



INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
**FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT
SCIENCES**

Title: Exploring Social Capital and its Contribution to Student Success at the

University of the Western Cape

By Wiedaad Dollie

9280524

**A mini-thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Development Studies at the Institute for Social Development, Faculty of
Economic and Management Sciences, University of the Western Cape**

Supervisor: Professor Amiena Bayat

Date: December 2021

Abstract

Development in education has been a focus area for decades, with theorists and researchers pursuing ways in which to understand the varying outcomes achieved in the South African higher education landscape. This is especially relevant in a context where education is identified as a key determinant for the promise of a better life for individuals. In South Africa, however, acquiring a tertiary education is not a straightforward pursuit.

Throughput and retention factors for students who come from low-resourced backgrounds remain a key challenge for universities. Establishing and working towards a solution requires a mindful and structured approach both from an institutional and student support perspective. As a resource produced by and essentially focused on people, social environments and the utilisation of shared resources, social capital may offer a solution that can contribute towards solving some of these challenges, especially if focused on understanding and developing student success factors at university.

This study used a mixed methods approach to understand how social capital impacts on the success of students at the University of the Western Cape, and specifically how students' informal and formal networks contribute towards improving the educational experiences and outcomes of students. Against the added pressure of remote learning enforced by COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on access to the campus, the study found that students' access to social capital is playing a significant role in enabling them to cope with both the psycho-social and academic challenges of academic study.

UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

Keywords: Social capital, Student support, Networks, Student engagement, University, Success, Bonding-, Linking-, Bridging social capital, Socio-economic status.

Declaration

I declare that '*Exploring Social Capital and its Contribution to Student Success at the University of the Western Cape*' is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination to any other university and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated or acknowledged by complete references.

Full Name: Wiedaad Dollie

Date: December 2021

Signature:



Dedication

This mini-thesis is dedicated to my sister Nuhraan who passed away in August 2017—you are forever in my heart.



Acknowledgements

To the Divine with whom all things begin and end. I am eternally grateful for everything bestowed upon me.

Words cannot express my love and gratitude to my parents. Shukran for all the love and the sacrifices you have made.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Institute for Social Development at the University of the Western Cape for the academic and personal support shown to me. A special thanks to Priscilla Kippie for always going the extra mile—you have a heart of gold.

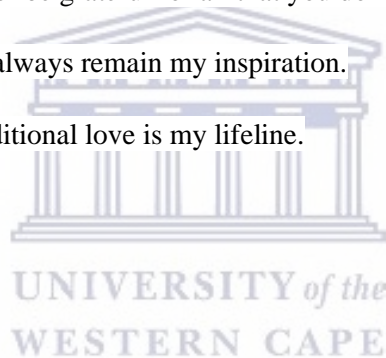
To my supervisor, Professor Amiena Bayat—I deeply appreciate all your kindness, support and guidance during this journey. Thank you for believing in me.

Thank you Nazeem Lowe for your editorial contribution.

To my husband Rifat—I will forever be grateful for all that you do for me.

To my children—you are and will always remain my inspiration.

To Zurayda—your ongoing unconditional love is my lifeline.

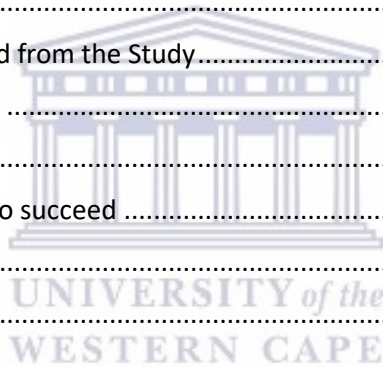


Contents

Abstract	i
Declaration	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
List of Figures.....	1
List of Tables.....	1
List of Abbreviations.....	2
Chapter 1: Introduction and Background	3
1.1 Introduction	3
1.2 Problem Statement.....	4
1.3 Research Questions	5
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	5
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	6
1.6 Structure of the Thesis.....	6
Chapter 2: Literature Review	8
2.1	8
Introduction	8
2.2 Defining Social Capital	9
2.3 Types of Social Capital	11
2.4 Human Capital and Social Capital.....	12
2.5 Social Ties.....	14
2.6 The Social Significance of Networks	14
2.7 Social Capital in Family and Community.....	15
2.8 Social Capital in Education	15
2.9 Family Social Capital and Academic Success	17
2.10 Key Aspects in the Literature relevant to Social Capital.....	18
2.10.1 Forms of social capital for community college students.....	18
2.10.2 The value of relational networks, social trust and norms	19
2.10.3 Social network, social capital and social support	20
2.10.4 The local context.....	21
2.10.5 Student engagement and pre-university factors	22
2.10.6 Students' pre-university admission pathways.....	22
2.10.7 The value of culture	24
2.10.8 The functional and structural components of social capital	25
2.10.9 Critique, methodological issues and gaps in the literature on social capital	25

2.10.10 Barriers to social capital in education	26
Chapter 3: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework.....	28
3.1 Introduction	28
3.2 Tinto’s Integration Model.....	28
3.3 Key insights from Tinto’s integration theory	30
3.4 Leach and Zepke’s Conceptual Organiser.....	31
Chapter 4: Methodology.....	35
4.1 Introduction	35
4.2 Research Design.....	35
4.3 Research Methodology.....	35
4.4 Mixed Methods Approach	36
4.5 Quantitative Research Approach.....	37
4.6 Data Collection Methods	37
4.7 Quantitative Data Collection	38
4.7.1 Semi-structured questionnaires	38
4.7.2 Population.....	39
4.8 Sampling.....	39
4.9 Ethical considerations.....	40
4.9.1 Informed consent and voluntary participation	40
4.9.2 Protection from harm and right of privacy.....	40
4.10 Limitations of the Study.....	40
Chapter 5: Findings and Recommendations	42
5.1 Introduction	42
5.2 Networks and Groups	42
5.2.1 Formal and informal networks	42
5.3 Quantitative Data Presentation.....	43
5.3.1 Section A: Formal networks.....	43
5.3.2 Characteristics of groups	46
5.3 Bridging Social Capital.....	48
5.4 Types of Social Capital	49
5.5 Section B: Informal Networks	50
5.5.1 Social network descriptions.....	50
5.6 Section C: Peer Characteristics	53
5.7 Section D: Academic Support on Campus	54
5.8 Section E: COVID-19 Context	56
5.9 Qualitative Data Presentation	59

5.9.1 Belonging and connectedness	59
5.9.2 Mutual trust	61
5.9.3 The relationship between trust and social capital	61
5.9.4 Improved coping skills	63
5.9.5 Emotional support received from networks	63
5.9.6 Networking opportunities	65
5.9.7 Academic achievement.....	67
5.10	68
Concluding Remarks	68
Chapter 6: Discussion, Analysis and Recommendations	69
6.1 Introduction	69
6.2 Discussion of Research Question 4.....	69
6.2.1 Lack of resources	69
6.2.2 Remote learning	69
6.2.3 First-time students.....	70
6.3 Unique Themes that Emerged from the Study.....	70
6.3.1 Communities of learning	70
6.3.2 Common characteristics	71
6.3.3 Agency and motivation to succeed	71
6.3.4 Ethos of care	71
6.4 Recommendations	71
6.5 Areas for Future Research	72
6.6 Conclusion.....	72
References.....	74



List of Figures

Figure 1: Tinto's revised model of student attrition.....	30
Figure 2: Six-stage data analysis process.....	39

List of Tables

Table 1: Leach and Zepke's conceptual organiser for student engagement (2011)	33
Table 2: Respondents Demographics	42
Table 3: Organisation, Sports clubs and Societies membership	43
Table 4: Hours spent in campus groups	43
Table 5: Most important groups/ formal networks	44
Table 6: Referral channels for groups.....	45
Table 7: Main benefits of joining groups.....	46
Table 8.1: Shared characteristics of members of groups	46
Table 8.2: Political views.....	47
Table 8.3: Socio-economic status	47
Table 8.4: Language	47
Table 8.5: Age frequencies	47
Table 9: Personal growth	50
Table 10: Communication with close friends	50
Table 11: Socio-economic status of friends.....	51
Table 13: Assistance provided by friends	51
Table 14: Support of friends	52
Table 15: Support of close friends	52
Table 16: Characteristics shared with friends	53
Table 17: COVID-19 challenges.....	56
Table 18: Coping during COVID-19 through formal networks	56
Table 19: Coping with COVID-19 through informal networks.....	57
Table 20: Support received from friends during COVID-19.....	57
Table 21: Support received from clubs/ societies during COVID-19	57
Table 22: Beneficial university services	58
Table 23: Communication media used during COVID-19.....	59

List of Abbreviations

COVID-19	SARS-CoV-2 Coronavirus
MMA	Mixed Methods Approach
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UWC	University of the Western Cape



Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

South Africa has seen a major expansion in university student enrolments since 1994. It is estimated that student enrolments have increased by 500 000 compared with 1994 and that more than 1 million students are registered at 26 public universities across South Africa (Putszai, 2014). This sharp rise in student numbers indicates a major improvement in access to higher education in the country's democratic era.

