

Exploring African immigrant student experiences - Themes and subthemes

The experiences highlighted from the initial analysis were grouped into themes. The main themes and subthemes described below are based on the interview transcripts. These are depicted in table below.

Themes and sub-themes identified

Super-ordinate theme	Sub-ordinate themes
Theme 1: The initial experiences of South Africa as an immigrant student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are South Africans viewed as xenophobic in the African continent?• Experiences of covert and overt racial discrimination in South Africa in interpersonal and institutional settings• Mental wellbeing• Social experiences (friendships, isolation, integration)
Theme 2: Experiences relating to language use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language is used as an identifier and to place people within in-groups and out-groups.• Language as an institutional tool of exclusion
Theme 3: 'Us' and 'them' in the university experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scapegoating – the tendency to blame foreigners in general for the socio-economic ills in the country
Theme 4: The learning experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The learning experiences can be positive or negative.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of learning resources
--	--

Clusters

Shinebourne (2011) and Willig (2013) assert that commonalities should then be identified from these themes to formulate clusters. From our assessment, three clusters have been identified, these being – Constructions of identity in South Africa – Acculturation and language, and –and Academic self-efficacy and adaptation. These are illustrated in the summary table below.

Table 3: Summary of clusters identified

Cluster	Description
Constructions of identity in south Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identities are socially constructed. People categorise themselves according to race/creed/ethnicity. They then use these constructs to form ‘in-groups’ and ‘out-groups’
Acculturation and language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a culture ‘shock’ as immigrant students fail to understand the South African ‘culture’ and ‘traditions’ • Language can be used as an exclusion tool. Interviewees note that one’s accent can also be used to classify one as a ‘foreigner’ • Immigrants students also feel excluded in class and other activities linguistically
Academic self-efficacy and adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigrant students are faced with several challenges in their new environment • All of them express a resolve to do well in the academic studies despite these challenges

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They find ways and means to adapt so that their academic performance is not compromised
--	---

: Interview transcripts – Analysis process

P1 TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWER: It's working, fantastic. How
do I pronounce
your name?

INTERVIEWEE: P1...

INTERVIEWER: P1, I kept saying P1 then I saw it was a "d" so okay, cool. Are you
okay with me calling P1?

INTERVIEWEE: That is fine, no problem.

INTERVIEWER: Fantastic.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you so much. Okay so I'm just going to ask a couple of
questions. And if you feel like uncomfortable with answering the questions you tell me and
we go on to the next question. The idea is to just get a good sense of your experiences, not
only just as an African immigrant in South Africa, but as an immigrant who's in a South
African University.

So I want to focus a lot on your educational so your academic experiences, your social
experiences and specifically those two but obviously this will speak to your psychological
experiences. So my questions will relate a lot around that.

INTERVIEWEE: That is fine.

P1	–
youngest	
of the	
group	–
only 18.	
From	
Zim	

INTERVIEWER: So let's just start off... how old are you?

INTERVIEWEE: I'm 18.

INTERVIEWER: Okay and how many languages do you speak?

INTERVIEWEE: Let me say four to five.

INTERVIEWER: Four to five, my goodness that's a lot. What are the languages you speak?

INTERVIEWEE: English, Ndebele, Zulu, Shona and Xhosa.

INTERVIEWER: Nice... So you are Zimbabwean if I remember? And are you Ndebele, Shona?

INTERVIEWEE: Ndebele.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, cool stuff that is why you know all the Nguni stuff. When did you come to South Africa?

INTERVIEWEE: 2010.

INTERVIEWER: 2010, so did you do your schooling here?

INTERVIEWEE: No, I was just visiting, I did my schooling in Zimbabwe then I came here on full bursary as from...

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

INTERVIEWEE: When I came here in 2010 / 2011 it was during the holidays, I was visiting my mother, coming with my father and my younger brother.

INTERVIEWER: So your mother's been here for a long time?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes since 2008, she's now a permanent resident, she's now South African

INTERVIEWER: Nice, nice...

Speaks
multiple
languages –
may aid in
adjustment?
Nguni
based
language –
related to
SA
Some
familiarity
with SA
through
holiday
visits

INTERVIEWEE: So she's the one who changed our documents, my father's documents, my younger brother and I, I am paying local fees, not foreign.

[cross talk 02:25]

INTERVIEWER: Okay, that must be much better, because I have heard it is a bit expensive...

INTERVIEWEE: It is a bit expensive.

INTERVIEWER: Is it a double?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, it's a double, a hundred and something instead of paying fifty something.

[cross talk 02:39]

INTERVIEWER: Yes it is a lot of money. But then your father?

INTERVIEWEE: My father is based at home, for a long time he did go... he was a business kind of man.

INTERVIEWER: Back in Zimbabwe, did he also come or...

INTERVIEWEE: He's visiting.

INTERVIEWER: So he stays that side full time. So when you go home or let's say like when the Varsity closes now now, where do you go?

From Bulawayo
lives with parents

INTERVIEWEE: I go to Bulawayo where there is my mother and father's house.

INTERVIEWER: So that is home to you?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, that's home.

INTERVIEWER: That's cool. And then when you I mean obviously you say you were visiting your mother a lot from 2010 but then you only came to stay here this year?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You came to stay here because of school?

INTERVIEWEE: Because of varsity.

INTERVIEWER: So why did you choose to come to varsity here at Wits?

INTERVIEWEE: My mother is the one who knew these things. To tell the truth I wanted to go to UZ, the University of Zimbabwe, I wasn't blessed with these varsities but my mother said this varsity has a good education, when you are finished you are likely to get a job, those things.

Then she applied in June because I wrote some exams that side in June, she used those results on the applying forms then I got a place.

INTERVIEWER: Okay that is fantastic. When you were studying that side you were doing O Levels I think they call them or A Levels? What's the difference between the two?

INTERVIEWEE: A levels.

Studied A levels, may in in academic adjustment

INTERVIEWER: What is the difference between the two?

INTERVIEWEE: Ordinary and Advanced Levels.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, so do you have to do Advanced Levels when you get to a certain grade?

INTERVIEWEE: For you to go to varsity you have to do Advanced Level, if you do Ordinary Level you go to technological...

INTERVIEWER: Like a Technicon?

INTERVIEWEE: Right you won't go for varsity.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think maybe doing, like I don't know, your first year now how have you managed academically? Have you managed to keep up with the work? Do you feel like you're prepared sufficiently by your high school education?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, the high school is very good because what we are doing is more like what we did in high school, we are repeating the same thing. So for me it is an advantage. For them the matric isn't that...

INTERVIEWER: So you find that your classmates are struggling?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, especially physics, maths, they are struggling.

INTERVIEWER: Shame man, which course are you studying?

INTERVIEWEE: Civil Engineering.

[illegible]

INTERVIEWEE: Computer design, something like that drawing using the software, for now we are drawing using our [inaudible 06:51:0].

INTERVIEWER: So you have to be able to draw then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: I have no drawing ability...

INTERVIEWEE: It is just a matter of knowing, you will be using those drawing sets. You won't be using your hands.

INTERVIEWER: Okay so that's where you see yourself going?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Then when you did your high school education in Zimbabwe, what kind of school was it? Was it a girl school or was it a co-ed school

INTERVIEWEE: My Ordinary Level it was a girl school, my higher level, advanced, it was mixed.

INTERVIEWER: It was mixed. Was that a bit of a strange thing for you?

INTERVIEWEE: It was very strange, I was afraid of the boys and the staff. I got chosen in my final year but I did two years for Advanced Level. [Inaudible 07:46:0].

INTERVIEWER: Was it a boarding school?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, since Grade Five I was boarding.

INTERVIEWER: Can you imagine, it must be so awkward.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, but you get used to it, Grade Five, Six, Seven [inaudible 08:02:0].

INTERVIEWER: Then when you went to... when you came here are you staying in a residence or are you staying in a flat?

INTERVIEWEE: Flat...

INTERVIEWER: Is it an individual flat or are you sharing?

INTERVIEWEE: I am sharing.

INTERVIEWER: And how are you finding that?

INTERVIEWEE: It's not that bad, when we started but I think later on I will have to be alone.

INTERVIEWER: Is the person that you are sharing with studying the same thing as you?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Is it near campus or?

INTERVIEWEE: I walk 30 minutes.

INTERVIEWER: 30 minutes, that sounds far.

Accustomed

to living

away from

parents –

add in

adjustment

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, it sounds far.

INTERVIEWER: Sounds a little bit far especially with what's been going on around the Campuses, it is a little bit scary.

So if you, since you have been coming here this whole time, let's start from when you came you said from 2010, whenever you came here how was your experience, how would you describe it?

INTERVIEWEE: To tell the truth I think this country is more developed than our country, I can say that.

INTERVIEWER: Is it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, it's more developed, the roads, the infrastructure, it's far much better than our own Zimbabwe. Even people here I think they have too much freedom than us.

INTERVIEWER: So you guys don't have a lot of freedom?

INTERVIEWEE: To such an extent that you can protest and do that, we don't do that at home.

INTERVIEWER: You are not allowed to protest?

INTERVIEWEE: No it's something awkward.

INTERVIEWER: So if you were to try to protest because the school fees are too high, what would happen in Zimbabwe?

INTERVIEWEE: They will arrest you or do something like that, they won't tolerate it.

Initial thoughts on SA

INTERVIEWER: That is rough, I can't imagine, I suppose I am used to this. Now that you are here full time, how

have you found it? Because then you have come only for the school holidays, has your experience changed since you have been here full time?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I can say that, now I appreciate that, I am here for almost four years. It's not bad to tell the truth, it's not bad.

INTERVIEWER: And what would you say was your [inaudible 10:36:0] before you ever came here, what was your ideas your perceptions about South Africa as a country?

INTERVIEWEE: I thought that South Africa was a country full of crime, you see on the television, you think these people, there is a gunshot that side, it is something else. I was afraid to tell the truth.

INTERVIEWER: I can imagine, now that you are here do you feel the same way?

INTERVIEWEE: No I am used to it but I won't walk at night, those things, I won't take risks but I am now used to it.

INTERVIEWER: You are used to it, it takes a bit of getting used to it being in any new environment. That is the country what were your ideas about South Africans as people?

INTERVIEWEE: I have no problem with them of course here and there, I can say there's [Xenophobia? 11:44:0] problems.

INTERVIEWER: Did you think that you will experience Xenophobia before you came?

More
thoughts
on SA

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: But now that you are here would you say... how do a lot of people treat you, South African people.

INTERVIEWEE: I can say majority of my friends are South Africans, only one of my friends is from Zimbabwe.

They treat you as their own people, there is no problems.

INTERVIEWER: They have never said, "Oh you are a Zimbabwean", or something like that came up?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. So now we have been talking about South Africa, in terms of your experiences here at Wits, how would you describe those experiences?

INTERVIEWEE: So far I think it is an international varsity there is no problem with foreigners or staff because our international offices [inaudible 12:48:0] in this place.

INTERVIEWER: Have you managed to find your way with ease or when you first came here did you struggle to like really navigate finding buildings?

INTERVIEWEE: The first week was hell, this building is very big. Even today I don't know some places. Maybe after Monday I will stroll around and see this is this...

INTERVIEWER: So you are finishing your exams on Monday?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

Easy to make friends

INTERVIEWER: You are so close, how have your exams been they been thus far, your exams?

INTERVIEWEE: So tricky but I am hoping I will pass.

INTERVIEWER: Does Wits have... what do they call these things? Subs, you know Subs?

INTERVIEWEE: Supplementary's, they have a certain percentage, I heard they have.

INTERVIEWER: So far you haven't been getting a sub, you have been passing only?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: That's good. And so when you are here obviously not at exams it wouldn't be a typical day, when you have lectures, how would you describe a typical day for you?

INTERVIEWEE: It's always packed I don't want to lie because it is from 08h00 to 17h00.

INTERVIEWER: That's like a job.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes it's packed.

INTERVIEWER: So what do you do, do you go to classes, tutorials. Just describe it a bit for me.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes we have got classes almost one module is two hours long then we have got for the tutorials on second days, maybe twice a week and then we have for the first years, they are ADU tutorials the ones for extra work.

INTERVIEWER: So if you want to, it's not compulsory.

INTERVIEWEE: But if it comes to a time when you failed almost all your modules they check that you were attending those ADU tutorials, they won't chase you away but if you were not they will say you did not put in any effort.

INTERVIEWER: That is true.

INTERVIEWEE: So I can say they are doing justice for us first years.

INTERVIEWER: So do you basically just go to class then because that is what I am hearing you say you... from eight to five.

INTERVIEWEE: no there is a lunch from ¼ past one to ¼ past two and then between the modules there is a 15 minutes break.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, each module?

INTERVIEWEE: Each module even within that second module.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, okay.

INTERVIEWEE: Because you can't breathe...

INTERVIEWER: Okay so they let you breathe at least. When you got here you said have some South African friends and Zimbabwe friends. Did you find it easy to make friends? How long did it take?

INTERVIEWEE: Only a week.

Attends tutorials – aids academic adjustment
--

INTERVIEWER: A week? That is amazing. How did you make the friends, how did you find them?

INTERVIEWEE: There is this friend, we always got lost together, “Where is the next lecture?” something like that and then we have got close to each other.

Then the other one I was sitting next to him, this Zulu guy, in the lecture and then he introduced me to this Zimbabwean lady as Talent is [Sian’s? 16:38:0] sister.

INTERVIEWER: Oh yes, what a coincidence, I thought you knew Talent directly.

INTERVIEWEE: I knew the younger sister.

INTERVIEWER: So the rest of the crew you met them by introduction?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Okay and you guys are still close now like the friends you made or?

INTERVIEWEE: [Inaudible 17:05:0] we don’t click here now, we are no longer that close because what I can say, what I have analysed is the first years we were busy but they want to pass alone, something like that? At first we were a group and then they realized I am not scoring I am not going to pass [inaudible 17:25:0] pass the things then they started.

INTERVIEWER: So you started growing away, I didn’t realise that. So you guys would share each other’s like you would say I got this...

INTERVIEWEE: I got this years ago, so we wrote the first test, guys I have got this you see?

Making friends

INTERVIEWER: So when they found out it was you getting the good marks they were just like [inaudible 18:00:0].

INTERVIEWEE: She is wasting our time see? You never know the [Inaudible 18:02:] especially us girls.

INTERVIEWER: That is so true, that's very true.

INTERVIEWEE: Because I am no longer close to [Talent's sister? 18:08:0] because of that, she is moody, I don't know why.

INTERVIEWER: At the end of the day you can't control people's feelings.

INTERVIEWEE: Seriously.

INTERVIEWER: So are you still close... you had your original circle but are you still close with anyone in that group?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I am still close with the Zulu guy and the Sotho guy, you know the guys don't give much problem, not like us ladies.

INTERVIEWER: That's good that you still manage to keep some of them close. So you say that it is the Zulu guy and the Sotho guy. So then what language do you speak when you are all together?

