't notice, they only noticed the ones that asked questions a lot but the ones on campus they knew everyone which made you feel part of something. That was good actually that they could have that teacher student relationship with us.

Leigh:

Did you feel like you belonged at TSIBA?

Kylie:

At times I really did, but your mind is a very powerful thing and once I set my mind to the fact that I am not enjoying what I am studying it made me feel I don't belong there; but the people themselves made me feel that I belonged there. With the leadership camp – the Wilderness one in the mountains, that was a good camp because I wouldn't interact much but after that it makes you more at ease and there wasn't tension or any animosity or anything. So it made me feel as though I belong there, but the work and my mind said no I have to go.

Leigh:

Fair enough. Did you have a group of friends that you were comfortable with?

Kylie:

Yes I did. They were interesting, but it was mostly the Muslims. They were fun because you had your ones that slacked like myself and others like most of my group of friends always did their work; I was the one that didn't want to do my work and I think I might have been a bad influence on some of them. I feel guilty for that but I hear that they are doing well there though.

Leigh:

Yes Rashaad is doing fantastically.

Kylie:

And Carla and them they are all doing well. So I am proud of them!

Leigh:

You can be, they are doing fabulously. Were you involved in any clubs and societies at TSIBA?

Kylie:

No.

Leigh:

When you weren't at TSiBA how did you spend your time?

Kylie:

I went out a lot with friends, I was always socializing and I still went to my cousin a lot and I always went to go when I wasn't at college. I used to be with my cousin and his friends.

Leigh:

So what were your reasons for leaving TSiBA?

Kylie:

My reasons for leaving were one I didn't enjoy what I was studying and I wanted something else and more; and the other was that my mother is the only bread winner in the house and I see it is difficult on her. Why I left was because I wanted to help but I planned on working a couple of months or so and I realized that I did it for her sake but I also needed to do it. I help my mommy now and then in the house but not financially, so that was my main plan was to help her out so that we could live properly and she doesn't need to stress or die of a heart attack or something.

Leigh:

You said that was a stupid mistake, what was a stupid mistake?

Kylie:

Leaving because I left and I did nothing, I sat at home all the time and I am still sitting at home today. Besides the programme that I am on, other than that I would sit at home and do nothing, just lay around. I looked for work but I was so – I started a lot of nonsense and then I just lost interest in even looking for work so I didn't even get to do what I planned to do when I left. That is why it was a stupid mistake.

Leigh:

So even though you weren't interested do you think you should have stayed?

Kylie:

Now I realize maybe I should have just stuck it out and seen how far I would have gotten; and if I would have changed whereas doing my work was concerned. Now I actually realize that maybe I could have done better with myself in that way.

Leigh:

Sometimes you only learn these things back ways round. What would you say your personal strengths are?

Kylie:

I am friendly and give too easily to people.

Leigh:

You can and I know that for a fact.

Kylie:

I make friends very easily and I don't know why; that's my strength. I am a good listener but I am bad at sharing. I have lost myself in these last couple of years so it's difficult for me to explain if I'm asked how do you see yourself, I have a very low self-esteem so I don't know exactly my strengths and my weaknesses that much. That's what I am trying to find out but I know my friendliness and I can talk easily are strengths of mine.

Leigh:

That is a great strength about you and that is how I know you.

Kylie:

It is easy to network and that stuff but I was so lazy.

Leigh:

What are your weaknesses? What gets you into trouble and it sounds like laziness gets you into trouble sometimes?

Kylie:

Yes laziness and my thrill seeking personality; I like to seek a thrill and that gets me into trouble all the time because then I get caught up in the world's nonsense which I shouldn't be doing and that is one of my weaknesses. I seek that adrenalin rush and it's really bad. I enjoy it but it actually gets me into trouble a lot.

Leigh:

At the end of the day it doesn't help you.

Kylie:

Yes because then I don't want to abide by rules and regulations and I just want to do my own thing. I have gotten into trouble all the time over that; even last night I went out and came home after 3am and I was still supposed to pick my mother up, and I just don't listen. I told her I will come home at 12pm and come and fetch her, no Kylie wants to party the whole night and so I ended up getting into trouble but she's okay with it now.

Leigh:

What are your dreams for your future? Where do you want to be in five years' time?

Kylie:

I would like to be actually on my feet, stable financially, working and hopefully starting to study. I know it will take a while for me to study; I just want to be where my mind is at a mature level

because right now it is still in an immature phase. I want to have made something of myself in five years' time and something to show for my ability of taking on all the trouble and putting it behind me. Just living a positive lifestyle and a healthy life.

Leigh:

And having turned it into positivity. Does religion play a role in your life, are you religious?

Kylie:

Right now I am still converting to Islam so I haven't found the right time yet to do it, but I am thinking of doing it. I am actually building myself up spiritually; so I pray now and then and all of that stuff but other than that religion hasn't been playing a big role and that's why a lot of bad things have happened to me because I don't seek help or strength from God or something like that. But I am slowly and surely regaining my spirituality.

Leigh:

What made you to do that?

Kylie:

I just got fed up with myself; because I was frustrated I just got fed up with the stuff that I had been through and just said I am not going to procrastinate any longer and I love procrastinating, I don't know why but I said this time I really have to do something. I am not getting any younger and I am not getting anywhere in life; I am just stuck in a hole all the time and I need to get out of it. That's why I am trying to change and everything.

Leigh:

Who is it that interested you in Islam?

Kylie:

I had a lot of Muslim friends while growing up in high school and I found they are more obedient and how committed people are to that religion. It touched me and I really feel more connected to Islam than I did with my own religion; because yes I went to church and did my holy communion and that but my mother didn't even bother with confirmation. So that already pushed me to a place that there is nothing there; I didn't have that commitment in my own religion but with Islam I do find that after knowing Muslim people I found that I am more connected to that and it is interesting to me. It is great and I am set on doing that. I had animosity from my ex-boyfriend and people were saying it is because of that, and I said you can't convince me my mind is set on turning no matter what. His family offered to help me and everything and at the place where I am there are Muslim people, a Sheik owns it so he offered to help me and he said he will teach me and get the ladies who will help me.

Leigh:

That is exciting.

Kylie:

For me it is because it is something new and I am going to enjoy it.

Leigh:

So what does your mommy think about it?

Kylie:

Well at first she didn't like it but she said it is my decision and if I want to do it then she will support me. Because it is my decision she is happy with it.

Leigh:

That is very sweet of her. I think that is all that I wanted to ask you. Is there anything else you would like to add or that you think that I need to know?

Kylie:

Not at this moment in time.

END OF TAPE

University of Cape Town

Appendix E: An Adapted Version of Archer's Internal Conversations Indicator for Students in a Developing World Context

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1. I dream about winning the Lotto							
2. I think about my studies a lot, even when I am not at university							
3. I think a lot about what is right and what is wrong							
4. I try to put difficult things out of my mind, rather than think them through							
5. My only reason for wanting to study is to get a job							
6. I don't find it easy to make decisions quickly							
7. I try to keep high standards for myself, even when it costs me a lot to do so							
8. When I think about my problems, it rocks my emotions							
9. As long as I know that the people that I care about are ok, nothing else really matters to me at all							
10. Nothing really makes a difference to how my life turns out. So I find it difficult to take action							
11. I am not happy with myself and my life. Both could be better than they are							
12. I know that it is important for me to take an active leadership role to bring about social change for justice							
13. I feel helpless and powerless to deal with my problems, however hard I try to sort the out							

Appendix F: Sample Consent Forms