The current status of the South African higher education system has been shaped significantly by its historical context. While there has been a notable increase in the admission of black students to South African universities, the proportion of students from low-income families, defined by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) as having household income less than R120'000 per annum, remains very limited. Fewer than 5% of youth from this category qualify for entry into universities while 70% of students have parents earning, <R600'000 per annum (Klassen et al., 2021). What is concerning is that, from this population of students, barely 50% of undergraduate students graduate within five years after entry into university. Of the students supported by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), two-thirds will drop out without graduating (Klassen et al., 2021). Student retention is undoubtedly among the most challenging of the myriad trying issues facing our higher education system.

Scholars pursuing theories as to why some students accomplish more improved outcomes than others have alluded to social capital as a contributing factor. Educational settings are viewed as more than just environments where learning inputs lead to learning outcomes—they are essentially social environments. The concept of social capital aims to clarify the effects of the students' social positions on their development of human capital. Whereas human capital refers to the education, skills, abilities and educational achievements of individuals (Robbins & Craig, 2011), social capital is an intangible resource that produces human capital. Social capital resources such as family, friends and networks influence the educational achievements of individuals. Research (Smith, 2015) has shown that there is a positive relationship between social and human capital. Students with high social capital can possess winning strategies for academic success.

Numerous issues emerged with researchers who endeavoured to link social capital with individuals' educational achievements. Some of these issues were drop-out rates, university admissions, retention rates at university, duration of studies and graduation. Educational achievements have been linked to several forms of human capital that an individual could have, as well as social, economic and cultural capital. Those who have increased access to these kinds of capital exhibit greater educational achievements (Coleman, 1982, 1988; Parcel & Dufur, 2001). The meaningful relationship between

social capital and the educational accomplishments of students has been highlighted in extensive research (Parcel & Dufur, 2001; Pishghadam & Zabihi, 2011). Differences in educational success can be attributed to different levels of existing social capital, which is produced in the networks and connections that individuals may have. For instance, social capital supports educational success by providing an enabling educational climate and the values that motivate students to achieve higher goals (Khattab, 2003). The student's development is strongly shaped by social capital in the institution, community and family (Khattab, 2003). Furthermore, social capital positively affects educational achievement and students' behaviour and development, reduces drop-out rates, increases graduation rates (La Porta et al 1996), as well as positively affects achievements in tests (Sun, 1999). Most of the research on the links between social capital and educational achievements emerged from either Coleman's (1988) or Bourdieu's (1986) theoretical foundations.

This study focuses on social capital in the educational context of the University of the Western Cape (UWC), a public university located in the suburb of Bellville, Cape Town. It has a proud history of struggle against racial oppression and inequity dating back to 1960. UWC has earned a reputation as a benchmark institution that has significantly contributed to the historic transformation of post-Apartheid society. About 23 000 students are registered for both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees across seven faculties (Putszai, 2014).

This study aims to understand the collective value of students' social networks and their inclinations that arise from these networks to assist one another and advance for personal and academic gains in the process. Social capital, in this view, emphasises specific benefits that flow from the trust, reciprocity, information and cooperation associated with social networks. It creates value for the people who are connected.

1.2 Problem Statement

Students from less-resourced backgrounds are increasingly joining the university environment as access to university increases (Pusztai, 2014). However, access does not necessarily guarantee academic success, which is reflected in the demographic disparities and statistics on academic achievement. Students from less-resourced backgrounds face numerous challenges when they enter university that include financial difficulties, under-preparedness and the presence of unfamiliar norms (Palmer & Gasman, 2008). These are barriers to students' adjustment to the university environment. First-generation students are vulnerable to dropping out of university. (The lack of) Family and personal resources such as finance, academic advice, parental involvement or language difficulties (Parcel & Dufur, 2001) may be contributing factors to drop out. The early drop-out rates of students of low socio-economic status (SES) is well researched. However, little consideration has been given to their success in relation to social factors such as their social networks, social capital and social support (Reay, David & Ball, 2018).

Social capital and social support are significant when considering the adjustment to and academic success at university. Changes in students' personal, social and academic circumstances such as leaving home for the first time, leaving current family and friends, establishing a new life, expectations of new friends, acquiring independent ways of learning and coping with academic and financial demands (McNeal, 2012) are present during the transition period at the beginning of a student's university career. Support is offered by friends, peers and other social networks and these influence academic outcomes (Schuller & Field, 1998).

This study examines the role of social capital which includes formal networks and social support, as well as the informal networks of students at university, and how these shape and impact their academic success and progress at university. It further explores the degree of preparedness for university and how students learn and benefit from social capital support structures to achieve academic and personal advancement at university. A key consideration of the study is the role social capital plays in the educational trajectory of a typical South African student's years of undergraduate academic engagement at UWC.

1.3 Research Questions

In exploring social capital and its contribution to student success at UWC, the following research questions were investigated:

1. How do students' cope through leveraging their social capital at university?
2. How do students' access the formal and informal networks available to them?
3. How do these networks contribute towards their success and progress at university?
4. What challenges are experienced by students when accessing their formal and informal networks at university?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

- Define what social capital means in the context of the university.
- Identify the various kinds of social capital that students draw from when at university.
- Explore the personal and institutional networks (formal and informal) that students access for their development and support.
- Explore, in the context of the university, how bonding, bridging and linking capital take place and which relationships students view as the most beneficial to their success at university.
- Identify the challenges that students experience when accessing formal and informal networks at university.

1.5 Significance of the Study

South African universities are changing rapidly in various ways, including:

- Relaxed access opportunities to a more diverse student population.
- Learning platforms are changing.
- The tertiary educational landscape has been challenged by recent student protests, the increase of youth unemployment and an increasingly competitive job market, among others.

The focus of this study is to highlight those factors that influence student progress at university, both academically and personally, using the conceptual lens of social capital. It is within this background that university environments are driven by their institutional social capital and the social support they offer—these are some of the key issues that assist students to cope and succeed despite challenging demands.

This study examines social capital at UWC to ascertain to what degree students utilise formal and informal networks in their progress and success at university. It further explores the degree of preparedness of the student to attend university and the value that social capital brings to students' learning. It also explores the benefit derived from several social capital support structures to achieve academic and personal advancement at university.

Studies on social capital have focused on the outcomes for health policies and the general population's well-being (Rose, 2000). There has been less interest in understanding *social capital* at the workplace (Sun, 1999), in the neighbourhoods (Winter, 2009) and in students' academic environments. While many studies on social capital were carried out in Europe and North America, there have been very few written in the context of Africa and developing countries. Studies that examine the relationships between students' academic performance and social capital in African countries are lacking. Since research findings on social capital from developed countries may not be entirely relevant to the African context, and relevant local studies are sparse, this study could assist understanding of the relationship between social capital and academic outcomes of students in tertiary educational institutions in developing countries and particularly Africa.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

This study is presented in six chapters. **Chapter 1** provides the introduction and background to the study. It includes the problem statement, research questions and research objectives and the significance and structure of the thesis. **Chapter 2** is a review of the literature on the definitions of social capital, types of social capital and social capital in various contexts, such as family, community and education. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the value of relational networks, social trust and norms and includes

current debates and a critique of social capital. **Chapter 3** presents the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. **Chapter 4** discusses the research design, data collection method, sampling and important ethical considerations. **Chapter 5** presents and discusses the data and findings of the study. **Chapter 6** concludes the study by reviewing the research objectives and making policy recommendations and suggestions for future research.



Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Various theorists have attempted to shed light on student phenomena concerning academic adjustment, student engagement as well as social and academic integration in higher education (Lin, 2010). According to numerous sociological theories, the transition into university is pervaded with pre-existing characteristics, external variables and institutional factors which influence student persistence within higher education (Tinto, 1993).

Increased access to universities has led to a more diverse student population in higher education. Students from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds are increasingly becoming part of the tertiary education landscape (Ra, 2011). However, succeeding in entering the university system does not automatically guarantee academic success. Low SES students are likely to face barriers in the process of adjustment to the university environment that could impede their academic success, including financial challenges, under-preparedness and an unfamiliar culture (Lopez, 2006). First-generation students are particularly vulnerable to university drop out, partly due to disparities in family and personal resources such as finances, academic advice, parental involvement or language difficulties (Shucksmith & Spratt, 2002). The early drop-out rate of low SES students is well-researched, yet their success in relation to social factors such as social networks, social capital and social support has received little attention (Bangeni & Kapp, 2015).

Given the challenges, interventions to support students become necessary and peer, family and community support are important resources for students as they transition into a new phase of learning. Such support also influences academic outcomes (De Souza Briggs, 1998). This view is supported by Adams, Berzonsky and Keating (2016), who emphasise the significance of peer support in helping to understand and master course materials and difficult concepts in the learning process.

Social capital and social support are particularly pertinent to higher education because multiple changes occur in students' personal, social and academic circumstances as they embark on their university careers. These include leaving home for the first time, leaving their families and current friends and establishing a new life with the expectation of making new friends, learning independent ways of learning and coping with academic, financial and social demands (Bloch, 2009).

Social capital is increasingly suggested by a range of leaders as part of the solution of ongoing educational and social challenges. Given this, it is necessary to investigate existing literature to assess and understand the role that social capital can offer in supporting student's adjustment and success at university.