INTERVIEWEE: But with the Zulu guy I can speak Zulu but I can't speak Sotho.

INTERVIEWER: That's what I was thinking, how do you guys communicate...

Language experiences

INTERVIEWEE: For the Sotho guy we can speak in Zulu, the Zulu guy is from KZN, the Sotho guy is from the Free State.

INTERVIEWER: So he speaks proper Sotho, I can imagine then you can't even...

INTERVIEWEE: So I can't even say any words there.

INTERVIEWER: So doesn't he feel a little bit excluded when you guys are speaking Zulu?

INTERVIEWEE: When Tanya, [Khanyisa? 19:22:0] and I are speaking he is just quiet because of this.

INTERVIEWER: He can't hear Zulu?

INTERVIEWEE: He can but ...

INTERVIEWER: He can't say back, I am with you, definitely. Okay. Then so with your friends circle you say you were doing much better academically but then when you got to your class would you say that anyone treated you differently?

INTERVIEWEE: No, no, in class we would just greet each other because of the [inaudible 20:01:0] hello, hello, that's all.

INTERVIEWER: So there's a lot of interaction with your fellow classmates? But I don't know if this is the case but do you ever find out in class how everyone is doing academically? [Inaudible 20:20:0] got the highest mark for this test.

INTERVIEWEE: Ai, you can't.

INTERVIEWER: They Won't do that, it's a bit of a high school thing to do I guess.

INTERVIEWEE: No, you can't because they send your results on your own [inaudible 20:34:0] on your own student number, you can't see it.

INTERVIEWER: I suppose then it helps not having a lot of competitiveness in the classroom because that is so unproductive. So you would say then that since you got here until now, would you say that people have generally treated you the same? Out of your friend circle obviously, like your class mates and your lecturers.

INTERVIEWEE: I am happy, what I can say, we are a class of 250 so I am happy for now, the lectures they just see the face, they don't know who is who.

INTERVIEWER: They don't.

INTERVIEWEE: They just see the faces and know they always see her but I don't think they know who is this one and that one. Even if we write a test it's just our student number, I don't think they know us, the face only.

INTERVIEWER: Of course, for sure.

INTERVIEWEE: Maybe second and third year it's a smaller class I believe.

INTERVIEWER: So in the one classroom there's 250 of you guys? That's a lot of people hey?

INTERVIEWEE: Imagine, that's a lot.

INTERVIEWER: Now that you have been here a couple of months, would you say that what you have experienced here with your interaction here with other people and with school would you say it is all that different from your experiences back when you were at home?

INTERVIEWEE: It is different.

INTERVIEWER: How is it different?

INTERVIEWEE: What I can say ne? At home we are, we are not, like what can I say, we are blinkered, people here have open minds. Because at home to tell the truth I don't think we welcome international students the way they do here. Because at home we have this Shona thing and Ndebele thing.

INTERVIEWER: Like travellers and...

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, they speak in that language, they don't use English but here you rarely hear people speaking in Sotho, they speak in English so now you become familiar with those people. Imagine I go to a certain group and I hear them speaking Sotho I will just bounce back and say I don't belong so at home I can say there is that problem.

INTERVIEWER: So you stay in your circles you never really mingle with other people. That is difficult.

INTERVIEWEE: It is difficult at home.

INTERVIEWER: If I am understanding you correctly it is easier to mingle this side with new groups than it is back home. Interesting.

Cultural differences – linked to language
--

INTERVIEWEE: Because if I was a foreigner at home I was going to face challenges, back here it is just like...

INTERVIEWER: Okay, you said you know the four languages but did you know them before, like the Xhosa, Zulu?

INTERVIEWEE: Xhosa, Zulu, when I was visiting meeting friends, see when you are young you go outside and play with people.

INTERVIEWER: True, so since you have been at varsity have you learned any new language?

Open to learning local languages

INTERVIEWEE: I am trying to talk Sotho.

INTERVIEWER: That is nice of you so you can talk with your friend.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I can greet and ...

INTERVIEWER: That's good that helps a little bit with interaction.

INTERVIEWEE: Then where my mother stays they are Tswana so I am trying to speak Tswana because Tswana and Sotho they are more like the same.

INTERVIEWER: That is very true. With the passing of your father does that mean when you go home and since your mother's here, who do you go to?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, we are going home my mother is closing on the 30th so what I did, when I was waiting for my results I wrote the provisional for driving because in our country

the varsities they open in September. My friends are still at home, so I was planning in that period of time I will be doing driving. So I passed theory.

INTERVIEWER: Awesome.

INTERVIEWEE: I am waiting for the car to come, so I want to go and do the park, since I have started that side instead of sitting. Because the provisional is only for a year, next year you have to write again. So my mother is coming on the 20th, we are going to plan everything because we didn't finish everything, we were in a hurry.

I had exams in a week or so, so we came back and my mother is a teacher so she has to come back, set the exams, so we are going there to finalize those things in the house.

INTERVIEWER: So it's still very murky, you don't know yet.

INTERVIEWEE: Maybe I will be alone whilst I am waiting for my mother because my young brother is also a boarder.

INTERVIEWER: So it's you and your young brother, is there anyone else? Now you have to see what is going to happen with the house, I suppose that will be... you will have a bit more time. When do you open at Wits?

INTERVIEWEE: 24th July.

INTERVIEWER: A lot of time still, I miss those days.

INTERVIEWEE: I must still go and finalize which is which.

INTERVIEWER: And since your father has passed away, did you find it difficult to come back to Wits or did you feel like maybe... because it sounds like you have a lot more friends at home.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes that's true, I have a lot more friends at home.

INTERVIEWER: So the social body is there at home.

INTERVIEWEE: That is why I still think I have to go, I am leaving on Wednesday, I am going home on Wednesday. Obviously, but maybe second year, third year I will say I don't want to go because I will be used to it.

INTERVIEWER: You will be used to this environment.

INTERVIEWEE: But for now people are going home, my friends are going home, of course I have friends but I cannot say they are friends like the ones at home, they don't know me well as yet.

INTERVIEWER: Because of the fact that there's been less time?

INTERVIEWEE: That's true imagine those ones since I was young, we went to school together.

INTERVIEWER: You have done everything together, I can imagine. With your degree you spoke about how the exams were a bit tough but how would you say in general, how have you found your degree.

Solid
friendship
circle at
home she
likes to
return to

INTERVIEWEE: It needs a lot of study, there is a lot of work I won't lie but the module that was giving me a hard time was the drawing module, that one was very bad.

INTERVIEWER: Yes and how did you cope with that one?

INTERVIEWEE: I was getting the 50's but after a struggle.

INTERVIEWER: Would you go to study groups?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, Khanyisa and Tanya did drawing at school so they were assisting us.

INTERVIEWER: Okay you didn't do any drawing?

INTERVIEWEE: No, okay so that is why it is a bit stretched.

INTERVIEWER: But you passed that is all that matters at the end of the day.

INTERVIEWEE: We are finished our module at least next semester there is no drawing.

INTERVIEWER: Oh is it? I would think that drawing is essential if you are going to be using it...

INTERVIEWEE: I also thought so but there's no drawing, second year there is only CAD but they say is also only a semester then after that they are civil, civil, civil.

INTERVIEWER: I would think that civil is a drawing...

INTERVIEWEE: I also thought so but no it is not the case.

Academic struggles and how they navigated those
--

INTERVIEWER: You are going to learn I suppose, you will see what it's all about. How would you say you study best? Do you like to do flash cards, do you study in a group best, how do you learn best?

INTERVIEWEE: I like flash cards I can say that, studying alone, if I am alone I do better than when I am in a group because in a group I start chatting, sharing stories blah, blah. I don't like a group I can say that. But sometimes for group discussions you hear something which you didn't study or which you did study but just passed over it, that's true.

INTERVIEWER: So even though you do best individually you also still use the group situation?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes the groups.

INTERVIEWER: Yes that's good, you complement both sides of the equation. And then if you had a choice, if you could start over again would you still choose Wits as the university to go to?

INTERVIEWEE: I would choose UCT.

INTERVIEWER: UCT? Why do you say that?

INTERVIEWEE: Because they say the standard of UCT they are higher so I don't know how true is that. But they say the standards at UCT...

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

INTERVIEWEE: But for the fact I am getting my Honours on the fourth year that is best because for UCT you will get your Honours on the fifth.

Study strategies she uses – well developed
--

INTERVIEWER: Really?

INTERVIEWEE: They say that Wits is the only South African university that gives Honours in fourth year in Engineering.

INTERVIEWER: Because the other universities are a four year degree.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: I know with TUCS that is the case, Engineering is a four year degree and then if you want to do Honours you have to do the fifth year.

INTERVIEWEE: But here I will do my fourth year I will leave with my Honours and then fifth, Masters.

INTERVIEWER: Wow, I know with Engineering at TUCS it's not a science degree it is a B Engineering at Wits is it a B Engineering as well?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: I wonder how ... that means they must just pump you guys with a lot of work then?

INTERVIEWEE: That's maybe why it is challenging.

INTERVIEWER: They don't like spread it, maybe that is why it is so challenging for people then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, it's true.

INTERVIEWER: Because if you spread the work over a few years then maybe you would manage but you would still choose the four year option.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I think that's the best.

INTERVIEWER: So you wouldn't go back because I remember initially when we started you said before your mother intervened you wanted to go to the university at home?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes with friends, you know when you are with friends, hey guys we are going to this university

[inaudible 31:55:0]. So I was surprised when my mother said, "You have got a place at Wits", oh Mom!

Then I had to calm my mother you know, she hated this fact of September thing, she said, "Oh, my daughter what do we have to do and all this money, must come and start in February", so we had to come and my father said go, please.

INTERVIEWER: So your father also wanted you to come this side. Any your friends did they go to the University of Zimbabwe or did they go...?

INTERVIEWEE: They are going in September.

INTERVIEWER: So they are going to go?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So are you the only one from your friends circle back home who left?

INTERVIEWEE: I am the only one so they are waiting to see me, what's happening, is anything changing because when I am going they always ask when are you finishing exams, when are you coming home?

INTERVIEWER: Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWEE: Because they wanted to see me during, after the funeral, I said I can't make it, I have to come back, I couldn't see any of the friends.

INTERVIEWER: Did they come to the funeral? No?

INTERVIEWEE: Only two of them, some of them they didn't manage because some they stay like PE, [inaudible 33:13:0], so it's far.

INTERVIEWER: So it's very far...

INTERVIEWEE: Because it was boarding schools, it was far to come.

INTERVIEWER: So it's not very convenient for them necessarily to come there. But now they will see how you are, do you think you have changed though?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, obviously.

INTERVIEWER: You never know, six months is not a long time...

[cross talk 33:34:0]

Solid friendships back home

INTERVIEWEE: Varsity changes you because there are some things, I have changed, if they are observing they will see that I have changed.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it's for the good or the bad, the changes you see?

INTERVIEWEE: I am more mature...

INTERVIEWER: You have matured.

INTERVIEWEE: Because some things I normally did if I am thinking of them now I say ah... what was I doing?

[cross talk 34:04:0]

INTERVIEWEE: I have changed it is true, varsity changes you.

INTERVIEWER: We have to grow, we all have to grow.

INTERVIEWEE: That is true.

INTERVIEWER: It will be interesting to see how... what you think when you finish the whole process, when you get your Honours how you feel you have changed, will you think it's for the good, will you think it's for the bad. It

will be very interesting to see.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Well thank you so much for your time, that was all I have for you, we have gone through all my questions. Do you have any questions that you want to ask me?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I wanted to ask you as a psychologist. You studied the mind of a person?

INTERVIEWER: No, we study the mind but it's also more than anything it's the behaviour of the person which...

INTERVIEWEE: Through speech?

INTERVIEWER: So you study... what we do is you look at how people behave in certain situations which gives you almost a prelude into what they think. So if you are a kind of a person who, whenever you are upset with someone you always turn your back towards them. Every time you are angry... That becomes a prelude into your mind even if you don't say it necessarily, your behaviour tells me that this is what you do when you are feeling upset. So it is those connections between your behaviour, your emotions and your thought processes.

There are different forms of psychology, there is even something called biological psychology where you go into the neurological workings of one's mind and how certain stimulus in the environment stimulate the brain in a certain way.

INTERVIEWEE: Because my mother always says, "I think psychology my daughter", when I am lying to her. You

see as a teenager you do something, when you come back home, "Where were you?"

[inaudible 36:00:0] my mother says I think psychology [inaudible 36:07:0] what's up with the psychology.

INTERVIEWER: People always...okay, the biggest misconception about psychology is that psychologists can read your mind, it's a lie, we can't read your mind.

INTERVIEWEE: Serious?

INTERVIEWER: We can't read your mind.

INTERVIEWEE: I thought you could, so you do [philosophy something? 36:20:0] okay, because I was having also a fear that...

INTERVIEWER: Did you hate it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes because it was more of how people they were teaching us [inaudible 36:38:0].

[cross talk 36:40:0]

INTERVIEWER: It's exactly that, I think they try to teach everybody a bit of that. Do you think you find it is the way you have to think in philosophy that you find difficult?

INTERVIEWEE: No it is not difficult as such, if you grasp it there is [inaudible 37:02:0], ambiguity... I got 90% for that.

INTERVIEWER: Amazing.

INTERVIEWEE: If you give yourself time to learn concepts if this is that...

INTERVIEWER: You just didn't like it. But I can't read your mind, I can look at your behaviour and I can get a very good idea about what you are probably thinking but that is if I have sat with you for a long time.

I am a research psychologist, I am not a therapist type but that's what therapy is about, you get insight from the way you behave and then of course we basically feed back to you what you are showing us

INTERVIEWEE: Okay I thought if you exchange words with someone you tell them this person is like this, this person...

INTERVIEWER: There are mannerisms, actually anyone can do this, you can pick up people's mannerisms and figure out that this person is lying to you but you learn that through engaging with that person on a constant basis. It's not like there's a secret tool that I have and then I can get into your brain and then [inaudible 38:07:0] know what you are thinking.

I think that's what people think, that's why people get nervous about talking to psychologists like this one can get into my brain. If I could get into your brain I wouldn't have to sit here and have an interview with you, you see what I mean?

Think about it that way, I think it will give you certain... your mother is just telling you so that she can... you know how mothers are. Thank you so much for your time.

INTERVIEWEE: You are welcome.

P2 TRANSCRIPT

P2 = Participant 2

INT = The Interviewer

1 INT: So, in terms of your name, you okay with me calling you
by your

2 first name?