A research synthesis and review exploring the educational research literature that links educational outcomes and social capital demonstrates a significant body of work realised in the period 1990-2001, most of it international, that looks at social capital. The remainder of this chapter provides an overview of the existing literature on social capital and related concepts. The roles of social capital, networks and social support for students and how these shape and impact their academic success and progress at university are included in the review.

2.2 Defining Social Capital

Numerous definitions have evolved, many of which refer to the manifestations of social capital rather than the phenomenon itself (Tzanakis, 2011). Social capital is a multi-faceted concept comprising a variety of cultural and social value systems. It has become a popular and appealing concept among social scientists with a growing number of sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists and economists employing the concept to explain various economic and social developments and outcomes.

The theory of social capital is specifically grounded in the notions of trusts, norms and informal networks and posits that social relations are valuable resources. According to Yan (2000), social capital is generally defined as a multi-dimensional phenomenon consisting of social norms, values, beliefs, trusts, obligations, relationships, networks, friends, memberships, civic engagement, information flows and institutions that fosters cooperation and collective actions for mutual benefits and contributes to economic and social development.

The notion of social capital originated with classical economists such as Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill and sociologists like Max Weber, who contributed to the cultural explanation of economic phenomena. The intellectual history of the concept of social capital can be traced back to Karl Marx (1818–1883), Emile Durkheim (1858–1917), Georg Simmel (1858–1918), John Dewey (1859–1952), and Max Weber (1864–1920). These scholars emphasised the role of culture in economic development—an implicit use of the idea of social capital. According to Tzanakis (2013), the concept of social capital was first invoked by Lyda Hanifan in 1916 to explain the importance of community participation in enhancing school performance (Tzanakis, 2013). The concept of social capital as a theory, however, only came into the spotlight in the late 1980s and thereafter attracted growing research interest (Woolcock, 1998). The first account of the term and its entrance into the academic debates occur with the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1986) and James Coleman (1988), generally considered the founding theorists of social capital. However, it was the established work of Robert Putnam (1993) that greatly promoted the term among social scientists and attracted the attention of researchers and policymakers.

Being a multi-faceted construct, there is no single definition of social capital. Rather, different authors define social capital in different ways reflecting their specific interests. Definitions of social capital

have come from Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988), Robert Putnam (1993), Francis Fukuyama (1995), Nan Lin (2001), the OECD (Henry et al., 2001) and the World Bank (2006). The common denomination for most definitions is that they emphasise social relations that generate productive benefits. The main difference between these definitions is that they view social capital either as a personal resource or a social resource.

In his definition, Bourdieu identified three forms of capital—economic, cultural and social—following Marx in understanding capital as a material economic phenomenon. Bourdieu defined social capital as “...the sum of the actual or potential resources that are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—in other words, to membership in a group” (1977: 147). This definition emphasises the importance of the social network; i.e. the opportunities and advantages available to members through group membership.

Coleman (1994: 102) defined social capital according to its function. It is a multi-dimensional entity having two common characteristics: it is an aspect of a social structure, and it facilitates certain actions of individuals who are within that structure. The entities include obligations, expectations, trust and information flows. Social capital is a productive resource that facilitates production and makes it possible to achieve certain ends that would be impossible in its absence. Coleman also identifies three forms of social capital: reciprocity (including trust); information channels and flow of information; and norms enforced by sanction. For Coleman, social capital is a public good as it exists in the relations among people. Both Bourdieu and Coleman see social networks as the medium by which collective capital can be maintained and reinforced.

Robert Putnam played a central role in promoting the concept of social capital as well. He defined social capital as “... features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam, 1997: 53). Social capital refers to connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them (Putnam, 1997). For him, social networks have value and social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups.

Another significant contribution to social capital theory was made by Francis Fukuyama. He offered a more specific but significantly different definition of social capital. He defines social capital in terms of trust as “...the ability of the people to work together for common purposes in groups and organisations” (Schuller, Baron & Field, 2000: 31). Alternatively, he defined social capital simply as the existence of a certain set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permits cooperation among them (Schuller et al., 2000). Fukuyama contends that interpersonal trust is fundamental for social relationships to emerge.

Lin, Fu and Hsung (2001) defined social capital as “...investment in social relations with expected returns in the marketplace”. Operationally, Lin et al. defined social capital as the “...resources embedded in social networks accessed and used by actors for actions” (Lin et al., 2001: 55—56). The concept has two important elements: (i) it represents resources embedded in social relations rather than individuals; and, (ii) access and use of such resources reside with actors.

Lang and Hornburg (1998, p33) defined social capital as “...a person’s or group’s sympathy toward another person or group that may produce a potential benefit, advantage and preferential treatment for another person or group of persons beyond that expected in an exchange relationship”. They argue that this definition contains the properties of classical capital and it separates what it is (sympathy) from what it does (potential benefits) and focuses on the transformative capacity of capital residing (embodied) in human relationships.

Narayan and Pritchett (2000) reviewed different definitions and concluded that social capital is an individual asset that comes from access to networks and social connections, whereas others view it as a shared asset that resides in a homogenous collective entity such as a community with common interests and shared values.

The sets of definitions representing different views broadly agree that the basic foundation of social capital is the social relations that engender individual and collective benefits. Social capital then is a collectively owned resource generated through individuals’ shared norms, values, attitudes and behaviours that mainly produces a positive influence on economic development.

2.3 Types of Social Capital

Based on different characteristics and functions, the literature distinguishes different groups of social capital. The most common forms of social capital in the literature include structural and cognitive social capital; bonding, bridging and linking social capital; strong and weak social capital; as well as horizontal and vertical social capital. In the interest of the current study, bonding, bridging and linking capital will be defined.

Bonding, bridging and linking social capital: From a social cohesion perspective, recent literature distinguished social capital into three important forms (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 2001). **Bonding** social capital denotes ties among people who are very close and known to one another, such as immediate family, close friends and neighbours. Often people in bonding networks are alike in key personal characteristics (e.g. class, ethnicity, education, age, religion, gender and political affiliation). It is more inward-looking, protective and exercises close membership, and is therefore good for undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilising informal solidarity (Israel, Beaulieu & Hartless, 2001). Bonding promotes communication and relationships needed to pursue common goals.

Bridging social capital refers to more distant ties of like persons, such as loose friendships and workmates. Often people in bridging networks differ in key personal characteristics. Bridging is more outward-looking, more engaged in civic society, narrows the gap between different communities and exercises open membership. It is, therefore, crucial to organising solidarity and pursuing common goals (Hagan, Macmillan & Wheaton, 2006).

Linking social capital refers to ties and networks among individuals and groups who occupy very different social positions and power. It connects unlike people in dissimilar situations, such as those who are entirely outside of the community.

Bonding with closely-knit people can act as a social support safety net whereas bridging ties between people across diverse social divides can provide links to institutions and systems and enable people and communities to leverage a wider range of resources than are available in the community. Bonding generates great trust that is useful for ‘getting by’ in life, while the bridging of expansive trust may be useful for ‘getting ahead’.

2.4 Human Capital and Social Capital

Social capital theory in education was inspired partly by the work of Pierre Bourdieu and James Coleman. For Bourdieu, social capital served children from dominant classes and perpetuated the maintenance of inherited advantages in the school system (Bourdieu, 1979, 1985). His research sparked a series of educational studies that focused inquiry on the role of institutional agents and institutional characteristics in social capital formation. These studies further highlighted the role and responsibility of institutional agents in providing and promoting social capital acquisition, which is paramount to the advancement of students from less-resourced backgrounds.

Probably the most important and original development in the economics of education in the past 30 years has been the idea that the concept of physical capital as embodied in tools, machines and other production equipment can be extended to include human capital as well (Kurfiss, 1988). Just as physical capital is created by changes in materials to form tools that facilitate production, human capital is created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that enable them to act in new ways.

Constant evolution in the education system has illustrated that students are positioned as operative parts of their learning process by way of participation, agency and how they self-regulate this experience to achieve their learning outcomes. The academic success of individual students is influenced by several factors, including their personal characteristics and dispositions. Other factors are schooling background, their families and communities who were sources of support to them. Access to support has been recognised by researchers as having a significant impact on academic success. Several researchers have demonstrated evidence of the strong link between social support and students’

academic success. Parental relationships and involvement are especially strong indicators for student success. This support constitutes a form of social capital as it adds value to children's academic success (Christie, 2011).

From a social capital perspective, relationships fostered by an individual are seen as a form of capital that differs from economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1979). Bourdieu recognised that these have various advantages for people in certain circumstances, such as overcoming poverty, social adaptation and integration processes. At the same time, Bourdieu (1990) also held the view that social capital can be used to increase social reproduction and is, therefore, an element of social inequality and differentiation. Reid, Archer and Leathwood (2003: 111) expressed this explicitly, by saying that the best-connected people perform the best. However, social capital is a complex concept going beyond the social relationships of people. That is, social capital not only involves social networks and resources but the quality and functionality of these connections (trust and norm groups) are also important considerations (Rose, 2003). Social capital can be an advantage for less privileged groups with limited human capital when social capital makes up for gaps in other forms of capital (e.g. financial).

Fukuyama (1995) believed that it is necessary to include additional components when considering the definition of social capital, including the relationships to peers. Bourdieu (1989) and Zhou and Bankston (1996) examined the relevance of relationships that are fostered in the educational context and the importance of these relationships within the multitude of agents as these predict involvement and engagement with the education system. The educational institution is therefore seen as another context that opens up opportunities for social relationships and that also contributes to the students' performance.

In terms of social capital, keeping in contact with people who are outside the group is more beneficial than contact with those in the closest relationships (Garfinkel et al., 2001). The issue that is highlighted here is that social capital does not simply refer to connections with other people, but to connections with the right people, i.e. the proverbial 'moving in the right circles', to connect with those who can grant access to influence, power and recognition (Garfinkel et al., 2001). Relationships with their peers and institutional agents are a strong form of student social capital and Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore (1982) infer that this form of social capital has both functional and structural components.

Several studies document students' behaviour and the significance of the peer-to-peer relationship at university (Coleman & Hendry, 1999). Bruen (2014) characterised universities as a context for socialisation and social relationships and Sullivan (2002) showed there is an array of models that demonstrate the significance of social relationships—both authors emphasised that peer groups hold huge advantages for students, such as providing emotional support and a reference group for students. This further supports the achievement of academic goals (Schaefer-McDaniel, 2004).

This study aims to combine the various aspects of theory from Bourdieu (1990), Coleman (1990) and others, to understand social relationships and their links with higher education.

2.5 Social Ties

Social ties is an instrumental phenomena to Social Capital. Strong social ties are portrayed in homogenous networks that involve close relationships, whereas weak ties are found when heterogeneous networks are located in infrequent ways with relationships as acquaintances. Chapman and Pyvis (2006) asserted that both patterns of ties are significant because they serve as intermediaries for individuals to varying resources. Social ties have advantages such as psychological and emotional well-being while social capital includes cohesion, job opportunities, social mobility and civic engagement. Chapman and Pyvis (2006) further explained that the meaning and function of a tie is characterised by the duration of the interaction, the intensity of the level of emotion and intimacy and the reciprocal nature of the relationship.

Historical comparisons between strong and weak ties have shown that strong ties have more advantages in terms of social and psychological resources for individuals. Their bonding function is particularly noted. This means that strong ties increase strength and cohesion among relationships, thereby increasing feelings of reciprocity and trust and giving rise to feeling social cohesion and solidarity. However, Rose (1990) held a firm belief in the strength of weak ties, believing that they have a significant 'bridging' function by acting as a facilitator between cliques and sub-groups and thereby opening up opportunities. He labelled these connections as 'local bridges' as they create efficient pathways and links between social groups. On the other hand, historical and contemporary critiques of weak ties hold that they lack the feelings of reciprocity and trust characterised by strong ties.

2.6 The Social Significance of Networks

A network-analytic approach to social inequality in society takes as its starting point what Marshall and Case (2010) referred to as the social distribution possibility. The term refers to the unequal distribution of opportunities for individuals entering into different social and institutional contexts and forming relationships with agents who exert various degrees of control over institutional resources, such as bureaucratic influence, career-related information and opportunities for specialised training or mentorship. The importance of such institutional agents and advocates can be illuminated by looking at how dominant group members consistently depend on these social ties to secure their successful and privileged participation and mobility within mainstream institutional arenas (Marshall & Case, 2010). For children and youth, the most important social spheres are the extended family, the school, community organisations (like churches) and peer groups.

2.7 Social Capital in Family and Community

Coleman (1993) looked at social capital from two different angles wherein he distinguished family and the environment as the two main sources of social capital. He believed that these sources play a crucial role in the creation of human capital and that family underpins the formation of a healthy generation and society (Temkin & Rohe, 2002). While Coleman (1993) saw the family as the initial provider of social capital, he theorised that people benefit from social capital derived not only from their immediate family but also from the broader community, networks and associations. One of the fundamental supporters of social capital are social networks. The collective value of these interactions is established through information, trust and reciprocity to assist individuals to solve individual and collective challenges more effectively (Putnam, 2000). A child's development is shaped primarily by family. Within the family, elements of social capital such as trust, networks and norms of reciprocity have powerful effects on children's opportunities and choices as well as on their educational success and behavioural development (Putnam, 2000).

Different studies investigated social capital within families with specific focus areas on parents' aspirations and the family structure, among others (Hofferth, Boisjoly & Duncan, 1998). For instance, studies show that parents who regularly help their children with homework create an effective barrier against the negative impact of low SES and low parental education attainment (Hou, Li & Zheng, 2008). Here, the network between parents and children is employed to contribute to the educational success of the children. Homework assistance thus reflects the existing social capital within the family.

Children born to well-educated parents tend to perform well academically (Harpham, 2008). These families create an environment where educational achievement is valued and expected. Furthermore, when children are provided with a nurturing environment and role models that guide behaviour, the effects on their educational success are powerful and positive. Probably the most important study about family social capital was Coleman's (1994) study titled *'Equality of educational opportunity'*, better known as the Coleman Report. One of the most extensive and best-known studies on education in the USA, the Coleman Report drew data from 570 000 students, 60 000 teachers and 4 000 elementary and secondary schools across the country. The study found that parents and the home environment are far greater determinants of children's future than the schools they attended.

2.8 Social Capital in Education

Students enter university with a diverse range of social capital acquisition that serves as their starting point to further social capital accumulation at university. Research linked to forms of social capital for university students in their contexts revealed that social capital gained at university plays a more crucial role compared with family social capital. Palmer and Gasman (2008: 113) emphasised the "informational benefits" of university social capital. This relates to how students obtain and interact

with beneficial knowledge and skills related to their success by interacting with students, academics and support staff in their university environment. Social capital of this kind is especially critical for low SES first-generation students as they are less likely to obtain this information from family or from their communities.

Other empirical studies had congruent findings. For example, Baker (1990) found that parental involvement had an influence on levels of persistence for students but mattered less than the social capital they pursued at university. Horvat and Antonio (2009) argued that family social capital only served as an emotional support to students, not necessarily proving to be the necessary guidance with which to navigate the university terrain (also see the discussion in the next section below). Furthermore, they highlighted the positive effect of administrators in facilitating students' university identity development and successful transfer into the first year.

Borgatti, Jones and Everett (2008) state that Bourdieu's theories (1998) of cultural reproduction and of cultural and social capital (1986) were developed as alternative explanations for unequal academic achievement. Bourdieu, in fact, suggested that the influences of cultural and social capital account for unequal academic achievement. These phenomena are demonstrated in low dropout rates and subsequent higher retention rates and more meaningful university experience (Israel et al., 2001), higher university enrolment (Fritch & Cromwell, 2001), greater success in tests (Furstenburg & Hughes, 2005), and increased collaborations in school and community organisations (Sun, 1998, 1999).

Coleman considered the form of social capital where there is the presence of both parents, a low number of siblings and higher parental levels of education to be a superior form of social capital (1988, cited in Dika & D'Amico, 2016). Dika and D'Amico (2016) postulated that the indicators for social capital in this context are school attainment and achievement while Carbonaro (1998) noted the inter-relationships and associations between school, parents and the community.

In this framework, the expectations of parents, their obligations, social networking via family, school and community all add up to social capital. Differences in how students perform can be linked to the networks and relationships that schools have with communities. Social capital encourages school success and attainment by supporting an academic ethos that encourages students to persist and aspire within cultures, values and norms that align with these criteria. Putnam (2000) believed that the progression of youth and children is powerfully shaped by social capital in school. Furthermore, associations that build social capital for children's families, schools, peer groups and the community have a profound effect on educational pathways in achievement-orientated ways and towards students' overall behaviour and development.

Cook-Gumperz (2006) explained the advantages of social capital in students' behavioural development and success of school educators who are devoted to education, and steadfast to academic success, selfless in their approach towards students' model positive attitudes of education to parents and sponsors (community) towards good schooling and education. Cook-Gumperz (2006) also demonstrated that, for students, there would be no need for unending coaching in collective norms and values as this exemplary educational ethos would be observed in their educators, networks, their schools and families. In addition, Cook Gumperz (2006) contended that educationalists who epitomise robust educational values and ethics ultimately attest to being more effective than textbooks and instruction.

As established earlier, academic studies show that social capital plays a fundamental role in overall success in education. In different forms, social capital produces gains and benefits for students in particular and for society in general. In addition, formalised policies and guidelines regarding parental responsibility towards their children's education may lead individuals to pursue more and better educational involvement.

2.9 Family Social Capital and Academic Success

Coleman conducted pioneering work by emphasising social capital's function in collectively advancing children's life chances, using his theory of intergenerational closure (1999), which was a descriptive analysis of how connections and networks among parents have the potential of causing positive outcomes on children's academic achievements. This theory became a benchmark for the use of the family structure as the measure of children's social capital. Coleman conceptualised and grew his theory in a way that linked family and educational institutions.