3 P2: Yes

4

5 INT: Okay awesome.

6 And how old are you?

7 P2: 22

8 INT: Oh, so young

9 P2: No I feel old, I feel ancient, but any ways

10 INT: You are a baby.

11 Uh and in terms of languages at home what do you speak?

12 P2: Chichewa

13 INT: Chichewa. Is that the only language that you speak?

14 P2: Chichewa, English yeah

15

16 INT: Uhm at home?

17 P2: Yeah at home

18 INT: Oh, cool

19 So when did you come to South Africa?

20 P2: I came here about 4 years ago

21 INT: 4 years ago? And was it for studies, or?

22 P2: Yeah it was for studies

23 INT: So do you go home during the holidays, or do you stay
around?

24 P2: Yes, I go home uhm during the June holidays and the
December

25 holidays, because my mom wants it that way, but any
ways

P2 –

Malawian

- 22

26 INT: (Giggles) if it were up to you would you stay?

27 P2: Yeah I would I actually would

28 INT: Oh okay. Is it do you find it more convenient to stay
here, or

29 do you just prefer to be here?

30 P2: I just find it more convenient, cause going home for 2
weeks

31 then flying all the way back. What's the point? What is

32 actually the point?

33 INT: I can imagine it's expensive

34 P2: Ja, quite

35 INT: Ja hey.

36 And when you decided to come here it was obviously uhh
for

37 education, but did you come with any siblings, or
family?

38 P2: No no, it was just me

39

40 INT: It was just you?

41 P2: Yeah, but my brother lives in Joburg so it's not like
I'm very

42 far away from family, and my aunt also lives in Joburg

43 INT: And your brother and aunt, do they uh have they lived
in

44 Joburg for a long time, or?

45 P2: Yeah my brother has been there for 8 years. My aunt, yoh
she's

46 also back and forth, so she's here then she's in Malawi
and

47 then she's here

48 INT: So, it's a back and forth that thing?

49 P2: Yeah

50 INT: And so when you decided, okay it's time to go to
University,

Cost

of

going

home

51 what made you choose Tuks specifically?
52 P2: For me it was cause I was a very athletic person, when I
 was in
53 high school, and the thing is I wanted a place where it
54 actually uh it like fosters your athletic side as well
 as your
55 academics, and I saw like online that Tuks was the only
 place
56 that actually did that
57 INT: Hmm
58 P2: Yeah so for me..
59 INT: We even have a high school
60 P2: Yeah exactly, so for me it was just Tuks Tuks Tuks, like
 it was
61 literally the only place I applied, it was just Tuks
62 INT: Wow are you serious?
63 P2: Ja like I was like Tuks
64 INT: You went by faith hey
65 P2: I really did. I really did yoh. God has favored me
66 INT: At least hey
67 P2: It could've gone so badly, it could've gone so badly
68 INT: It could've, I mean that's why they try and encourage
 all the
69 students apply in different places, acquire for places,
 even
70 though you know your heart is at a place, because if
 you in a
71 situation come now, and they say, "no provisional
 acceptance,
72 we might consider you in the beginning of the year", it
 sucks
73 P2: But for me it's like uh in my heart, I don't know I'm
 very

74 different when I say that this is the way it is, it's
usually
75 the way it goes
76
77 INT: That's amazing, you speak it into the universe
78 P2: Exactly, exactly you speak it into the universe and it
will
79 come
80 INT: Ja
81 Ja I know what you mean. So, either than South Africa,
have you
82 lived anywhere else?
83 P2: I lived in Kenya but I was too young to remember
84 INT: Oh okay
85 P2: Yeah, and Malawi
86 INT: Malawi, okay perfect. Now, I have to ask you, when
you've been

87 here, you can't tell me about your Kenyan experience,
but once
88 the 4 years that you've been here, tell me a bit about
your
89 experiences
90 P2: Yoh hey, uhm okay let me start uhh first day I got to
the
91 University
92 INT: Ja
93 P2: First day I got to the University I was accepted to res,
and it
94 was ja it was Erika, yeah it was Erika first. And then
95 while I was at Erika, uhh like you know how the hakas
are
96 meant to like intimidate you and everything
97 INT: Ja

Res experiences — experienced a lot of prejudice

98 P2: It was like that. And then they told us that we have to
learn
99 all these songs, in languages I don't even understand
100 INT: Hmm
101 P2: And it was like they wouldn't even explain exactly
what they
102 saying. They would just say something in Afrikaans
and I must
103 just repeat it, and it's a language I am not even
well
104 Versed in. And then uh I could see from the beginning
105 when I came here that there was a, there was a division
between
106 blacks and whites
107 INT: Hmm
108 P2: And being an international student, and the fact that
there
109 aren't a lot of international students in res, is very
hard for
110 me to find my place cause I'm coloured so I don't
identify
111 myself as black and I don't identify myself as white
112
113 INT: Hmm
114 P2: So yeah that was res
115 INT: Ja

Struggles
with
registration
as an
international

116 P2: And then something actually happened when I first got to
the

117 university

118 INT: Hmm mm

119 P2: It was a case of uhm, I was accepted to the University
fully,

120 and then it was okay now you have to get your HESA
121 certificate. Do you know what HESA is?

122 INT: No

123 P2: Higher Education South Africa

124 INT: Oh yes I do actually know that certificate

125 P2: Yes, and the requirements for HESA are different from
the

126 requirements of the University. So HESA said no, so I
couldn't

127 come to the University

128 INT: Wow

129 P2: So what I had to do was I had to do an extra course, uhm
at

130 Varsity College and then I came back, which was pretty,
it was

131 pretty hectic

132 INT: Wow. So you could've actually been here much earlier?

133 P2: Yeah I could've been here earlier. So, I had to do an
extra

134 course, came back and then yeah when I came back I got
into

135 modelling, but now I'm like well versed and well I've
been here

136 for a year, so I understand South Africans and
everything. But

137 it was it was culture shock the first time, cause in my
country

student

138 we are very reserved, and then to come to South Africa,
 where
139 everyone is just, like...(snaps fingers)
140 INT: ... (*Laughing*)
141 P2: That's how that's the only way I can describe it, like
 everyone
142 is just (gestures)
143 INT: Ja

144 P2: So, I came here, uhh one of my friends came here as well
 and
145 actually she didn't fit in at all, and I know she
 suffered
146 from, she's also from my own country, she suffered from
147 depression and everything because of her experience
 here as
148
149 well

150 INT: Shame man
151 P2: Ja it's really really bad
152 INT: So, its' that, it's that heavy it's that heaviness of
 having to
153 deal with people who you not only just not familiar
 with them
154 but the way that they respond to you is so different
155 P2: From the way, traditionally, people respond to you
156 INT: Oh it's so terrible
157 So you say that traditionally well not traditionally,
 you say
158 that uh in Malawi the society is a bit more uhm
 conservative?
159 P2: Yeah
160 INT: You mean socially conservative, or like, are you
161 talking about
162 religion, or?

Experiences with mental illness

163 P2: Well religion is a big part of our society, but it's
also
164 socially, it's like there are certain things you
wouldn't say
165 even though you thinking it, there's certain things you

166 wouldn't do even though you'd like to
167 INT: (Giggles)
168 P2: So, ja
169 INT: But you'd think looking at that looking at from at
least that
170 point of view, has it been then positive the way that
you've
171 adapted?
172 P2: Yeah
173 INT: Have is been received uh positively by your family, by
your
174 friends back in Malawi?

175 P2: Ooh actually me and my friends in Malawi we kind of
split apart

176 INT: Is it?

177 P2: Yeah because obviously a new environment and I'm
changing, and
178 they are in a new environment and they changing, cause
uhm in
179 my school it was a lot of international people, so when
they
180 were done with their degrees, they also branched out,
so did
181 the Malawians, so it's like work in completely
different
182 environments and we come back together, it's like I
don't know
183
184 who they are

Social experiences – comes from conservative background
Struggled to maintain friendships, new environment

185 INT: Hmm

186 P2: You know, and they don't know who I am anymore. But here
I feel

187 like I fit in, meeting new friends, I'm enjoying it

188 INT: That's nice man. And your mom and your brother, how do
they

189 find your change?

190 P2: They find it good, I feel like I changed like I wasn't
very

191 vocal in the past, about issues I actually find
important, but

192 now

193 INT: That's good

194 P2: Ja

195 INT: And in terms of South Africans, how would you say you
perceived

196 South Africans coming into the country? So before you

197 interacted with them?

198 P2: Very vocal, very racialized, I mean the first question I
get

199 asked whenever I meet someone is, "what are you? Are
you black,

200 are you are you, what are you"?

201 INT: That's true that's true

202 P2: It's like they like to put people in categories, and
once they

203 categorize you it's like, "okay so she's gonna chill
with these

204 people"

205 INT: Yeah

206 P2: Type of thing

207 INT: There isn't that kind of uhh dynamic back in Malawi?

208 P2: No, well, personally I don't think so

209 INT: You don't, I suppose from your experience?

Racial
dynamics
of SA
unpacked
here

210 P2: Ja I don't think so
 211 INT: And in terms of South Africa as a country, what did you
 think
 212 of it coming, before coming in?
 213 P2: Oh, I thought rainbow nation
 214
 215 INT: Really?
 216 P2: Oh I bought it I bought those adverts, I was like
 rainbow
 217 nation. I was like this is where I need to be
 218 INT: So do they advertise things uh about South Africa in
 Malawi?
 219 P2: We have like DSTV and you know
 220 INT: So you get it from the shows particularly?
 221 P2: Hmm
 222 INT: I find it so interesting, okay cool.
 223 So now when we look at specifically here at Tuks, what
 would
 224 you say your experience has been at Tuks, particularly
 with
 225 making new friends and uh of interacting with your
 lecturers,
 226 that kind of dynamics
 227 P2: Uhm whenever I speak to, okay I'm going to start with
 white
 228 people, cause ja res, I was in res like white people
 kind of
 229 rule res. It was very uhm, they wouldn't say it, but
 you could
 230 feel the racial tension you know
 231 INT: Hmm mm
 232 P2: You could always feel the racial tension. It's like, ja.
 And I

Racial tensions in res -

233 also felt, what else can I talk about? Black people are
 very
234 friendly
235 INT: Hmm
236 P2: And in terns of my lecturers, I could when it was a
 white
237
238 lecturer I could still feel the tension and everything
 and, uhm
239 sometimes they make remarks when uh like I would ask a
240 question, and then it'll be "I'll reply you later,
 cause I have
241 to think about it and everything". And then during the
 lecture,
242 it would be like, "who was that foreigner who asked the
243 question?", you know type of thing
244 INT: Woow
245 P2: And it was like, "wow"! But everyone else is just
 chilled about
246 it, and it's like "guys" ...
247 INT: ... "Did you not hear that?" (*giggles*)
248 P2: (*Giggles*), he said it was the foreigner... ja
249 INT: Woow
250 P2: So...
251
252 INT: That's so that's so uncomfortable
253 P2: It is very uncomfortable. It is very uncomfortable
254 INT: Ja ja that's very uncomfortable. And I'm just thinking,
 what
255 would make you like based on what exactly because?
256 P2: Before like, uhm, my accent was quite different back
 then
257 INT: Oh okay so your accent has also changed
258 P2: Ja my accent has also changed

Experiences with lecturers

259 INT: I wouldn't even I wouldn't pick you out of a car and
say,
260 "she's definitely not from South Africa"
261 P2: Yeah exactly
262 INT: I would say maybe no you coloured, but then there's so
many
263 coloured in South Africa, I wouldn't assume

264 P2: That's true. I had a very very different accent. I was
about to
265
266 say something else. What else, Tuks? Tuks?
267 Yeah, even the way uhm when you first come and you
sorting out
268 your administration and everything, the way they treat
you as a
269 foreigner? You can pick it up

270 INT: Hmm
271 P2: You can really really pick it up
272 INT: What do you mean by that?

273 P2: I mean like, uhm I don't know if it's with everyone but
if
274 there's if there's like a problem, they'll be like
"sorry",
275 then they'll just bounce you around from one person to
the
276 other. And I know with uhh another one of my foreign
friends,
277 its uhh how can I say... they have preferences in
foreigners.
278 So one of my friends uhm, she applied here, she got in,
and
279 then she was sorting out her Visa, but the Visa process
for her

How your
accent can
impact
your
experiences

280 with her uhm with her country, it takes a very long
time to
281 process, so she was uhm missing out on lectures and
everything.
282 INT: Hmm
283 P2: But Tuks does have this thing where they say, uhm if you
284 waiting on your Visa and you have that uhm thing that
proves
285 that you applied for a Visa and you can still study
here
286 INT: Yes, okay

287 P2: So she had she actually had 2 passports. One of her
passports

288 was from Uganda, the other one was from the UK. So with
the one
289 from Uganda it's the one that she applied with, and she
gave to
290 the people, they were like "sorry sorry we can't
process you we
291 can't process you we can't process you". And then she
came back
292 with her United Kingdom passport, and that's when they
started
293 to take her seriously
294 INT: *(Giggles)* Woow
295 P2: And that's when she got processed, and ja
296 INT: Wow, wow. And this is one person, and they didn't...
297 P2: ... This was the same person
298 INT: They didn't wonder why does this person have 2
passports?
299 P2: No

The
power of
western
versus
African
passports
– very
important
to
unpack

300 INT: Wow. That's very sad hey
 301 P2: It is very sad, you can feel it
 302 INT: Cause that's a clear, so I see what you saying, the
 basically
 303 if it's a if you're an international student from more
 of the
 304 European countries, you get a bit more preferential
 treatment
 305 P2: Like they treat you more professional, let me just put
 it that
 306 way. And another thing is uhm I've noticed that
 307 international
 308 student issues aren't taken seriously here
 309 INT: Hmm
 310 P2: Like even with the whole fees must fall situation, it
 was like
 311 uhm of, what was the resolution? Ja the resolution was
 fees
 312 wouldn't increase for uhh certain kinds of South
 Africans, but
 313 fees would definitely increase for the international
 student
 314 INT: Hmmm
 315 P2: You don't know whether like the background of that
 316 international student
 317 INT: It's so true
 318 P2: And it was like, it was just South Africans and, no one
 even
 319 brought it up that, "hey, what about the international
 320 students?" They just accepted that okay cool, that
 means that
 321 fees won't increase for a certain uhm certain type of
 family
 322

The
 power of
 western
 versus
 African
 passports
 – very
 important
 to
 unpack

323 within a certain bracket for South Africans, which is
 that's
324 the way it is. No one even continued fighting
325 INT: Were there any uhh like groups on campus who maybe then
 voiced
326 voiced this? Nothing?
327 P2: Nothing. I didn't hear I did not, and I am very
 politically aware I did not hear anything
328 INT: Ja
329 P2: Even DASO was like ah but
330 INT: At least we've won like one thing
331 P2: Hmm
332 INT: That's so sad, because I'm just thinking uhm in 2015 I
 remember
333 there were a lot of uhm international students who were
334 involved in protests
335 P2: Exactly, it's like
336 INT: I mean the fight the fight was right there
337 P2: It was our fight as well, until that point and then it
 was all
338 our fight, then sorry, you guys just
339 INT: Oh guys I mean at the end of the what do you expect,
 it's so
340 sad, like then what's the point, you can't ask me to
 also join
341 the protest if then I'm also not going to get anything
 out of
342 it
343 P2: Nothing. Maybe the only thing that we got out was uh
344 registration fees doesn't increase for like everyone,
 cool
345 INT: That was for everyone thing, not just your income
 bracket. It

346 didn't matter, which I mean, it's not really can't say
even

347 it's a benefit per se

348 P2: And even another thing I've noticed is uhm, when it
comes to
349 applying to res, it's like they they they have a quota
for
350 black people and white people but not international
students.