The development of a child is formed mostly by the family through components such as trust, networks and norms of reciprocity. These features of social capital have an influential effect on a child's educational opportunities and success (Putnam, 2000). Numerous studies have explored social capital within the family context with specific focus areas such as parental goals, family structure, parent-school relationships and support and assistance with homework (Dika & Singh, 2002). For example, Morgan and Sorenson (2005) showed that parents who diligently assist their children with homework tasks generate an effective barrier against the negative impact of low SES and low parental educational attainment. Homework assistance reflects the existing social capital within the family and the network between parents and children thus contributes to the success of the children's education. Coleman (1987, p.79) defined this social capital simply as "the relationships between children and parents" that encourage success in the area of education.

The structure of the family, how they engage on issues related to education, monitoring of children by parents, child-parent relationships, obligations and expectations from parents and children, connection to school and children's friends are all the proponents of social capital that impact on academic

achievement in varying ways (Dika & Singh, 2002). McNeal (1999) perceived social networks among parents and between parents and educators as facilitators for positive experiences and achievements for all who are part of the school community. McNeal (1999) presented more than a functionalist perspective on social capital by articulating that collaboration between families and schools is pivotal for student success, more so than family structure, marital status and educational backgrounds of parents, parents' financial dispositions, ethnicity or family size, although she acknowledged the importance of these factors. McNeal deemed it critical to policy development that these factors be taken into dire consideration, for the formation of higher social capital and to address these needs to amplify educational success. The World Bank (2011), noting the studies of Coleman et al. (1982), argues that the acceptance and promotion of the importance of education by the family positively impact children's academic performance in schools. Coleman's (1986) "equality of educational opportunity" research also found that parents' background and home environments are greater determinants of student success and performance than the schools themselves. For instance, the report found that black students in the USA (who tend to be poorer and therefore more exposed to negative influences on education, such as less time spent in early childhood development facilities) started school trailing behind their counterparts and essentially never caught up, even when their schools were as well equipped as those with predominantly white enrolments.

Finally, Morrow (2001) noted that children with well-educated parents seem to perform well academically because these families provide an environment where high recognition is given to educational achievement. In addition, well-educated parents tend to have had better economic outcomes and their children are consequently exposed to a nurturing environment that is most likely to have outcomes that are powerful and positive for education.

2.10 Key Aspects in the Literature relevant to Social Capital

2.10.1 Forms of social capital for community college students

In the context of the community college in the USA, researchers often found that college social capital plays a more critical role compared to family social capital. For example, Kalmijn and Kraaikamp (2006: 73) emphasised the "informational benefits" of college social capital. In particular, community college students obtain beneficial knowledge and skills for success in college through their interactions and relationships with lecturers, counsellors, advisors and other students (Kalmijn & Kraaikamp, 2006). Similarly, Lin (1990) indicated that academic integration with institutional agents positively influenced community college students' baccalaureate expectations. College social capital is especially critical for those who are first-generation college students and for under-represented ethnic groups because they are less likely to obtain related knowledge, skills and information from home (or through family social capital) and are more likely to drop out of college (Israel et al., 2001).

Other empirical studies had congruent findings. For instance, Wells (2008) found that parental involvement had positive influences on college students' persistence overall but mattered less for community college students. Roscigno and Ainsworth (1999) argued that family social capital only served as an emotional support; the family might not provide guidance to navigate the college administrative organisation and seek institutional support.

Furthermore, Pong and Hao (2008) found a small but significant effect of interactions with institutional agents, such as instructors and counsellors, on Latino students' success at community colleges. Valenzuela and Dornbusch (2004: 77) highlighted the positive role of administrators in facilitating community college students' "collegiate identity development and successful transfer". In addition to the above, transfer capital was identified as a unique type of college social capital that can be obtained from institutional agents at community colleges (White & Glick, 2000). Transfer capital refers to the skills and knowledge that community college students acquire for navigating the transfer process from two-year to four-year institutions (White & Glick, 2000). Transfer capital can often be measured through students' interaction with faculty members, counsellors and advisors regarding the transfer process and the skills needed for learning at four-year institutions (White & Glick, 2000). The scope of transfer capital can be expanded to high-quality interactions with lecturers and other staff, financial factors and other related factors (Fritch, 2009). Empirical studies found that transfer capital significantly influenced students' academic adjustment after the transfer (Lareau & Horvat, 2004), their degree aspirations and vocational choices.

2.10.2 The value of relational networks, social trust and norms

Coleman (1992) portrayed this value with three short 'vignettes' illustrating how relational networks, trusts and norms are paramount forms of social capital. His first example illustrated the success of radical student activism in South Korea (despite their government's disagreement) as an outcome of social networks. This story demonstrated that social networks provide opportunities for the exchange of information that can bring about desirable outcomes for group members. Without social relations, there is no possibility for the exchange of information or the enforcement of norms that facilitate collective goals. Coleman (1992) also emphasised that the quality of the information exchanged depended on the functionality of the relationships in which one engaged.

In the second vignette, Coleman demonstrates increased medical costs (e.g. malpractice insurance) as an outcome related to the breakdown in trust between patients and physicians. The point is that social trust gives group members confidence in the expectation that others will act reliably and competently. Moreover, individuals engaged in relationships characterised by high levels of social trust are more likely to openly exchange information and to act with caring and benevolence toward one another than those in relationships lacking trust. Kanters, Bristol and Attarian ,(2002) defined relational networks,

social trust and norm relationships among adults as critical to the achievements of students in Chicago elementary schools engaged in restructuring.

The third vignette described children's safety during a walk home from school as a result of "a normative structure [that] ensures...unattended children will be looked after by adults in the vicinity" (Coleman, 1992: 113). This illustrates the importance of social patterns of acceptable behaviour that support desirable outcomes.

2.10.3 Social network, social capital and social support

A social network is defined as "a structure composed of a set of actors, some of whose members are connected by a set of one or more relations" (Dyk & Wilson, 1999, p55). By virtue of membership in social networks, individuals gain access to a variety of resources (Duncan, Hofferth & Stafford, 2004).

This conceptualisation is linked specifically to Bourdieu's (1988) definition of social capital, defined as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu, 1988: 211). Social networks provide access to various forms of social capital such as information, social support, values and aspirations, along with economic resources (Yan, 2000). Social capital is accessed and mobilised through a complex set of mechanisms that are dependent on what social networks look like in relation to their composition and characteristics. For example, network relationships involving close ties, inclusive of individuals who share characteristics such as age, education and social class, are often found among family and friends (Yan, 2000). However, formal ties could also consist of members with disparate social and demographic features, as acknowledged by Granovetter (1973).

Individuals will acquire "bonding" social capital—for example, from social and/or emotional support received from their close ties, and would be dependent on their formal/ weak ties for information-related or "bridging" social capital (Putnam, 1993). Weak ties allow for opportunities or interactions across diverse settings and are particularly relevant for obtaining information-related social capital, which cannot only be achieved by depending on close networks such as familial or social ties.

Networks have characteristics such as SES, levels of education, resources and power. These characteristics within networks can influence the formation of weak ties and the type and form of social capital gained. This gives rise to certain individuals being better positioned to form weak ties because of their SES, ethnicity or gender, which gives them access to new and diverse information. This is exactly what creates inequality in distribution within networks (Bourdieu, 1991; Lin, 2011), with the result being that certain individuals and groups benefit and gain an advantage over others.

Social networks, social capital and social support in higher education become particularly relevant within the context of higher education when referring to information-related social capital and social support. The transition from high school to university is hugely significant and accompanied by many

changes in personal, social and academic circumstances. The information and support that these students obtain from their families and friends provide significant leverage for coping with the change of environment and its associated challenges as they enter university. Furthermore, the quality of their social positions and characteristics of their networks will also determine how much or little social capital (information-related or support) they will be able to utilise and enjoy during this period (Hofferth et al., 1998).

Students who have parents with university degrees are better endowed to access and mobilise information such as processes for successful degree attainment, how to prepare for exams, information on study materials, etc., all of which play a critical role in determining success. As they have been equipped with the norms, values and rules associated with the appropriate educational networks, the experiences that these students have been exposed to allow them to be groomed for the acquisition of higher education success (Fritch, 2009). These advantages set them apart from students with disadvantaged backgrounds who may not have had similar exposure and ties that impact their knowledge and information relevant to succeed at university.

The benefits of social support and the role that it plays in facilitating success at university are witnessed in the function that relationships and social interactions have among peers. Dyk and Wilson defined the above as “social interactions or relationships that provide individuals with actual assistance or with a feeling of attachment to a person or a group that is perceived as caring or loving” (Dyk & Wilson, 1999: 167), which they deem pivotal to higher education success. This positive affirmation from network members may have a complementary effect and compensate for the lack of information-related social capital before coming to university.

Apart from social capital accessed in formative years, other avenues of social capital can be acquired by investing in ties and relationships outside family life. This is referred to as bridging social capital and weak ties. According to Lin (1990), an individual's access to resources (e.g. information) can be improved by building relationships and acquiring social capital through strategic ties and relationships outside their immediate networks. By developing relationships both on and off-campus (e.g. with members of the faculty or mentors), students can gain the necessary resources required for their academic success.

2.10.4 The local context

Over the past 26 years, universities in South Africa have moved from an elite, ethnically divided education system to one more representative of the country's demographics. This change has wrought simultaneous opportunities in and challenges to the process of transformation within our education sector (Pather & Chetty, 2015).

A major consequence of the above is that access has been expanded for students across the country, enabling broader participation for diverse groups. This change is accompanied by ramifications resulting from the historically unequal distribution of economic, social and cultural capital in the country, which in turn impacts how students interact with and access the university and its potential opportunities. A review of the literature showed that critical issues have arisen related to admission, financial capacity, equity and knowledge of courses (De Graaf, De Graaf & Kraaykamp, 2004). Research regarding students' access to higher education reveals that access does not guarantee meaningful social and academic retention and achievement of success for students (Kandel, 2006).

It would be fitting to examine the literature on the compelling experiences of South African students' historical backgrounds that will capture a more coherent understanding of how their circumstances both impact and influence their university experiences and engagements. However, this study was partly motivated by the paucity of local studies, particularly on the social capital construct and how it contributes to students' access to and success at university.

2.10.5 Student engagement and pre-university factors

Given the disparities among students as a result of the extreme historical inequities based on ethnicity, class, schooling and socio-economic resources, Pym and Kapp (2013) acknowledged that students from socially disadvantaged communities can experience a crisis of confidence and self-esteem when they enter university that influences their sense of belonging in the new environment.

Historically and economically less advantaged students in South Africa must typically carve out a pathway for themselves using less conventional methods to facilitate their access to university. These methods include the practices that they adopt to apply to university amid impoverished and difficult conditions. One of the ways such students use to access university is to mobilise their community and cultural social capital. Discussion in South African literature regarding disadvantaged students often focuses on two central aspects: (i) access for success and (ii) access for participation.

2.10.6 Students' pre-university admission pathways

The theoretical framework of this study employs Bourdieu's (1986) notion of 'cultural capital' and Yosso's (2005) 'community cultural wealth' to understand how disadvantaged students create pathways to gain university admission. The framework provides a perspective that allows looking beyond the normative viewpoints of students' dispositions as they enter university. Bourdieu (1986) contended that middle-class families produce cultural capital that is in alignment with their formal education. Cultural capital here refers to the knowledge, skills, habits and values that are acquired through being part of a particular social class. Elaborating further, he states that the cultural capital of different classes is unevenly valued. Bourdieu (1986) recognised that cultural capital is cultivated within the family and argued that the domestic transmission of cultural capital is "the best hidden and socially most

determinant educational investment” (Bourdieu, 1986: 67). Bourdieu argued that what was generally seen as natural ‘ability’ or ‘talent’ is actually the product of an investment of time and cultural capital by the family. His argument, therefore, holds that cultural capital is not naturally acquired or innate but is a product that has been formed through belonging to a particular class within society. That the capital of middle-class families holds a higher value than that of lower-class or working-class families reflects the fact that deliberately acquiring and accumulating this kind of cultural capital is a process that takes place over time (Bourdieu, 1986).

Yosso (2005) provided an extension on this view by drawing on her understanding of what she terms community cultural wealth. Community cultural wealth refers to the “accumulated assets and resources found in the lives and histories of disadvantaged students” (Yosso, 2005: 77). Yosso (2005) believes that Bourdieu’s theory on cultural capital was limited in that it focused exclusively on how middle-class homes reproduce cultural capital for their children and families in alignment with their formal education and does not provide an explanation and understanding of how the cultural and social capital and networks of poor people are put to work. Yosso challenges traditional models that claim that working-class students do not have the cultural capital to successfully engage with their education. She argues that impoverished communities and families draw on their unique form of social capital, namely community cultural wealth, to institute social and racial justice (Norodien-Fataar, 2018).

Yosso (2005) argues that numerous forms of capital are evident and cultivated in poor communities and these have to be identified and accepted to comprehend how students from these communities access and engage with their educational process. She identified various forms of social capital that students draw on to access the resources and networks present in their communities and families, such as aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational and resistant capital. Yosso (2005) states that disadvantaged students have attained various forms of capital characterised by the abilities, skills, resources and knowledge that they build up over time. They use cultural resources such as family and community support networks to navigate the social structural contexts in which they live and to access their education. Yosso (2005) maintains that each of these forms of capital comprises a dynamic process that develops, intersects with and corresponds to multiple types of resources upon which students rely. She argued that “multiple forms of cultural wealth” (2005: 78) are located in communities and families, as well as the “various types of capital” (2005: 78) that are mobilised by disadvantaged students in their educational processes.

A study conducted by Norodien-Fataar (2018) focuses on how students use the cultural capital and resources within their families and communities to enable them to gain university admission, with specific emphasis on the role that families, especially mothers, play in the provision of what Gillies (2006) calls “emotional capital”. This type of capital refers to the ways in which maternal figures in the students’ lives support them in their educational quest. Emotional capital refers to the mothers’ role in

offering support, encouragement and a caring environment, which are crucial in the academic access practices of the students (Norodien-Fataar, 2018). This broadens the understanding of the types of capital that support students' pathways to and through university.

Another theoretical element deserving consideration is the students' recognition and utilisation of community circumstances, social resources and networks. Low SES students utilise these as forms of capital in their advancement to a university education. Some of these circumstances are rife with instability, pathology and dysfunction, which pose an ongoing threat to their educational aspirations. Zipin (2009: 330) refers to "dark life world assets" that poor students have to contend with and navigate to establish their pathways to university. Zipin (2009) portrayed how disadvantaged students manage to succeed in their education while daily confronted by tough ('dark') community circumstances. Poor students can employ a range of navigational assets (various forms of capital) to manage and bypass the worst consequences of these community influences. The ways and methods that students utilise in navigating their paths around these circumstances are the central backdrop to their admission, participation and success at university. The agency and accumulation accompanying their own unique form of capital cannot be dismissed.

2.10.7 The value of culture

Lower SES students are often labelled as less resourced or at risk. They may not possess some of the prerequisite skills to excel at university, but they do possess a cultural history and resources that go unnoticed or are undervalued in the mainstream educational environment (Lareau, 2001).

Lareau (2001) stated that people of colour have a distinct cultural makeup that has yet to be fully acknowledged in educational institutions. Giving recognition to these resources and experiences will provide a more contextual understanding of their experiences that would impact more effectively on their academic success. Acknowledging the role of culture for students of colour may prove beneficial to their academic engagement and educational experiences. Bourdieu (1998) coined the term cultural capital that he defined as "instruments for the appropriation of symbolic wealth socially designated as worthy of being sought and possessed" (Bourdieu, 1998: 168). A salient point is that the notion of cultural capital is rooted in the foundations of white, male, upper-middle-class philosophical principles that value a person's likeness to the dominant culture (Palmer & Gasman, 2008; Yosso, 2005). Acknowledging the conception of cultural capital utilising the white normative discourse can be problematic as it perpetuates the notion of white, western or colonial supremacy and ultimately conveys a deficit discourse to decrease the value of culture in communities of colour (Yosso, 2005). Thus, community cultural wealth is the compilation of a people's abilities, knowledge, skills and contacts that are utilised by people and "communities of colour to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression" (Yosso, 2005: 77).

It follows that understanding the value of culture as social capital in education requires a complete overhaul of mainstream notions and cultural ideas regarding what a student entering university for the first time typically looks like. This conventional perception needs to be deconstructed and replaced with a contextual understanding of the person and an acknowledgment that only viewing students through the lens created by dominant cultures serves to misplace and alienate marginalised groups from full participation in the higher education system.

2.10.8 The functional and structural components of social capital

Researchers have increasingly recognised the importance of social support for academic success and demonstrated the connection between strong relationships and student achievement (Chudek, Muthukrishna & Henrich, 2015; King, 2007; Lloyd, 2006; Naicker, 2005; Schoeman, 2005; Wright, Cullen & Miller, 2001). A significant point to note is that relationships are not the only form of social capital. Coleman et al. (1982) ascertained that social capital held both structural and functional entities. Relationships are viewed as part of a social structure. However, being familiar with someone or knowing them does not require productive interaction. A further consideration is the functionality of relationships. Relational networks comprising of social features such as low norms and trust discourage academic engagement and could lead to low levels of academic achievement. A study of social capital should consider both the functional and structural elements of the construct.

2.10.9 Critique, methodological issues and gaps in the literature on social capital

Conceptual, measurement and analysis issues related to the body of research on social capital and educational outcomes are highlighted throughout this paper. In this section, a systematic appraisal of these issues and gaps illustrates their cumulative effect, and as such, reveals that the concept of social capital as applied to higher education is not yet empirically grounded.

The original conceptualisation of social capital by Coleman is problematic (Portes, 1996, 2001). Although thus far described as a theory, the delineation of social capital by Coleman (1988) is too vague to develop testable hypotheses. Social capital is a fuzzy concept as developed by both Coleman and Bourdieu (Woolcock, 2008). However, Bourdieu views his notion of social capital as an open concept designed to guide empirical work (Woolcock, 2008) rather than a causal model.