351 And if you think about it, how hard would it be, you
coming to
352 a place you don't even know, and now you have to look
for a
353 res, well uhm accommodation, and the University is just
like,
354 "we will just treat you like you're a normal South
African"

355 INT: Uhh I don't know if uhm from your experience, do you
know how

356 many like not like number wise but in terms of
proportions, are

357

358 there a lot of internationals at your res, or like
res's in

359 general?

360 P2: No, there were probably, in the first-year group, there
were

361 probably uh 5 internationals when I was in ja in the
first-year

362 group, I'm not saying the whole res

363 INT: Oh yeah yeah

364 P2: Cause those are the people we interacted with, it's not
like I can look at someone and be like, "they probably
international"

Quota system for res – how its applied

365 INT: Ja I get what you mean I get what you mean
366 P2: And I don't know...
367 INT: But that's still like just 5?
368 P2: Just 5
369 INT: Wow
370 P2: So yeah
371 INT: So obviously then you obviously wouldn't then have
exposure to
372 other international uh, you didn't have exposure to
other
373 internationals because they just weren't there!
374 P2: Yeah well if they were, I didn't know about them, and it
was
375 like uhh also it's when you first, I just think Tuks
can do a
376 better job introducing international students to the
377 University. When you first show up to res, uhm ja
obviously,
378 obviously it's nice to be treated like everyone else,
but at
379 the same time it would be nice if people remember that
you are
380 not from this country, and you know how there's a Haka
that
381 deals with certain situations, maybe like a sub-
portfolio for a
382 certain Haka could be making sure that international
students
383 feel comfortable
384 INT: Hmm
385 P2: And it's uhm, like I said different cultures, we we are
all
386 different and everything, especially coming from a
different

387 country here. One thing that could happen to actually
 make sure
 388 that uhm we are united despite our diversities, is also
 389 introducing them to a certain society, you know?
 390 INT: Hmm. Is that what you mean?
 391
 392 P2: So they are able to socialize better, otherwise they'll
 end up
 393 like our friend who's depressed and she's literally
 about to
 394 drop out. I I know (*sigh*) I might have fit in more, but
 I know
 395 it's very hard to fit in as an international student
 396 INT: Hmm. So what does Tuks, in your experience, provide for
 the
 397 international community?
 398 P2: Ah! What does it provide? Well uhm welcoming day
 399 INT: Okay
 400 P2: Where they just introduce you to the University, and
 then you
 401 get to inter... well there's international welcoming day
 402 INT: Okay
 403 P2: You get to meet other international students, and you go
 to,
 404 what was it? It was like Gold Reef. You just go for a
 trip
 405 there and you come back, and then people, ja.
 406 INT: I haven't been there
 407 P2: Ja. So we have that, and that's all I can speak of
 408 INT: Wow
 409 P2: No like that's all I can speak of. Otherwise it's like,
 "ayt
 410 cool", your everyone else

More
 psycho-
 social
 support for
 international
 students

411 INT: Are there any like uhh like support services that you
know of?
412 P2: Ja there are, there's like UPI, but it's not like they
413 very vocal about their presence you know
414 INT: Hmm
415 P2: So, you don't know, you don't know about them, you
basically on
416 your own
417 INT: Wooh ja ne
418 P2: Tuks ne
419 INT: *Um'hloolo nje lo* (it's just shocking), it's shocking
shocking
420 P2: (*Laughing*)
421 INT: And then let's let's now go back to your day on campus.
When
422 you start, like it's a Monday, what does a typical day
look
423 like for you?
424 P2: Uhm wake up, eat breakfast, well shower eat breakfast,
come to
425
426 lectures, chill with my friends then go study, go home
427 INT: So, it follows basically the same pattern that uhh
every day
428 P2: ... Student

Despondency of not adjusting as an international
--

student

429 INT: So when you look at someone like your friend, what do
you think
430 is then different with her situation in terms of her
every day?
431 P2: With her everyday...
432 INT: ... Interactions
433 P2: ... It's probably uhm wake up, maybe like think about a
whole
434 bunch of stuff that, you know, she can't control. And
then go
435 to her lectures, and then go home straight. She doesn't
436 interact with anyone at all, she goes home straight.
And then
437 she'll maybe uhm, because she has insomnia as well,
she'd
438 probably stay up the whole night, uhm speaking to her
mom back
439 home
440 INT: Ja
441 P2: Crying to go back home, cause that's what she she cries
to go
442 back home. And she was about to she was this close to
dropping
443 out cause her mom even allowed it. But her dad said no.
444 So she's just home, and even when I go and try to chill
with
445 her, she's just like, silent you know
446 INT: Hmm
447 P2: It's just the the the I don't know what broke her cause
back
448 home she was a very lovely person, but here
449 INT: She doesn't even she doesn't interact with other people
very
450 much

451 P2: Not at all
452 INT: (*Sigh*) So with your South African friends, what
languages do
453 you do you speak to them in?
454 P2: English
455 INT: Just English?
456 P2: English obvious
457 INT: (*Laughing*) hehe
458 P2: And then like uhm maybe when somebody makes a comment in
459 whatever language, they like "ah shucks, Jody, this is
this is
460 what they said", you know
461 INT: (*Giggles*)

462 P2: But it's fine. I, I really don't mind people speaking
their
463 languages and everything, but it's uh ja I like the
fact that
464 they actually explain it to me so I don't feel left out
465
466 INT: Hmm. And do you speak any other South African languages
now
467 that you've been here? (*laughing*)
468 P2: No, no. There's no time for that
469 INT: (*Laughing*), oh the way you say it even it's funny
470 P2: No no

471 INT: And then, with your lecturers I mean like, has do you
think your
472 relationship with your lecturers, has evolved? Do you
see a
473 difference to the way they treat you, from when you first
started
474 to now?
475 P2: Not really
476 INT: They still treat you the same? There isn't any evolution?

Language experiences

477 P2: Nah there's no evolution, maybe the comments and that but
that's

478 because you can't really tell if I'm South African at
this point

479 INT: Ja

480 P2: But ja it's basically the same

481 INT: Still that awkward vibe? Same thing with res?

482 P2: With res, wooh with res I actually dropped out of res
cause I

483 couldn't take the tension anymore, and ja

484 INT: Ja

485 P2: But uhm one thing I forgot to mention is, even in meetings,
where

486 it was like a sports meeting, uhm when I was a first
year, the

487

488 first days uh I was there. We had a sports meeting and
the Haka

489 was literally like "oh yeah you not South African, and
what-what-

490 what", and I was like "yeah I'm not", she was like "cool
cool

491 cool". Everyone showed up for the other for the meeting,
and then

492 she just goes, "argh guys I'm not very good in English,
so I'm

493 just going to say everything in Afrikaans". And then the
whole

494 meeting, like the whole meeting was in Afrikaans

495 INT: Woow

496 P2: The whole meeting was in Afrikaans

497 INT: Wow woow. And she knows that there's people who can't...

498 P2: And I've seen nothing has changed with the University as
well,

Language
experiences
– language
as a tool to
exclude
others

499
500 well to say that they don't care about international
students,
501 because even when those xenophobic attacks were happening
right
502 there in Sunnyside, which is very close to our University
503 INT: Very very close
504 P2: They did not, any measures, nothing. It was just ordinary
day you
505 know
506 INT: I mean there's even busses that go to that area, like
Arcadia and
507 there
508 P2: Ja there's...
509 INT: ... And they didn't think maybe we should just help our
students
510 out?
511 P2: No! No they didn't, they didn't, but ja
512 INT: It's still basically the same. That's really sad
513 P2: It's really basically the same
514 INT: Hmm
515 P2: Yeah with the lecturers nothing has changed. What has
changed?
516 INT: And then your degree, specifically your degree, do you
think, I
517 mean I don't know, how are you finding your studying your
degree
518 here?
519 P2: I like it, cause I chose International Relations
520 INT: Oh that's nice! (*giggles*)
521 P2: So yeah I really like my degree. There's basically no
favoritism,
522 cause there's not even any lectures in Afrikaans, it's
fully

523 English
524 INT: Awesome
525 P2: For my major modules, but I know for Engineering they
still have
526 Afrikaans uhm Afrikaans lectures
527 INT: I thought Afrikaans was...
528 P2: ... No, uh you see what the University did was...
529 INT: ... Hayibo, I thought I really thought Afrikaans was no
more a thing post the Afrikaans must fall movement
530 P2: Baby girl, like what happened was, they had the meetings
and
531
532 everything in on Afrikaans must fall must fall.
533 INT: Ja
534 P2: They did uh a draft on a policy and the University said
they
535 adopted the policy, and the policy basically was, the
people who
536 have started in Afrikaans, learning in Afrikaans,
lectures in
537 Afrikaans, they can finish in Afrikaans. But the first
years,
538 cannot have Afrikaans lectures
539 INT: Oh okay
540 P2: It's only gonna be in uh what was, it's only gonna be in
541 tutorials. But, Afri-forum came with uh with uh with
lawyers
542 and what-what-what, and now the lecturers the first years
started
543 lectures in Afrikaans
544 INT: No!
545 P2: The thing is about those Afrikaans lectures, it's like, I
know

Lang
policy
and
lang
bias in
teaching

546 that for a fact they also got weekend lecturers. So they
get
547 lectures on weekends, and they their their lecturers do
tell them
548 what's gonna be in semester tests, and what's gonna be
in exams
549 INT: So specifically, the Afrikaans group?
550 P2: Ja the Afrikaans group...
551 INT: ... Gets weekend lessons and they don't even make it an
option for
552 English classes?
553 P2: No
554 INT: *(Sigh)*
555 P2: I know that's deep right?
556 INT: And it's still continuing and it's just one of those
things
557 P2: Hmm
558 INT: I don't, did they put it an indictment or did they say
no guys,
559 uh for now the first years?
560 P2: I think that's the word, indictment
561
562 INT: That is oohh wow
563 P2: Tuks! Welcome
564 INT: Wow wow. I mean I think, so that means if it's still
continuing
565 for them, I would imagine that it's still continuing for
all the
566 other degrees that offered Afrikaans. When will this ever
end?
567 P2: That's the thing, I've noticed with South Africa it's
divided and
568 it's like it wants to say divided
569 INT: So sad hey. Like I literally

Thoughts on SA

570 P2: It's sad
571 INT: And you know what? What's a bit disappointing is that
I've
572 literally cause I'm from the outside I just read all the
things
573 and there's no mention of that. So I would be out of the
perception
574 that, oh Afrikaans is now uh not a thing anymore
575 P2: That's the thing. Tuks, instead of actually solving the
situation
576 they just wanna like hide it under wraps. I mean you
haven't heard
577 about the suicide, you know, at all. There's been
suicides cause
578 people, like there's some girl ...
579 INT: ... Woooooh you just telling me things now
580 P2: ... I know (*giggles*), let me stop let's go back to ...
581 INT: ... No no no tell me tell me this is actually could fit in
a lot
582 P2: Alright, uhm some girl she didn't feel like she fit in,
and she
583 was studying Actuarial Science, that course is very hard.
She
584 tried to jump off the building on madelief, the res. She
585 tried to jump off
586 INT: Wow!
587 P2: You don't hear about it. You...
588 INT: Is she okay?
589 P2: Hmm?
590 INT: Is she okay?
591 P2: how can that person be okay? I mean her parents put her
in residence thinking she would not be alone but because of that
environment, that's exactly what happened, she felt completely on

her own, and none of us even realised it till that day. We don't know, but she didn't kill herself, so...

592 INT: Yeah.

593 P2: Yeah she made it, like that far, but doesn't mean she's okay

594 mentally

595 INT: Ja

596 P2: That's another thing about Tuks. Uhm if you want to go for, what's

597 it called, psychiatrist, yeah, it's a long process to actually

598

599 see a psychiatrist, plus sometimes ...

600 INT: ... Why?

601 P2: I think someone said you actually have to pay for the psychiatrist,

602 when it should be free

603 INT: Isn't it uhm I'm pretty sure that if you go to student, what is

604 it, student support, they pay they make you pay now?

605 P2: I think, someone told me that you have to pay but I know the

606 process for actually getting one, is very very long

607 INT: Okay, ja that is true

608 P2: It's very very long

609 INT: Cause they'll tell you there isn't a lot of uhm capacity

610 P2: Hmm

611 INT: They are bit under capacitated, so then you get on a, what a wait

612 list

613 P2: And as international student, when you're going through uhm like

614 depression, like my friend, you can't like you can't go there.

615 And what if you don't have the funds to actually see a
proper
616 psychiatrist? What happens to you? Exactly what's
happening to
617 her
618 INT: You have to rely on other sources that are outside of
Tuks
619 essentially, something like a life-line or
620 P2: The only reason she actually got a psychiatrist is because
uhm
621 her aunt works for a company, and this uhm the company's
622 psychiatrist it's like it's for her aunt and her family
members
623 type of thing
624 INT: Ah that's amazing
625 P2: So she was able to go there. And it was bad because uhm
the psy...I
626 don't know if I'm using the appropriate word, you can
tell me
627 INT: No don't worry
628 P2: It is a psychiatrist right?
629 INT: So, there is a psychologist and a psychiatrist
630 P2: Ja a psychologist, yes that's the word. I knew...
631 INT: There are people who go to psychiatrists particularly
because I
632 mean they prescribe your medications, they deal with
mental health
633
634 from a very uhh, you have an illness, so let me give you
medication
635 for it
636 P2: Maybe it is a psychiatrist cause she she is getting
medication

637 INT: You can also get medication from a psychologist, but what
uhh
638 psychologists mostly advise to advocate is the mind, body
balance,
639 that it's not just you getting the pills but the fact
that you
640 need to realize, there's an issue in your life and you
need to
641 deal with that issue and not become essentially dependent
on
642 medications. There's a bigger picture, so the first let's
say
643 start with the bigger picture. Obviously if you have
something
644 like Schizophrenia, something like a really heavy
psychiatric
645 condition, there's nothing we can... not that there's
nothing you
646 need to be on medication. But a psychologist would
advocate for
647 you to be on medication, as well as therapy,
psychiatrists'
648 therapy, don't care what therapy
649 P2: Okay
650 INT: As you can see, I'm very biased, so
651 P2: Yeah it's fine
652 INT: You can also speak to a psychiatrist probably word it a
bit
653 differently, but that's basically the difference
654 P2: The case... Psychologist
655 INT: So it's a psychologist
656 P2: So it was so bad that she felt uhm she didn't feel like
she

657 belonged in South Africa, so much that she almost tried
to commit
658 suicide
659 INT: Hmm
660 P2: Her herself she almost tried to commit suicide. And then
the
661 psychologist made her sign some some form that says, "I,
(***),
662 will not consider...", like a
663 INT: Ja, it's like a declare
664 P2: Ja a a
665 INT: You say it's like a promise note I call it
666 P2: Exactly
667 INT: To say, "I won't do this"
668
669 P2: But she's still till this day, and the thing is the
University is
670 not doing anything about it. They know, they know she's
depressed,
671 they know like the reasons why she's depressed, cause
she missed
672 on her first semester tests because of her uhm depression
673 INT: Hmm
674 P2: So they know this is a problem but they choose not to do
anything
675 about it, and I'm sure like it's just they way they
treat, well,
676 students
677 INT: It's very sad actually hey, really sad
678 P2: But it's really bad for an international student cause
maybe a
679 normal student may have family close

680
681 INT: Exactly
682 P2: But as an international student you have no one. You are
in a
683 whole different country
684 INT: Exactly
685 P2: So it just amplifies the isolation and it amplifies the
depression
686 as you can imagine
687 INT: And you all by yourself
688 P2: And it amplifies, it just...
689 INT: ...You you you, and no, okay at least I can go home to
mother or
690 dad or something and just have a conversation
691 P2: Exactly there's no brother there's no sister
692 INT: It's really quite sad. And your learning process, do you
think
693 being at Tuks has I mean contributed to a more productive
learning
694 process or do you feel that you just learn the way you
learn and
695 the way that you've been taught by lecturers, doesn't
influence
696 you at all?
697 P2: I actually don't like the learning process here, because
uhm when
698 I was in A levels, it was more uhh practical, you know.
And
699 here, it's well what I've seen from my course, it's
become a thing
700 of, "this is the way it's set on the paper, this is
exactly the
701
702 way it should

Lack of
family
support –
impact on
mental
health

703 INT: Hmm

704 P2: It's not (*sigh*), how can I describe it? Its rigid

705 INT: Rigid?

706 P2: It's very very rigid

707 INT: Hmm

708 P2: And I'm used to ja, something more flexible

709 INT: Ja

710 P2: You know, where uhm and it's only now where it's changing,
in my

711 third year where they tried to make it more flexible,
where we

712 can put our opinion. But it's gotten to a point where I
find it

713 hard to put my opinion cause now I've become so used to
this

714 rigidness

715 INT: Ja, hmm

716 P2: Ja

717 INT: Ja that is so true

718 P2: That's what I think about the learning process

719 INT: Okay no, good news is that it gets better at least in
Masters and

720 in Honours, you have to think for yourself, you can't
just

721 P2: I hope so. But you ca imagine the change going from
flexible to

722 rigid, and then now they asking you to go back to flexible

723 INT: Ja, its going to be very, the adjustment I can imagine.
And I

724 heard people actually say that it's a bit difficult the
way that

725 you are taught in first year, and second year, or third
year

Academic experiences

726 depending if it's a 4 or 3 year degree. Then out of
nowhere they
727 like, "okay so what do you think"?, and you like "what
do you
728 mean?"
729 P2: I know I find that uhm because the made it so rigid, it's
a it's,
730 I wouldn't actually learn the work, it's like I memorize

731 the work,
732 cause that's what they want us to do
733 INT: Hmm, so true
734 P2: Yeah, so I memorize the work, and now if you actually ask
me what
735 did you learn in first year, I won't be able to tell you
cause I
736 memorized it for the semester tests, for the assignments
and for
737 the exam
738 INT: And mind you, you actually like what you are doing
739 P2: Exactly! I actually do, I actually do
740 INT: Imagine when you are studying something for the sake of
just
741 studying it hey
742
743 P2: Hmm
744 INT: Very very very dismal. Ja I mean at the end of the day
you need
745 to take to the workplace practical skills, you can't cram
your
746 way through a meeting, uhm "let me just refer to my
textbook
747 quickly"
748 P2: That's one thing I really think needs to change, it
shouldn't be

Academic experiences

749 a memorizing type of thing

750 INT: Ja. And my final question for you is, do you think I mean
not do

751 you think, would you recommend another learner another
752 international student to come to Tuks?

753 P2: Oh no, not at all. I'd be like, "just run away", just
never, yoh

754 I would never I would never, not even to my worst enemy,
not even

755 to that girl I hated in high school, would I be like,
"come to
756 Tuks"

757 INT: Wow!

758 P2: "It's amazing"

759 INT: So when they say like, okay but why? What would you say?

760 P2: I would say it's because uhm, like what I imagined
Stellenbosch

761 to be, Tuks is very racist. And I told you in Malawi we
are not

762

763 used to racism. So, first that's gonna be a shock, it's
gonna be

764 the shock of your life. Two, there's no support systems
in Tuks,

765 for international students. What else would I say? You
are going

766 to find it very hard to fit in with culture itself, and
the fact

767 that there's no support systems, and it's very hard to
uhm make

768 friends who would probably make you want to leave

769 INT: Hmm

770 P2: Ja. Four, what else would I say? Ja I just wish there was
more

<p>Race</p> <p>politics</p> <p>huge them</p> <p>in her</p> <p>experiences</p>

771
772 support for international students. They don't actually
hear
773 about you, there could be a xenophobic attack happening
right
774
775 outside, and there's nothing the University would do
because it's
776 off their premises
777 INT: Ja, it's very sad. It's actually very very sad. Cause
should it
778 happen inside, then they'll be forced to deal with it,
but that's
779 highly unlikely
780 P2: But if it's outside...
781 INT: Well that's all I have for you.
782 Thank you, you were very very helpful.

Key

Social experiences

Academic experiences

Financial challenges

Summation of experiences

P3 TRANSCRIPT

P3 = Participant 3

INT = The Interviewer

783 INT Are you comfortable with me calling you by your
first name?
784 P3: Yeah, no problem
785 INT: No other name you'd like me to refer to you by?

786 P3: No, it's okay
787 INT: And, how old are you?
788 P3: 29
789 INT: 29. And what are you studying?
790
791 P3: Electrical, honours
792 INT: Electrical. How are you finding it?
793 P3: Uhm, interesting
794 INT: Is it?
795 P3: Hmm mm
796 INT: Do you wanna go into the whole profession?
797 P3: Yeah sure sure
798 INT: That's nice. And how many languages do you speak?
799 P3: 3
800 INT: And they are?
801 P3: English, Swahili, and my mother tongue
802 INT: Swahili. I love Swahili, I like listening to Swahili
803 P3: Ja it's fine
804 INT: So, when did you come to South Africa?
805 P3: In January
806 INT: In January?
807 P3: Hmm mm
808 INT: Was it your first time coming to South Africa?
809 P3: No
810 INT: Oh okay. How when else were you in South Africa?

Engineering
student.
Oldest
participant
Working
experiences

811 P3: Last year. I came for work last year
812 INT: Okay. And is this the first time that you live live
full time
813 in South Africa, or did you live here at another
point?
814 P3: Nah this is the first time. The other times were just
uhm
815 coming in for like 2 weeks and then you go back
816 INT: Okay cool
817 And in terms of your reasons of for you coming here,
you came
818 here specifically just for your honours degree?
819 P3: Yeah, for the honours, masters especially like to
finish the
820 whole
821 INT: Oh you wanna go the whole route?
822 P3: Yeah
823
824 INT: Awesome
825 And have you studied anywhere else in the continent?
826 P3: Just Kenya
827 INT: Just Kenya?
828 P3: Ja
829 INT: So that's where you did your undergrad?
830 P3: Hmm mm
831 INT: Perfect
832 And in terms of, so so let's uh when you first came
here, how
833 did your experience of studying in Kenya, compared to
834 experience of studying here, in South Africa?
835 P3: Hmm, the difference would be... there was a difference,
there is
836 a difference, in terms of how the content is delivered
837 INT: Okay

Academic experiences

838 P3: Ja, there's there's more uhm online content, there's
more
839 access to the library, from by using the internet
because for
840 us the library was majorly physically you have to
actually go
841 there and get a book and stuff.
842 INT: Oh is it?

843 P3: There was a internet of course but it is not as not as
uhh wide
844 as it is in UP
845 int: Okay
846 P3: And then uh the way the course is being delivered also
is
847 different because you can get to know a lot of things
before
848 hand, before you go to class
849 INT: Hmm hmm
850 P3: Uhm the way the lecturers conduct the lectures is so
different
851 because they they sort of, there's more accountability
I'd say,
852 there's more personal touch to the students
853
854 INT: Okay
855 P3: Yeah in Kenya we have big classes with many
856 students with this one lecturer, so getting even a
whole other
857 lecturer we wasn't possible. But here there's a lot
more
858 Time with the lecturer. Ja so
859 INT: Nice. And before you came here, so like this is even
before you

Academic experiences

860 came here for work and everything, what was your
general
861 perceptions about South Africa as a country?
862 P3: Uhh I would say the I used to view some of it as a
country that
863 has grown economically
864 INT: Okay
865 P3: Diverse cultures, very great tourist attraction
866 INT: Ja
867 P3: Uhh so I really had a good perception of South Africa
868 INT: Okay. And how would you describe your perception of
South
869 Africa now that you've been here for a while?
870 P3: It has changed!
871 INT: *(Laughing)*, how so?
872 P3: It has changed because uhm, a part of it has changed,
the part
873 where there is a lot of tourist attraction, that still
remains
874 INT: Ja

875 P3: The economy, I've seen how it has had its ups and downs
since
876 I came here, but the matter that shocked me the most
was the
877 way the South Africans were welcoming us it wasn't very
good,
878 because The economy, I've seen how it has had its ups
and downs since I came here, but the matter that shocked me the
most was the way the South Africans were welcoming us it wasn't
very good, because in 2017, there was the whole xenophobic thing
again. And that was hard coz sometimes you hear other students in
the cafeteria talking about how we foreign people are taking jobs.
So that was a bit of a shocker, because back in Kenya we have a
lot of migrants, yoh from Somalia to Indians. We even joke at home

Thoughts
on
xenophobia

that Indians have even have been recognized as a 45th tribe in Kenya (Laughs). Like we've embraced them to be a tribe in Kenya. But here, people blame foreigner for everything, the economy, the jobs, studying too hard. It's a shocker

879 P3: Like we've embraced them to be a tribe in Kenya. But here, peopl

880 Think there's South Africa, and there's the rest of

881 Africa

882 INT: Hmm

883

884 P3: Yeah, so I think there's that divide which was a shocker to me,

885 I didn't expect it

886 INT: You didn't expect that at all

887 P3: No

888 INT: I never knew there were Indians in Kenya

889 P3: There's so many Indians, Somali's. We have we've got like you

890 can't even tell it's very hard for you tell

891 INT: The differences of it?

892 P3: Ja! We are so mixed in there, and people are very willing to

893 help. In South Africa, yes people are willing to help but

894 there's that I think that whole thing in I was pretty new here

895 INT: Ja

896 P3: It was ...

897 INT: It was a bit of a ...

898 P3: Ja it just shocked me so much

899 INT: Are you talking about the xenophobic attacks that were here in

900 Pretoria?

901 P3: Yeah in Pretoria

902 INT: I've heard about it because I'm so much in Joburg now
that I
903 never even
904 P3: Ja, yoh cause even the scholarship the guys who (***) any
of
905 the scholarship were telling us not to even move around
and
906 stuff, and not to get into taxis cause you cannot even
be sure
907 because they I don't know how you guys tell that we are
908 foreigners but somehow...
909 INT: There's like there's always these rules that say if you
don't
910 know what an elbow is in Zulu. Mind you, you know how
many
911 people don't know what an elbow is in Zulu? I probably
don't
912 even know what an elbow is
913 P3: (*Giggles*)
914 INT: It is just it's a very skewed way, cause sometimes you
find
915 that just because a person is like dark, they'd say that
person
916
917 is foreign
918 P3: Yeah
919 INT: There's so many dark South Africans. It's a problem
920 P3: Yeah
921 INT: And in terms of, so you've described what you thought of
South
922 Africa, but in terms of South Africans, what did you
think of
923 South Africans as people, before you came?
924 P3: As people?

Quite traditional

925 INT: Ja, like what did you think, how are South Africans,
before you
926 came?
927 P3: Oh ja before I came I just used to think you guys are
these
928 uhm happy, cultural centered people, and uhm you embrace
you
929 just embrace everyone. And your like you're have got very
930 strong cultural roots, cause of your whole tradition.
You guys
931 even speak Zulu, eve in like in class you guys are taught
in
932 your own language. So I really thought of you guys as
different
933 from the other countries that are more moving away from
the
934 culture
935 INT: Hmm
936 P3: I thought you guys are really good at embracing your
culture
937 and
938 INT: Do you find it is that the case in Kenya where people
are
939 moving away from their cultures?
940 P3: Ja we do we do that a lot
941 INT: Is it?
942 P3: Ja, a lot of things have been Westernized
943 INT: Oh so everyone is like moving towards more like the
Western
944 thing?
945 P3: Ja, sure sure. But you guys seem to be you sort of seem
to be
946 self-contained in a way, yeah. So you use your own stuff.
You

947 don't allow the influence of the other people to come in
948 INT: And then now? Now that you've been here for a while?
949 P3: Uhm now that I've been here for a while, I still see that
 the
950 culture is there but it's there is there are some
 shockers
951 because when I came here I expected culture is so much
 there
952 that uhm you know the way your student, you know like I
 wasn't
953 expecting to hear cases of (***) rape, HIV. I mean I
 really did
954 research much on the statistics of HIV and the culture
 of the
955 (***)PR), and students, you know, what students are in
 school
956 are doing
957
958 INT: Ja
959 P3: Uhm I sort of thought that you guys were traditional, but
 a bit
960 of that I see is not very true
961 INT: Hmm
962 P3: Yeah, so I don't know maybe the way that you guys that
 South
963 Africans have been brought up, maybe the culture here is
964 different from culture that when you talk about culture
 in
965 Kenya, we know we are talking about tradition, you know,
 uhm.