Coleman's concept assumes family mediation of social capital, ignoring the agency of the adolescent in accessing social capital. The concept emphasises the virtues of parental involvement and implies a top-down view of the parent-child relationship (Morrow, 1999). Coleman defined social capital as the resources inherent in the structure of relationships. This leads to two conceptual problems. First, the sources (relationships) of social capital are confused with the benefits (resources, opportunities) derived from it, leading to circular reasoning: for example, the reasoning that the student who stays in school has good social capital, whereas the drop-out has none (Portes & Landolt, 1996). Second, the

disentanglement of the possession of social capital from its activation becomes difficult. It is unclear whether the ability to access social capital (in the home or community) or the ability to activate social capital in the institutional context (the school) is associated with desirable outcomes.

Thus, the current social capital framework serves to describe rather than explain the effects of inequality on educational outcomes. Social capital has the potential to become part of a ‘...deficit theory syndrome,’ yet another ‘thing’ or ‘resource’ that unsuccessful individuals, families, communities and neighbourhoods lack...” (Loury, 1997: 260). These theories are faulted primarily because they obscure issues of power and domination; that is, they do not address links between lack of ties to institutional agents, macro forces and institutional-discriminatory patterns. Bourdieu’s notions of social and cultural capital represent a way to avoid this, but these notions have only been sporadically incorporated into the research in the United States, and only by certain authors (Stanton-Salazar, 1997, 2001).

While interest in and use of the concept of social capital has increased, a critical review and synthesis of the research literature on social capital in education is notably limited or even absent. Such an integrative review would serve to shed light on the theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches and implications of research over the past decade, as well as highlight gaps and inconsistencies. The body of research within the current scope of literature does not provide sufficient theoretical or empirical support for hypotheses about the positive relationship between social capital and education-related factors. This is due primarily to weaknesses in and misapplications of Coleman’s concept (Myers, 2005). Nearly all the studies focus on the conceptualisation of social capital as norms rather than as means of access to institutional resources. Methodological gaps in the conceptualisation and measurement of social capital, including the reliance on cross-sectional data, hamper the utility of the concept as an explanatory variable in education (Myers, 2005). These gaps are discussed in detail in the next section.

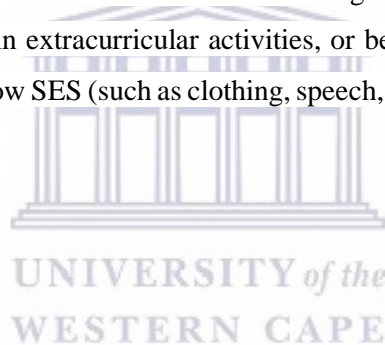
2.10.10 Barriers to social capital in education

Working-class community networks are organised based on scarcity and conservation, whereas the cosmopolitan networks constructed by their middle-class members are oriented toward maximising individual and group access to the mainstream marketplace. Mainstream circles have an abundance of wider institutional resources, privileges and opportunities for leisure, recreation, career mobility, social advancement and political empowerment that are distributed across many social spheres (Schiff, 2002).

Central to the debate is the construction of the social capital of interpersonal trust, solidarity and shared meaning in the context of institutional relations. There is an established social order where institutional agents fulfil particular functions—the ethos of which may at times be of a classist, sexist or even racialized social nature. In the role of help-giving, such social capital may be offered with some contradictions and ambivalence. Institutional agents have little say in the matter and have to negotiate their contradictory roles.

Institutional support and social capital are often given generously to high performers while alienating those most in need of such support. There are barriers to a disadvantaged student group accessing social capital at an institutional level, including socio-cultural, socio-economic, linguistic and structural barriers. Each of these barriers carries the potential to induce in disadvantaged student groups the experiences of ‘anxiety, depression, apprehension, or fear’, feelings that not only disrupt their ability to perform studies-related tasks, but that hinder their social development, particularly their ability to establish instrumental or supportive relationships with institutional agents within the educational environment (Tierney, 2006).

Goffman argued that socio-cultural barriers are erected when the cultural components in one environment (such as the home or the ethnic community) are viewed as less important than in another, or worse, are denigrated or cast as inferior (Goffman, 2009). Goffman noted that socio-economic barriers are erected when economic circumstances prevent the student from fully participating in the daily life of the educational institution’s social world, especially those circumstances that impede the formation of pro-social and supportive relations with agents and higher status peers (Goffman, 2009). These circumstances may have to do with the student working outside the home, not having the economic resources to participate in extracurricular activities, or being treated as inferior because of visible markers that communicate low SES (such as clothing, speech, family, not owning an automobile, etc.).



Chapter 3: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

3.1 Introduction

In understanding the complexities of student engagement, two key frameworks are cited in South African research. These are the student integration model of Professor Vincent Tinto (1975, 1993) and the conceptual organiser of Leach and Zepke (2011), which offered a pertinent framework for the topic of student engagement at South African tertiary institutions. Students entering university come from diverse backgrounds; most evidently, a poor state of basic education and limited access to funding and other resources. Tinto's (1975, 1993) integration model acknowledged these disparities in students' backgrounds, individual attributes and prior academic experience. Tinto regarded students' pre-entry characteristics as influencing students' ultimate social and academic integration. He also highlighted pre-university non-academic factors and further described how these factors influence students' experience of engagement with university support structures. Tinto theorised that the interactions between students' characteristics and level of commitment to the university influenced their level of engagement and success. Tinto's integration model emphasised structural and normative integration within the institution, which provides a useful framework to analyse data in terms of student support structures available in the institution. Tinto (1975) regarded structural integration as the explicit standards required by the university (of duties, responsibilities, procedures) while normative integration referred to norms and expectations of the student's identification of normative structures of the academic system that are not officially stated.

3.2 Tinto's Integration Model

Tinto has been an influential theorist on the subject of student affairs, having produced the leading sociological theory on student retention and persistence. Tinto developed a model of student 'drop-out' that explains student retention and success within the university context. Tinto suggested that the degree to which students are integrated into social and academic spheres of the university and are committed to their studies and the goals of the university are predictors of student persistence. He sought to explain the intra-institutional impact on the student in terms of a "longitudinal model of institutional departure" based on an environmental input-process-output model (Tinto, 1993: 114).

Tinto's revised Student Integration Model (1997) connects pre-university contextual factors of the student (family background, prior education, skills and abilities) to their institutional experience and overall institutional success (academic and student retention). Significant interactive and dynamic factors in Tinto's revised model are the student's intentions, goals and commitments; the student's institutional experiences linked to the academic and the social system; academic integration and social integration; and the quality of student effort and learning.

Tinto defined integration as the alignment of a student's attitudes, values, social life, academic life and the institutional goals of the university. As this integration grows, so do the student's personal goals (personal goals are linked to the university). Conversely, negative experiences dissociate the student from the academic and social spheres of the university, decreasing the student's commitment to linked personal goals with the university. Persistence, through goal commitment, is thus a key function in student integration.

A critique of the hypothesis is that social and academic integration that explains student drop-out includes the generalisation of so-called "non-traditional" students. These include distance-learning students, mature students, returning students and minority students (the term 'minority' here refers to the US understanding of an ethnic minority demographic).

Despite this critique, Tinto's Student Integration Model remains one of the most significant models explaining student drop-out from tertiary institutions. Tinto's integration theory is often drawn on in higher education research when discussing the concept of student engagement. It also presents a useful tool in analysing student success, especially within a South African context where many students are first-generation university attendees. Tinto discusses the link between students' social, academic and personal goals and the influence on them of external community factors. This point requires further research.

Tinto's "communities of learning" concept refers to students' social and academic inter-disciplinary peer groups, including residences (Tinto, 1997, 1998) and highlights the contextual influence on academic development and learning (Tinto, 1997, 1998). Where universities are embedded in socially fragmented contexts, it is essential that universities present opportunities for students to immerse themselves into a learning community that transcends the boundaries of multiple definitions—social or disciplinary.

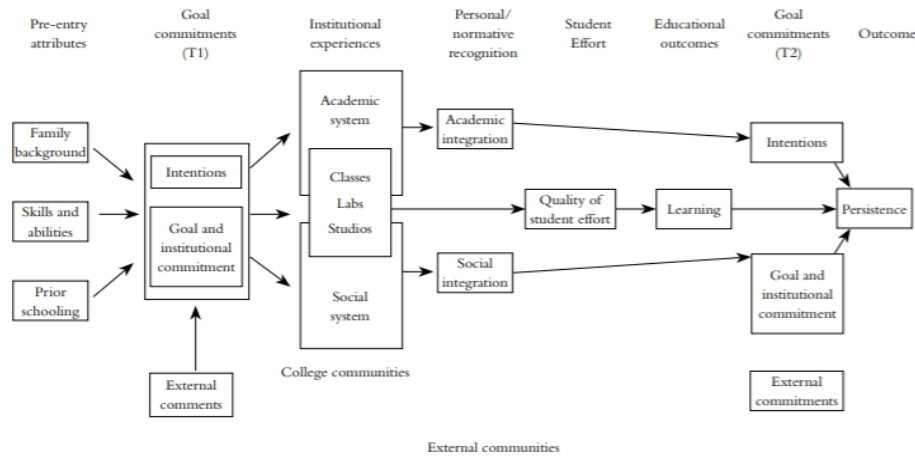


Figure 1: Tinto's revised model of student attrition

Source: McCubbin, 2003, p.11

3.3 Key insights from Tinto's integration theory

The key insights from Tinto's theory can be utilised in a social capital understanding of students in relation to their success at university. What Tinto emphasised is that social and academic integration by the student into an institution is of paramount importance. Students are aware of what they would like to achieve at university and institutions must support them in these endeavours, which in turn aids their academic success.