966 Our tradition requires you to you know, cover up, you
 know uhm,
 967 touching a woman is just a no no, walking around in
 campus
 968 wearing all these other things is just, not right. Cases
 of,
 969 you know, hearing on the news that this guy has this uhm
 maybe
 970 this prominent member of parliament has assaulted, you
 know
 971 INT: Ja
 972 P3: You know those things were not, are not really common, up
 east
 973 and west of Africa
 974 INT: So you find that they were a bit more like uh we're not
 as
 975 conservative?
 976 P3: No, no
 977 INT: As you thought we were?
 978 P3: Yeah yeah. There is there is a part of conservativeness,
 it is
 979 there in terms of uhm how you treat each other, like just
 person
 980 to person. But there's a big there's a bit of a divide
 on how
 981 ladies behave, how men behave towards ladies. It still
 is a bit
 982 of a shocker
 983 INT: Yeah, I see what you're saying. Its even a shocker for
 some of
 984 us, who have been here for a while

Cultural differences – informed my religious beliefs

985 P3: Ja sometimes I just look around and I'm like yoh, and
 students
 986 goes to school and say they want this, and the other day
 I saw
 987 condoms. I'm just thinking, "oh my God" (giggles)
 988 INT: (Giggles) really
 989 P3: Yoooh, in Kenya in Kenya I mean we are
 990 INT: So if you go to a public toilet you wouldn't find condoms
 in
 991
 992 Kenya?
 993 P3: You will but not for our age is 18. Like when you go to
 high
 994 school you cannot, even our uniform, it's prescribed your
 skirt
 995 has to be below the knee, it can never come above the
 knee
 996 INT: Ja
 997 P3: Yeah. Like you know you have to cover up, condoms are
 restricted,
 998 things like abortion an what, I think we're just, we are
 a bit
 999 more maybe say, let's say backward
 1000 INT: Is it? Let's go conservative
 1001 P3: Yeah
 1002 INT: So, I mean, it's actually very interesting that you
 saying that,
 1003 but looking at uh the institution where you studied, do
 you see
 1004 differences in terms of your institution back at home,
 and here
 1005 at Tuks specifically?
 1006 P3: In terms of uh?
 1007 INT: In terms of the culture

Cultural
 shook –
 finds
 SA
 more
 liberal
 than
 Kenya

1008 P3: Arhh no I think campus is campus
1009 INT: It's basically the same
1010 P3: Because guys smoke, guys drink, guys sleep around. I don't
think
1011 campus has any difference, yeah it's the same, same same.
They
1012 the ones that I'm talking about it's the external
environment
1013 INT: Ja
1014 But your experiences at Tuks so far how have they been?
1015 P3: Hmm it's good I think it's fine. In terms of how students
behave
1016 or?
1017 INT: So like since you've come here. How have you found it?
Have you
1018 found it easy to mingle with people, to integrate with
people?
1019 Like that kind of a thing?
1020
1021 P3: Ja sure sure, because uhm majority of the students we
interact
1022 with are mostly uhm, I would say, foreign students
1023 INT: Is it?
1024 P3: Ja
1025 INT: Your class particularly or like just all the people that
you
1026 interact with there in engineering?
1027 P3: Cause mostly I interact with my class
1028 INT: Okay
1029 P3: And uh we have a research group so we have an office
1030 INT: Oh

1031 P3: And the office is just full of Chinese, Zambians,
Zimbabweans,
1032 Kenyans
1033 INT: Wow okay
1034 P3: Yeah. We had one South African then he got a job and he
left, so
1035 INT: Hmm okay
1036 P3: And then the people that we come in with mostly for the
1037 scholarship, you know the scholarship gathers from all
over
1038 INT: Oh okay
1039 P3: So to see, to interact with South Africans has been, yoh
1040 (laughing)
1041 INT: (Laughing)
1042 P3: And then you see the guy, the guy that guy, and who else?
And
1043 then the guy that was in our class, like just 2 people.
Those are
1044 the only South Africans
1045 INT: Just 2 people?
1046 P3: Ja. The rest of the guys, I think it's also mostly because
in
1047 class, we don't meet them much
1048 INT: Hmm
1049 P3: They we have (***lock-quicks), you know how UP does with
(***lock-
1050 quicks)?
1051 INT: Yes
1052 P3: So they come and then they go. So we really I really don't
haven't
1053 had time to interact with them much
1054
1055 INT: Wow

Not as much exposure to South Africans
--

1056 P3: I would I'm still really trying to get a South African
friend,
1057 but yeah I wouldn't uh there I can't I can't judge
1058 INT: (*Giggles*). On an everyday basis, what does a day look
like for
1059 you?

1060 P3: A typical day would be me waking up, uh going to the
office, where
1061 we study from, in the electrical department. Interact
with the
1062 people around in the office, mostly Chinese, Kenyans and
the other
1063 people from Rwanda or wherever. And then just come back.
I'm a
1064 typical just introvert. I just go to class come back to
the house,
1065 which (**). And I when we go to parties, mostly its
Kenyan
1066 parties

1067 INT: (*Laughing*)

1068 P3: Or if it's not a Kenyan party, it's a master card organized
party,
1069 and master card has uh yeah South Africans and master
card are a
1070 few. And where sometimes master card will call, ask for
a party,
1071 the South Africans they stay home, so they are mostly at
home

1072 INT: Ja

1073 P3: Now interacting (**)

1074 INT: So you are constantly interacting with

1075 P3: Yeah with the foreigners

1076 INT: With different foreigners

1077 P3: Yeah yeah

Socialises with people outside her normal group- diversity

1078 INT: Okay. Have you found it easy to make friends, I mean
regardless
1079 of where they're from, have you found it easy to?
1080 P3: Yeah, sure sure.
1081 INT: But uh (*giggles*) only interacted with 3 South Africans?
1082 P3: Yeah so far it's just 3 South Africans. Now the other ones
are
1083 from are in church but we are not very close. We are just
hi hi,
1084 but not as close as
1085 INT: Okay. Are your friends uh do you speak a common language
like
1086 English with your friends? Or do you speak a certain
language?
1087 P3: We speak English, mostly English. But the Kenyans of
course we
1088 speak Swahili
1089
1090 INT: Okay
1091 P3: Ja
1092 INT: So, how did you say your lecturers first treated you when
you
1093 arrived here?

1094 P3: Uhh I would say it's okay they were okay. Yeah all of us
were
1095 just (***) (*bird noise*)
1096 INT: There wasn't any?
1097 P3: No, plus they are Chinese (*laughing*)
1098 INT: Your lecturers are Chinese?
1099 P3: Ja
1100 INT: Oh okay
1101 P3: Uhh let me see, no there was one, the first one was
Chinese,
1102 second Indian, third Chinese, fourth Chinese

<p>Exposure to diverse groups in classroom setting</p>
--

1103 INT: No ways
1104 P3: Ja
1105 INT: Why there's so many Chinese there?
1106 P3: I think it's the department. The research group I'm in,
the the
1107 leader of the research group is Chinese. So I think it's
quite
1108 (***tasteful)
1109 INT: Oh okay
1110 P3: So it's sort of neutral
1111 INT: So they were just... okay okay
1112 P3: Yeah
1113 INT: And obviously you still continued that they, what they
still
1114 wanted to know you, they've still treating you the same
way
1115 P3: Ja, yeah. I think also the research group has really had
diverse
1116 people, from South Africans to to Malawi where it's
really been
1117 diverse, so we were really treated neutrally
1118 INT: So have you by any chance started, I mean I know it's
still new
1119 but have you stated to learn a new language?
1120 P3: Uhh, not really, no no no. Cause when I came here, the
first thing
1121 I wanted to do was to learn Zulu, I just like I have to
sing in
1122 Zulu (*giggles*). I do know some few songs but yeah that's
it.
1123 So I'm still trying to learn Zulu
1124 INT: Why Zulu particularly? Many people always say Zulu
1125 P3: I don't know.
1126

1127 INT: There are so many languages but everyone always mentions
Zulu
1128 P3: I don't know I want to learn Zulu but I also want to learn
Venda
1129 cause I hear Venda is almost close to what we speak back
in Kenya.
1130 Like if a Venda person speaks they say that we can hear.
So I've
1131 not really seen somebody but I'm trying to learn Zulu
also
1132 INT: I will send you some words
1133 P3: Ja, yoh, in fact the greetings is, haah cause when you
get into
1134 a taxi, I saw you are supposed to say hi
1135 INT: Yes you must
1136 P3: Yeah
1137 INT: It's just considered rude if you just come in
1138 P3: If you don't, ja and then you don't say hi (*laughing*)
1139 INT: They'll be like "haibo, what's wrong with this one?"
1140 P3: Haah but its been fine it's been fine
1141 INT: And in terms of the actual now degree, how would you uhm
describe
1142 how its been here, have you found it to be easy to adjust
to the
1143 content, or is it been like a bit more of a struggle?
1144 P3: Uh no it's pretty smooth. The struggle I had at first was
1145 concentrating on my studies, because I used to work back
in Kenya,
1146 I worked for about 5 years
1147 INT: Woow 5 years?
1148 P3: Yeah I worked for 5 years before I came here. So, from an
1149 environment of working and I was a (**spanagal), to
sitting down
1150 was hard, but my studies were pretty much okay

Language experiences

1151 INT: So you like studying?
1152 P3: Like, no
1153 INT: Like now that you've gotten into the swing again?
1154 P3: No no
1155 INT: You feel like it's something that you enjoy?
1156 P3: In this phase?
1157 INT: Ja
1158 P3: It's fine but it's a phase, like it has to end
1159 INT: *(Laughing)*
1160 P3: I am not I'm not a, I think I used to be when I was in
undergraduate
1161 uh, but now I really just want to get it done over it
1162 INT: You had to do it, or? I mean cause you say you wanna go
all the
1163 way to PhD level. So do you have to go all the way to
PhD level?
1164 P3: Uhm I do have to go because the reason I want to go there
is so
1165
1166 that I can sort of have more time for myself and my
family. Back
1167 in Kenya where I used to work, depending doesn't matter
where you

1168 were, like whether you're a manager or what, most of the
time you
1169 spend in the company. So, you I will I would work for
almost 12
1170 hours, in the place yeah
1171 INT: Wow
1172 P3: And that is why I just I saw the easy option is one is
not the
1173 easy but the other option for me would be to start my
own company
1174 or start lecturing

Intends

on
going
back
home
to
work

1175 INT: Okay
1176 P3: For me to be able to lecture I need a Masters. I also need
a PhD
1177 to get a better advantage
1178 INT: Exactly
1179 P3: So when I saw that, I work for 4 years and it was at first
it was
1180 fine, but later on you realize you don't have a life. If
I decided
1181 to start a family while working there, I don't think I
would've
1182 given my children enough time. So, for me education is a
chance
1183 for me to do something else apart from adhering to the
to those
1184 12 hours working there
1185 INT: So in terms, your plan is after you finish your PhD is
to go back
1186 home and lecture, or what exactly?
1187 P3: It's to get into employment
1188 INT: Okay
1189 P3: And while doing that, also do the lecturing part time, so
that
1190 it's almost sort of giving me options. If I see that the
1191 employment option doesn't work well for me and my family,
then I
1192 can quit and go and do lecturing because you know
lecturing is
1193 flexible
1194 INT: Exactly, hmm
1195 P3: Yeah so it's just away of me to have options
1196 INT: Okay, but are you you are planning to go back home? Are
you
1197 planning to continue on here?

1198
1199 P3: To?
1200 INT: To continue, like working here in South Africa, or?

1201 P3: That's what that was my plan originally because I really
do love
1202 the country. Yooh I think after, I don't know what
happened, I
1203 don't know I just saw you guys dancing in your clothes,
Zulu
1204 costumes, then I was like "yeah, this country is nice".
But then
1205 uhh I think the reality is, the us, working here is a
process.

1206 INT: Hmm, I suppose
1207 P3: Ja
1208 INT: But what do you mean exactly by that?

1209 P3: Getting the work permits, getting the permanent residency,
and
1210 sometimes we had career fares here. And we would go to
the
1211 companies and ask them, "we are foreigners can we apply?"
Some of
1212 them would just tell us outright, "no". Don't even think
about
1213 applying, because

1214 INT: Wow
1215 P3: Being a foreigner, they say it's hard it's sort of a
burden, so
1216 we were like, "if we get a work permit, then what?" Then
they are
1217 like, "if you get we can consider you", but then they
really don't
1218 give you much hope. The companies that gave us much hope
they

Cultural differences prevalent here
--

1219 were there was (**Lafaj and there was LDB, and there
 was
1220 Helowaisa). Yeah so uhm, it's still is it's something
 that I'm
1221 considering, but you know sometimes home is always best,
 so when
1222 you I see that uhm it's getting hard, then I'll rather
 just go
1223 back. But I'm still trying, I'm still trying
1224 INT: Let's see what will happen
1225 P3: Ja
1226 INT: So, in terms of a support system here, do you have people
 that
1227 you can go to if you've had a long day or a hard day or?
1228 P3: Hmm, ja sure sure
1229 INT: Well then and those are?
1230 P3: Uhm my boyfriend is here
1231 INT: Okay
1232
1233 P3: Uhh, basically I would say him because you know friends?
 Okay I
1234 really tend to judge a lot, I don't know. But getting
 somebody to
1235 actually trust is not an easy thing to do So I keep in
 touch with
1236 my friends back in Kenya. Yeah we talk a lot, and those
 are the
1237 ones that I can actually rely on much, but here of course
 I do
1238 have friends just normal friends
1239 INT: But it's not that confiding kind of a friendship, where
 you tell?
1240 P3: No here, here no. It's just my boyfriend

1241 INT: And would you say, you just mentioned your friends now,
has your
1242 relationship with your friends uh back at home changed
in any
1243 way, now that you're not there anymore?
1244 P3: Yeah yeah
1245 INT: Do you see a difference?

1246 P3: Yeah it does because we sort of lose touch on the common
things
1247 we used to have. Back in Kenya, you're close to somebody
and the
1248 things that are happening around you are common
1249 INT: Yes
1250 P3: So you sort of have things to talk about, to catch up
about and
1251 stuff. But then when you're far away, even the timing
sometimes
1252 to talk, the issue that you guys can talk about,
sometimes they
1253 fade away so I've sort of remained with those friends
that I was
1254 with really really close to. Yeah but the rest they sort
of follow

1255 INT: Hmm.
1256 P3: We'll make new ones when we go back, or we'll get the ones
that
1257 we get here, you know
1258 INT: You've only been here, 7, 8?
1259 P3: 8 months
1260 INT: 8 months, you know, so you'd make a whole new set of
friends
1261 P3: Yeah yeah, and I'm beginning to make new friends, I mean
it's
1262 it's interesting though

Studying in touch with friends from home

1263 INT: So in terms of actual, the friends friends, are they
mostly the
1264 ones there at the research uh office?
1265 P3: No
1266
1267 INT: Or you have outside friends as well?
1268 P3: (*Giggles*), outside friends outside friends
1269 INT: Oh okay
1270 P3: Outside friends because the ones in there are mostly there
are
1271 people who are doing post-doctoral, I don't know those
things you
1272 know, PhD and then
1273 INT: Yes and then you go after your PhD

Process

1274 P3: (Laughing), so really of talking about here. So most of
them are
1275 the ones that we were in the same class with, the others
they're
1276 in the same class with, and others we just meet around
in the
1277 corridors
1278 INT: So do you think like living like in a place like this
where there
1279 is a lot of like students, has it helped you to actually
make
1280 friends, better than like living in a normal flat that's
a bit
1281 further on, like in Sunnyside, where there's more workers
and
1282 stuff?
1283 P3: Yeah yeah it does help. I think if you're new, in a place,
you'd
1284 rather get like live in a place where there's more
people, and
1285 then after that you can move forward
1286 INT: Ja
1287 P3: I can imagine of you're new and you just go live on your
own wooh
1288 you can die of isolation because how you... unless you make
friends
1289 at work, which is possible
1290 INT: Ja it's possible
1291 And how would you describe your personal like learning
uh process?
1292 Like how do you learn best? Like in your studies, and
all of that?
1293 P3: How I learn best is hmm in isolation, I like studying
alone. And

of making friends

1294 then I like also having discussions with my friends,
 which is

1295 what we normally do when we have an assignment. I do the
 readings

1296 then later on go have a discussion, or consult, there is
 no person

1297 to discuss with

1298 INT: Hmm

1299 P3: Yeah

1300 INT: And do you think your learning processing has evolved
 from when

1301

1302 you started in undergrad to now?

1303 P3: Hmm, okay not too much. I think what we used to do in
 undergraduate

1304 is what we are doing pretty much here. Yeah study and
 then go

1305 discuss

1306 INT: Ja

1307 P3: It's only that now we have more resources, to use

1308 INT: Ja. That is all that I have for you, thank you so much

Independent

student

Key

Academic experiences

Social experiences

Financial themes

Specific themes

P4 TRANSCRIPT

P4 = Participant 4

INT = The Interviewer

1309 INT: But is your course treating you okay?
1310 P4: Uhh I just went through a really really tough week
but
1311 otherwise ...
1312
1313 INT: Is it?

1314 P4: Great ja
1315 INT: Engineering week?
1316 P4: No, engineering week was last week but uh with
architecture you
1317 don't really follow the engineering week, ja
1318 INT: Oh okay, I thought that everybody just, who's under
Faculty
1319 P4: Ja. I think it's uh mainly the engineer ones cause
even the
1320 information people don't always follow engineering
week
1321 INT: Is it?
1322 P4: Ja
1323 INT: You are teaching me new information today, that I
did not know
1324 P4: (*Giggles*) Ja because sometimes we'll be stressing our
lives and
1325 then the engineers are just chilling (*giggles*)
1326 INT: I think it's so nice they get a week where you just
do all the
1327 tests, and the rest of the time you can just do ...
1328 P4: ... Ja your normal stuff

Engineering student

1329 INT: Because honestly having to do like test today, 2
weeks another
1330 test, and then 1 day after that it's another test.
It's
1331 annoying
1332 P4: Ja and this time it's routine (*giggles*)
1333 INT: Exactly, uhhh. But uh, it's okay if I call you by
your first name right?
1334 P4: Ja
1335 INT: Okay
1336 P4: No problem

1337 INT: And how old are you?
1338 P4: I'm 20
1339 INT: Uhh so... Did you just turn 20?
1340 P4: No I turned 20 in Jan but I still (believe) (*giggles*)
1341 INT: Are you still used to that 18, 17? ...
1342 P4: ... Ja the teens, yes
1343 INT: (*Giggles*) Oh my God I think now that... cause I'm
gonna turn 26
1344 this year, now I'm facing 30 I'm so scared to say
the word "30"
1345
1346 P4: ... "30" ja (*giggles*)
1347 INT: But I, but I digress. what languages do you speak at
home?
1348 P4: Uhh French
1349 INT: French, uhh you only speak French?
1350 P4: Uh French and then I think because we spend so much
time in
1351 South Africa, but with my siblings sometimes we will
start
1352 talking in English, especially ja when we talk about
(2

Very young, only 20

1353 tutoring) stuff, or if we have friends that are at
home we'll
1354 speak in English
1355 INT: So you said siblings, you have siblings here in
like? ...
1356 P4: ... In South Africa
1357 INT: Are they anywhere...everywhere in South Africa, or
Pretoria?
1358 P4: They are all in Johannesburg
1359 INT: Oh okay. You are all by yourself here? (*giggles*)
1360 P4: I'm here (*giggles*)
1361 INT: So why did you choose to come to Tuks then?
1362 P4: To Tuks? Uhm because uhh I think I wanted to like
change a
1363 little bit from staying at home all the time
1364 INT: Ja
1365 P4: And also I quite like the department here, so that's
why I
1366 chose
1367 INT: Did you go and do like your research, like on
different
1368 faculties at Wits, UJ?
1369 P4: It is that I wanted to do architecture
1370 INT: Ja
1371 P4: That was with my first choice everywhere, so I
applied to the
1372 ones that are I thought had a potentially good like
1373 architecture department
1374 INT: Ja
1375 P4: And uh I actually came for the open day just to check
it out a
1376 bit more, and I quite like the vibe here, so I was
like "okay
1377 why not"?

1378 INT: Not a lot of students actually do their research
hey, they just
1379 go "well..."
1380
1381 P4: ... Whoever takes me (*giggles*)
1382 INT: Whoever takes me at this point (*giggles*)
1383 P4: Ja I kind of like to look into things before
1384 INT: Yeah
1385 P4: Just to get a decision
1386 INT: You really should though, well like you sitting
there you like
1387 "uhh I should've gone there or I should've..."
1388 P4: Hmm but I'm starting to see quite a lot of benefits
from coming
1389 to UP for architecture
1390 INT: Really?
1391 P4: Yes, because uhh the way they structure the course,
because we
1392 are a part of the uhm of the engineering faculty,
uhm so we are
1393 actually are diploma and there is a BSc, and uh
compared to the
1394 others which is not a BSc and then since we doing
BSc
1395 architecture, uh we have quit a few modules that are
quite uhh
1396 either engineering orientated or biology type of
orientated, so
1397 we have quite a balance of everything
1398 INT: It's very diverse cause then now you doing the
building stuff
1399 and then a bit of biology, that's very very nice.
And now my
1400 pen falls to the ground weeeeeh. Okay

1401 And how long have you been in South Africa?
1402 P4: Yoh! okay I think it's going quite 10 years now
1403 INT: What? 10 years? Woow so you've been here full time
 10 years?

1404 P4: On and off 10 years, but 4 years full time
1405 INT: So you went and did your schooling here and all of
 that?
1406 P4: Yeah

1407 INT: Okay cool. And you've gotten have you gotten your
 permanent
1408 residence?
1409 P4: Uhm no when we arrived, we directly applied for that
 bit we are still waiting
1410 INT: Alright, so what were your reasons for coming to
 South Africa?
1411 P4: To South Africa? Uhh the thing is that my dad retired a
 year ago, because
1412 he was working in a uhh an African branch of the UN,
 and then
1413 uh when he retired he ... he tired he was trying to see
 where we
1414 should go because since we've been moving all the time
 cause of
1415 his job, he was trying to see where we could settle
 down. My
1416
1417 siblings are all older than me, so uh my brothers were
 already
1418 in University, 1 of them was in University, the other
 one was

Has
been in
the
country
for long
periods
(family
presence
in SA).
But not
full time
– thus
meet
criteria

1419 uh I think he was doing his matric before going to
 (UST), and
1420 my sister was in Grade I think she was finishing Grade
 10
1421 INT: Hmm

1422 P4: Uhm yes, so and I was quite little (*giggles*) still
1423 INT: So you used to it here?
1424 P4: Ja so he was trying to see a country where we could
 settle down
1425 because back home uh you know, uh the home country, is
 quite
1426 difficult to settle down in terms of schooling and
 University
1427 and things because with sometimes there's civil war and
 then as
1428 well some things happen
1429 INT: Hmm
1430 P4: So it's hard to have a proper life, ja. So that's how he
 he
1431 came a few times to South Africa during one of his work
 things,
1432 so he was like "uhh maybe we should go there", and then
 you
1433 guys can settle down, do your stuff without worrying ja
1434 INT: Okay. And uhh you from Chad is it?
1435 P4: From Chad
1436 INT: I have literally never met someone from Chad. You are
 the first
1437 person
1438 P4: (*Giggles*) Ja not a lot of people know people from Chad,
 it's
1439 quite small
1440 INT: How are the people in Chad?
1441 P4: Uhhh?

Chad – marked with violence. Reason for move

1442 INT: How are the people in Chad?

1443 P4: People in Chad uh they're quite uh I would say interest...
like
1444 they are quite open I would say

1445 INT: Ja

1446 P4: Uhm usually they they quite like foreigners so there's
no issue
1447 with that. But it it's between themselves that there's
1448 (*giggles*) tension between the...
1449

1450 INT: Really?

1451 P4: Ja because of especially between North and South, that
tension
1452 of cultures always ja

1453 INT: Oh okay, hmm. So it's like uh ethnic divides?

1454 P4: Ethnic divides ja

1455 INT: Okay

1456 P4: So the ethnic groups that are quite close to each other,
for
1457 example like my mom's ethnic group and my dad's ethnic
group,
1458 uhm they're quite like similar uh overall, even though
1459 sometimes the language some things are different and
things
1460 like that, but uh overall they're okay. Well there
might be
1461 another one like a little bit up uhh (after chereef
river) that
1462 they have a different group also over there, and its
quite
1463 different. But I think the major major opposites are
North and
1464 South, because the South is mainly very more like
African

<p>Conflict theme continues</p>

1465 culture like the what, want to say African culture,
 let's say
1466 more of the Cameroon, not Cameroon but let's say ...
1467 INT: ... How do you say, is it Chadian? (*giggles*)
1468 P4: Ja uh let me say this way. The North is more of an
 Arabic type
1469 of culture, having more Muslim and Arabic and then the
 South is
1470 different
1471 INT: Oh okay. It's like Nigeria

1472 P4: Hmm?
1473 INT: Cause Nigeria's also has the North is like more like
 uhh
1474 there's more Muslims and stuff like that
1475 P4: Hmm mm, it's that tension
1476 INT: Yeah
1477 P4: But it's also cause of colonization, I think that's what
1478 different at
1479 INT: Hmm yeah the troubles of Africa always doubting that
 hey
1480 P4: (*Laughing*)
1481 INT: Okay so your mother and your father are from the North
 or the
1482
1483 South?
1484 P4: From the South
1485 INT: Both of them are from the South?
1486 P4: Yes
1487 INT: Okay. Okay cool. So have you ever went and studied
 anywhere
1488 else either than here?
1489 P4: Yes
1490 INT: Okay
1491 P4: Uhh most of our life we stayed in Ethiopia

Has studied elsewhere, has experienced different cultures – impacts on observations made of SA
--

1492 INT: Oh okay
 1493 P4: Ja and then we moved to Rwanda afterwards, and then from
 Rwanda
 1494 we moved here
 1495 INT: Jeesh you moved around hey
 1496 P4: (*Laughing*)
 1497 INT: And how was it? How was it studying in Ethiopia and
 Rwanda?
 1498 P4: Uhm Ethiopia, I was quite little cause when we left
 there I was
 1499 only 7
 1500
 1501 INT: Okay
 1502 P4: Uhm but uh it was also an experience it's a different
 type of
 1503 uh because Ethiopia is all the way to the East and uh
 the
 1504 culture as well is very different. They have their own
 they're
 1505 very individualistic so it's a it's as if you go there
 you like
 1506 "wow it's another bubble"
 1507 INT: Hmm
 1508 P4: Uhm so it was quite interesting actually to study there,
 but we
 1509 uhh throughout our lives we were always in the French
 system or
 1510 the or a French speaking school
 1511 INT: Okay
 1512 P4: Uhm so we didn't know exactly how the schooling outside
 of that
 1513 was, in Ethiopia
 1514 INT: Okay

Exposed to
 French
 teaching
 system.

Influence
 on
 language
 experience?

1515 P4: Uhm but it was fun it was interesting, and then moving
to
1516 Rwanda, uhm I think what was really nice there was uhm,
the
1517 people are very friendly in Rwanda and uh it's a very
nice
1518 country in terms of its uh location like the region
where it is
1519 in
1520
1521 INT: Yes, ja
1522 P4: Also the temperature, the climate, everything is just
very like
1523 tropical but it's not like that harsh tropical, its
that nice
1524 tropical yes fine apples and everything
1525 INT: (*Giggles*) Argh it's nice (***)
1526 P4: Yeah it's a very like small country but very interesting
in its
1527 own way, ja
1528 INT: Okay. And so when you came to South Africa, what would
you say
1529 were your initial perceptions about South Africa as a
country?
1530 P4: As a country?
1531 INT: Ja
1532 P4: Uhm before coming, uh I had a friend who was in the same
school
1533 as me in Rwanda, and uhh she so for holidays her family
used to
1534 come here quite often, so they she used she used to
bring me
1535 back uhh like pictures and things like that, I was like
"that

1536 looks so nice, it doesn't look like Africa at all"
 (laughing)
 1537 INT: *(Laughing)*, is it?
 1538 P4: Yes cause we were used to like dust and uh you know this
 type
 1539 of environment where your roads are not always tarred
 and
 1540 things like that you don't have shopping malls
 necessarily. You
 1541 have the market place and that's it. So we were like "oh
 wow

 1542 this it looks really different it looks like Europe"
 1543 INT: *(Giggles)*
 1544 P4: And then the other part her other friends were like "oh
 but if
 1545 you go to South Africa, be careful of insecurity,
 insecurity,
 1546 xenophobia" *(laughing)*
 1547 INT: They told you, you must know what's gonna happen
 1548 P4: So when we came here, we were very like "can we go out of
 the
 1549 house, do we lock all the doors, everything everything".
 1550 And then we like guys we are becoming paranoid, this is
 not
 1551 right
 1552
 1553 INT: It's not a way to live
 1554 P4: Yeah exactly. Everywhere there is insecurity, it's not
 only
 1555 South Africa. Okay crime levels are high but still we
 can't
 1556 just be living (***), so we relaxed quite a bit and
 (giggles)
 1557 INT: Eventually

Views on South Africa
1551- 1556

1558 P4: Yeah and you realize that it's there's a they make it way
1559 bigger than what it actually is. Well it is an issue but
not
1560 "woooow don't go there"
1561 INT: So is it like reported a lot on uh in like Rwanda,
Ethiopia? Is
1562 it something that you see all the time on the news?
1563 P4: ... On the news (*giggles*), not necessarily on the news or
maybe
1564 it's cause I was quite little so I didn't always really
check the
1565 news. Uhm but mainly from family friends or things like
that, ja
1566 INT: (**For like South Africa, hmm okay okay
1567 P4: (*Giggles*) okay okay
1568 INT: I get you I get you. And in terms of actual South
Africans, what
1569 did you think about South Africans?
1570 P4: South Africans themselves?
1571 INT: Ja
1572 P4: Let's say uh, what I found interesting, but I guess it
happens
1573 everywhere, is that as soon as you're black, people think
that
1574 you know the language directly
1575 INT: Jaa
1576 P4: So then they'll directly speak to you, and if you like
that you
1577 show that you can't really communicate, they'll either
think 2
1578 things; okay you're a foreigner that's fine, or they'll
be like
1579 oh she's rude she thinks that she can she'd only speak
English,

1580 and she doesn't wanna speak her home language. But I feel
it's
1581 not my fault, I just literally don't know, but I'm trying
to learn
1582 (giggles)
1583 INT: Yeah I get what you're saying I get what you're saying.
So you
1584 are trying to learn? What are you trying to learn
exactly?
1585 P4: Uhm well we, my sister and I, well actually all my
siblings, my

1586 parents are like since we are living here for a long
time, you
1587 guys better learn, so uhm ja we took some lessons, but
then it
1588 was difficult to follow with school work and things like
that, so
1589 INT: Ja
1590
1591 P4: But I tried again when I came to University last, last
year. We
1592 have we have this space in our uhm schedule where we need
to take
1593 something from outside of our faculty
1594 INT: That's good
1595 P4: For one thing, so it can be anything cause they want us
to
1596 experience different stuff. So I decided to go in the
language
1597 side because I like languages so I took siZulu for like
uh first
1598 semester
1599 INT: Nice! Okay, and now that you've been here for a while
and you've

Willingness

to learn

local

languages

1600 experienced it, what would you say you think of South
Africa and
1601 South Africans?
1602 P4: As a whole?
1603 INT: Ja
1604 P4: Let's see. I really like the country to be honest, cause
uh it
1605 has lots of opportunities
1606 INT: Ja
1607 P4: Compared to a place like Ethiopia for example where if
you're a
1608 foreigner, its difficult to do your own thing. Uhm like
you can't
1609 own a house, you can't own a business, things like that.
Well
1610 here in South Africa, as long as you have the right
paper, you're
1611 in order and everything, you can you are allowed you have
more
1612 freedom to do whatever you need
1613 INT: That's nice
1614 P4: Uhm so ja. It's quite a nice country to be in. And people
are
1615 also really helpful, so
1616 INT: Really? So you found in general that people are more
helpful than
1617 you thought they would be?
1618 P4: Yeah. Sometimes there is this barrier of, okay, cause for
example
1619 I didn't have an ID for a long time, because uhm my all
my siblings
1620 when they came they had the right age to have an ID
already, so

1621 they managed to do that my parents as well, but I was
 too young
1622 to get an ID. I only got my ID actually this year, because
 uhm
1623 well everybody else I think got theirs like at 16. Is it
 16?
1624 INT: Yes it's 16
1625 P4: It's 16, yes. So that was kind of stopping me a lot of
 the time
1626
1627 because I had to always have my passport papers with me

1628 INT: Hmm
1629 P4: And then uhh, there are things I couldn't do cause it
 blocked me
1630 if I didn't have an ID, so that was a little bit
 difficult. But
1631 uhh either than that, uhh (***)
1632 INT: I can imagine that you wanna do this but uhhh, oh sorry
1633 P4: Even now because I register with the University with my
 passport
1634 right?
1635 INT: Ja
1636 P4: So when I wanna get the Fundi card and everything, my
 passport
1637 doesn't go through (*giggles*)
1638 INT: That can cause you a lot of anxiety hey
1639 P4: And I was like oh well, it's not like life and death, so
 its fine
1640 INT: Ja. But I can imagine if that's your only way like,
 that's what
1641 you need to get your like your laptop or whatever, then
 they like
1642 "sorry, no"

Struggles with registering as an international student

1643 P4: (Giggles). Even for my drivers, it was a hassle because I
had to
1644 go the long way round just to get the paper that tells
me, "okay
1645 she is allowed to do it because her passport is valid"
(giggles).
1646 So it's a lot of paper work
1647 INT: Ja
1648 P4: Uhm ja
1649 INT: Ja I can imagine. And now how would you describe your
institutions
1650 here at Tuks?
1651 P4: At Tuks?
1652 INT: Ja
1653 P4: Uhm in terms of?
1654 INT: In terms of like, let's say if you're looking at it from
a point
1655 of view of when you came to University, you had ideas of
what
1656 University would be like and how you'd be treated and
all of that.
1657 And obviously now that you've been here for like what, a
year and
1658 8 months, how have you found that reality like okay now
I'm living
1659
1660 now I'm here, going to class everyday, uhh I'm making
friends,
1661 I'm doing all these things. How has that journey been
like for
1662 you?
1663 P4: Uhm I would say when I started University I didn't know
what to
1664 expect at all. I was like, okay

1665 INT: You didn't have any expectations?

1666 P4: I was like I don't know what it is like, I only know in
high
1667 school, so uhm it's about going into the unknown. And
then I
1668 couldn't really ask my siblings cause they haven't been
to
1669 University here at Tuks, and then they studied way
different
1670 things that I'm going to study. So they can't be like,
"okay you
1671 gonna do this that", but it will be different
1672 INT: It's not going to be the same
1673 P4: And none of them went to the same University as well, so
all of
1674 them had different experiences (*giggles*)
1675 INT: Which is great
1676 P4: Ja. So I was like, okay especially that I'm alone here,
let's see
1677 how it goes. Uh, but uhm I think what made it quite a
nice
1678 transition was perhaps res, because uhm at least it gave
that
1679 little bit of, "okay you have a place to go back to, and
you have
1680 people, faces that you kinda know when you go back in
your
1681 apartment, you know people.
1682 INT: Yes
1683 P4: And the transition into your care, people can actually
direct you
1684 and be like, okay so you'll have this and the
registration process

Easy to make friends for this participant

1685 it wasn't that hectic. Uhm and overall I guess the
transition
1686 goes quite fast, and then as soon as you start with
school, you're
1687 going
1688 INT: You're going
1689 P4: Ja
1690 INT: It's classes all the time
1691 P4: Classes, everything like that. I did think I was going to
get a
1692 bit more free time but no (*giggles*)
1693 INT: So tell me, how does a day for you look like when you're
on
1694 campus, how does it look like, what do you get up to?
1695 P4: Usually all our classes start like at half past 8, and
then
1696 usually our faculty is let's say 60% practical work and
40% all
1697 the rest
1698
1699 INT: Wow
1700 P4: So you spend most of your time in the studio, or doing
your
1701 practical things
1702 INT: Okay
1703 P4: The thing is that your 40% that is left, if you neglect
that then
1704 it can cost you a lot
1705 INT: Hmm
1706 P4: So they'll refer you to presidents, maybe for those
people's votes and things like that to look at. But they won't try
it necessarily, well
1707 sometimes they do but you see they attempt not to change
1708 you're coming from

Daily schedule

1709 INT: So you've seen have you seen your design style evolve
since you've
1710 been uhm since your first year to now?
1711 P4: Uhm I guess so, uh I think now I'm starting to see more
into the
1712 details of the rules, even though I'm not a really
detailed person
1713 cause if I did I was going to perhaps choose interior
cause they
1714 focus a lot on detail, the presentation
1715 INT: It's all about presentation
1716 P4: I'm not an interior person at all. I didn't choose
landscape
1717 because I felt that it was going to be uhm too funneled
at the
1718 beginning. I'd rather do the normal one, the general one
then
1719 afterwards maybe, if I really want to
1720 INT: So interior and (***) they fall under architecture?
1721 P4: Yes because what happened is that uhm in first year, we
apparently
1722 the only South African University who have landscape
architecture
1723 in undergrad, all the others it's a postgrad thing. Uhm
so
1724 interior architecture also quite a very recent thing in
South
1725 Africa, uhm but they put in their architecture cause it's
1726 different than interior design, uh cause they focus more
on, they
1727 use architectural principles to do what they do
1728 INT: Okay
1729 P4: So the interior architecture, in first year, it's like

1730 engineering, everybody does the same thing. So whether
you chose
1731
1732 landscape wharawhara, everybody does the same thing,
cause they
1733 need to put you all on the same level
1734 INT: Have the same base?
1735 P4: Yeah same base, the teach you the same thing, then after
do it.
1736 So from second year onwards you follow which ever you
choose, uh
1737 then you have landscape of architecture, then you have
interior
1738 INT: Okay. So you just a normal
1739 P4: Ja the general, we never know how to call it because we
like
1740 normal, and the others are like, so we not normal
1741 INT: *(Laughing)*
1742 P4: We even decided to call ourselves the normal, not normal
cause we
1743 didn't know what to call or we call it general I guess
1744 INT: Ja
1745 P4: Our first year studio march...
1746 INT: So the open one, the open one?
1747 P4: Ja a studio march there last year used to call
"architecture", he
1748 used to always do movements, "architecture" was
everybody. And
1749 then "architecture" is the *(laughing)*
1750 INT: Oh so you guys are like the
1751 P4: The architecture, and then the architecture
1752 INT: Its so very cool
1753 And how many people are in your class cause it seems like
it's a

1754 very small group?
1755 P4: Uhm last year we were 88, and then there were people who
 dropped
1756 out and the people will do other stuff. But this year,
1757 architecture, we're supposed to be 54, even though there
 are some
1758 people I haven't seen in forever
1759 INT: *(Giggles)*
1760 P4: They just appear when its time to give work then disappear
 again
1761 INT: Ja
1762 P4: So we are supposed to be 54, and then interior, I think
 they are
1763 like 7, and landscape I think they are 11
1764 INT: That's very small hey
1765 P4: Its very small. Normally the department accepts a 100
 people in
1766 total
1767 INT: Oh okay
1768
1769 P4: Uhh but then, people do not come or go to other
 Universities or
1770 things like that. Uhh but usually have space for 25 in
 interior,
1771 25 in landscape, and 50 for architecture
1772 INT: Ja
1773 P4: And the thing is that a lot of people fell back, didn't
 decide to
1774 continue, or changed courses or some people never showed
 up. Uhm
1775 then a lot of the interior people are not there, and a
 lot of the
1776 landscape as well
1777 INT: Its very little

1778 P4: Yeah its very little, compared to they were supposed to
be 25 but
1779 now you have 11 people
1780 INT: That's ja, less than half
1781 P4: Yes, and the architecture we are 54 because a few people
that
1782 were in landscape and interior decided to switch to
architecture,
1783 and they were like no, it's just 4 more people, it's okay
1784 INT: Hmm
1785 Okay, so how would you describe then your learning
process?
1786 Like how do you study best?
1787 P4: How do I study best?
1788 INT: Ja
1789 P4: Haah, it actually depends on what the work is, which
module it
1790 is, and uh how intense and difficult it is (*laughing*)
1791 INT: How do you know you need to be intense then in that
module?
1792 P4: Intense?
1793 INT: Ja
1794
1795 P4: Okay. Sometimes if its uh, like if they are all intense
their own
1796 way, but I guess it depends how far I am from finishing
it
1797 INT: Hmm
1798 P4: For example, if uhh just in the time I need to get it done
as
1799 well. Uh so for design for example, I'm always like
rushing
1800 because (***) (*laughing*)
1801 INT: Ja

Academic experiences

1802 P4: Well that's because I'm a very slow designer, like I take
time
1803 and be like, "okay but if I do this maybe this will
work", I think
1804 I over-analyze and then I'm like, oh but
1805 INT: I won't finish this thing
1806 P4: Exactly. So, I think I'll need to reach decisions faster
but
1807 that's my own thing now
1808 INT: Yeah
1809 P4: So for design, usually, uhm when it's the beginning phase,
it's
1810 more relaxed because it's more idea phase and things like
that.
1811 So usually the last week where it's all about production,
1812 production, production, so that's where everybody shuts
1813 themselves somewhere and just produce produce produce
produce
1814 INT: No talking
1815 P4: Ja no talking, just go. Uhm and then for the other modules,
I
1816 like to usually study uhm like sit at a desk and properly
do my
1817 notes, and focus that way. I know that last year I used
to study
1818 a lot in the library but I can't remember why
1819 INT: *(Laughing)*
1820 P4: Because this year, I'm not going there at all
1821 INT: So you don't like the library at all?
1822 P4: I think maybe I got tired of always having to do the
distance
1823 INT: Ja, it's such a big distance hey

1824 P4: Because sometimes uhm there are that, I know I used to
carry like
1825 lots of files and I was okay with carrying them, but I
don't know
1826 why this year not so much. Uhm and I think maybe last
year I
1827 didn't concentrate as much in my room, as I did there.
But this
1828 year I managed to really concentrate in my room. So I
guess I
1829 really didn't need to
1830 INT: Evolution! Good
1831 P4: Yeah, I don't need to go back anymore, and I know that
sometimes
1832 I used to stay till very late, and I didn't enjoy just
walking
1833 back in the middle of the night, and like at 1 o' clock
walking
1834
1835 back. So I was like okay maybe I should find a way to
just study
1836 there
1837 INT: And make it work in your room, so that you don't have to
walk.
1838 Makes sense
1839 So overall you'd say you are enjoying your degree then?
1840 P4: I am, even though this year I was like, "why am I doing
this?"
1841 Then I'll be like, "go back". Actually I reached that
point where
1842 I was like, why are you doing this again. Usually it
never lasts,
1843 it is just like a few hours of honouring, "why am I doing
this.

Academic experiences

1844 If I wasn't doing architectural, what would I be doing?"
Like girl
1845 you wouldn't be doing anything, so just
1846 INT: (*Laughing*), just keep going
1847 P4: Just keep going. You're like, "do you wanna do engineering?"
Ah
1848 no, okay, then that's what you're doing".
1849 INT: Ja exactly
1850 P4: Even though engineering was my second choice, but then
since
1851 architecture, I was like "yey", I'm like, "okay". And
now when I
1852 listen to my engineering friends, I'm like "yoh okay, I
really
1853 don't wanna be doing calculus all the time"
1854 INT: Ja. So you're happy with your choice? Okay cool
1855 And if you had a opportunity to choose again, or even
maybe
1856 recommend another international student to come to Tuks,
would
1857 you do that?
1858 P4: Yes, I would actually. Uhm there's quite, well some
people I
1859 know, there's quite a few people actually who are
international
1860 students. And uhm I'm quite okay, so
1861 INT: You even integrated well
1862 P4: I think so
1863 INT: Ja, you have integrated very well, better
1864 P4: Uh I've been here for quite a long time. Uhm a lot of
them
1865
1866 actually just only came to South Africa to study, so
they

1867 haven't been here that long. But it seems like they are
 fine
1868 INT: Hmm
1869 P4: Even some of them, know places that I haven't been before
1870 INT: "Like what are you talking about?"
1871 P4: Exactly, I'm like "woow". So I guess when you come you
 just,
1872 and if you meet the right people and you have the right
 attitude
1873 I guess it works
1874 INT: That's very true. A right attitude is everything
1875 Okay. That was the last question for you. Thank you so
 much

Key

Academic experiences

Social experiences

Specific themes