It is also vital that students have the ability to develop social and academic integration skills in both formal and informal ways. Formal academic integration consists of various academic activities related to academic success. Informal academic engagements are viewed as equally important and include students' interactions with both faculty and university and this Tinto sees as having a normalising effect on their attitudes towards their institutions. This also leads to an increased bond between the student and the university. Social integration (informal integration) takes place with peers while formal integration refers to extra-curricular activities. Higher levels of interactions from students lead to higher levels of persistence and graduation (Tinto, 1993). This student integration theory postulates that if students can have the varied experience of informal and formal academic integration, it puts them in a favourable position to re-examine their commitments and goals to the institution. This may lead to them making alternative decisions based on tertiary studies or further career goals. Based on this assessment, they can decide whether they want to remain at the university. Dropping out in this context means that the student leaves that particular university rather than abandoning higher education altogether (Tinto, 1993).

Significantly, Tinto's model is still largely utilised by high-level educational experts (Smith, 2014) as a reference model for understanding student drop-out rates and support to educational institutions as a

way of organising and directing student and institutional behaviour. It is therefore used as an analytical and problem-solving tool to understand and measure success in education. This model attempts to mirror the iterative process that a typical undergraduate student experiences when pondering a possible decision to drop out of university or persevere. This model assists with understanding students' drop-out behaviour which can aid in minimising its occurrence and thereby enhance student retention and success at university.

The main points of Tinto's (1993) student integration theory are social and academic integration in relation to a student's commitment to the institution and/or outside efforts. As can be seen in Figure 1, students bring to university prior schooling, skills and abilities. When these three things are combined, they lead to a set of commitments, goals and intentions from and to an institution. In other words, students are aware of what they want to achieve before their enrolment in their first academic year. This means that institutions must set out to meet student expectations, which then aids student success. It is also very important that students have the ability to develop informal and formal social and academic integration skills.

Formal academic integration includes researching topics in the library, attending labs and classes and engaging in various activities related to academic success. Informal academic engagement is equally important and includes student interaction with both non-teaching staff and lecturers. Student interaction with faculty members outside class hours can positively affect student retention. Such interactions can have a normalising effect on students' socialisation to the attitudes and values of their institution. Interactions like these can also lead to increasing the bond between students and their university (Palmer & Dancy, 1998). In terms of social integration, informal social integration involves interaction with peers, while formal social integration involves extra-curricular activities. Higher levels of interaction can lead to higher levels of student persistence and graduation (Tinto, 1993).

3.4 Leach and Zepke's Conceptual Organiser

The use of Leach and Zepke's (2011) Conceptual Organiser in this study expands on Tinto's notions of commitment and engagement by providing key lenses that could be used to investigate student engagement.

Leach and Zepke's (2011) identified key lenses from the literature reviewed on student engagement, indicated as perspectives on engagement in their model. Further, they suggested indicators of outcomes that may be reached by using the six lenses. Leach and Zepke's six perspectives of student engagement are summarised in Table 1 below. Leach and Zepke's conceptual organiser illustrates the complexities of student engagement that provided the starting point of the current study. These complexities assist in gaining a deeper understanding of student engagement as a "complex interaction between personal and contextual factors" (Leach & Zepke, 2011: 200). They conceptualised student engagement at the

university as a form of transaction that students enter into with other parties at the university. The transaction concept is useful to explain first-year students' engagement at the university as they transition from 'outsiders' to 'insider' status at the university. While Tinto's Integration Model provided scope to be more descriptive in the analysis of student engagement, Leach and Zepke's (2011) Conceptual Organiser allowed an enhanced understanding of the nature of student engagement experiences in relation to the institutional support provided.

The study by Leach and Zepke (2011) highlighted the significance of understanding students' pre-university non-academic factors and their influence on student engagement at university. It revealed that pre-university non-academic factors are assets and resources that students use to engage with university support structures. The findings of this study brought to the fore three important indicators from the pre-university non-academic factors, being family support, the financial status of the family and the family's level of education.



Table 1: Leach and Zepke’s conceptual organiser for student engagement (2011)

Perspectives on Engagement	Indicators
<p>Motivation and Agency: Engaged students are intrinsically motivated and want to exercise their agency.</p>	<p>A student feels able to work autonomously. Students feel they have relationships with others. A student feels competent to achieve success.</p>
<p>Transactional engagement: Students engage with teachers.</p>	<p>Students experience academic challenges. Learning is active and collaborative inside and outside the classroom. Students and teachers interact constructively. Students have enriching educational experiences.</p>
<p>Transactional engagement: Students engage with each other.</p>	<p>Learning is active and collaborative inside and outside the classroom. Students have positive, constructive peer relationships. Students use social skills to engage with others.</p>
<p>Institutional support: Institutions provide an environment conducive to learning.</p>	<p>There is a strong focus on student success. There are high expectations of students. There is investment in a variety of support services. Diversity is valued. Institutions continuously improve.</p>
<p>Active citizenship: Students and institutions work together to enable challenges to social beliefs and practices.</p>	<p>Students can make legitimate knowledge claims. Students can engage effectively with others including the ‘other’. Students can live successfully in the world. Students have a firm sense of themselves. Learning is participatory, dialogic, active and critical.</p>
<p>Non-institutional support: Students are supported by families and friends to engage in learning.</p>	<p>Students’ families and friends understand the demands of study. Students’ families and friends assist with, for example, childcare, time management. Students’ families and friends create space for study commitments.</p>

The significance of the above model for this study is to explore students’ learning and engagement at university to understand their pathways to success. The learning process for students is complex

influenced by many factors. The conceptual organiser captures key perspectives necessary to keep students engaged in the multi-faceted components of university life. The model provides input related to how learning takes place and how the education habitus of a student can be improved. The significance lies in its explanation towards this meta-construct in understanding the trajectories of student success.



Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive presentation of the research methodology utilised in the study, discussing the research design before moving on to the instruments that were used for the collection of the data. Furthermore, the population and sampling methods are discussed before the chapter concludes with the data analysis and ethical considerations of the study.

4.2 Research Design

Taylor, Bogdan and De Vault (2015) highlight that the research design provides a ‘blueprint’ that the researcher follows for valid and reliable study outcomes. Bryman (2004) described a research design as a set of guidelines and instructions, when addressing the research problem. A research design focuses on the end-product and all the steps in the process to achieve that outcome. Consequently, a research design is viewed as the functional plan, in which certain research methods and procedures are linked together to acquire a reliable and valid body of data for empirically grounded analyses, conclusions and theory formulation. The research design provides a clear research framework, guides the data collection and analyses methods, as well as decisions, setting a basis for interpretation (Babbie, 2010).

4.3 Research Methodology

Research methodology, according to Bryman and Teevan (2005), is defined as using a set of procedures and rules to study a situation or phenomenon. It involves linking theory with practice. Quantitative and qualitative studies have been the most prominent research methods and have been the dominant research approaches. Most recently, the mixed methods approach (MMA) has gained traction among social scientists. In this study, the MMA was utilised by accessing quantitative and qualitative methods, arguing that both approaches may be used interchangeably with each other (Bryman, 2004). A summary of the quantitative and qualitative approaches is shared below as the backdrop and introduction to the MMA.

Data analysis refers to the process of systematically examining and interpreting data to derive insights (Creswell, 2009). Creswell (2009) described data analysis as a process whereby the researcher reduces large information to make sense of it. Data analysis can be divided into quantitative and qualitative techniques (Berg, 2007). This study yielded results from both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Quantitative data analysis uses statistical analysis to analyse data whereas the qualitative technique identifies emerging themes in the data to interpret findings (De Vaus, 2001). The findings in this research were linked to literature, the research questions, the objectives of the study and the theoretical framework.

Qualitative research (Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarshar & Newton, 2002) comprises any type of research that generates findings not reached through statistical processes or other quantification means. This entails a study about people's lived experiences, emotions, behaviour and lives. According to De Vaus (2001), qualitative research is important in exploring individual attitudes, perceptions, conceptions and priorities on a certain topic. Qualitative methods seek to understand social realities (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative research combines several interpretative techniques that seek to explore evidence of the world as it is lived (Denzin & Lincoln, 2006). One major disadvantage of using this kind of research is that findings cannot be generalised to a larger population because the data gathered is from a small sample. The advantage of using qualitative research, however, is that it depends on human experience and therefore the issues covered can be evaluated in depth and with greater detail.

4.4 Mixed Methods Approach

The mixed methods approach (MMA) is described by Berg (2011) as a bridge between qualitative and quantitative methodology. This approach is advantageous because it offsets the limitations of qualitative and quantitative research methods, thereby enhancing the validity of the research (De Vaus, 2001). By using mixed methods, researchers are not restricted when answering research questions. Mixed methods are a pluralistic, complementary and inclusive form of research (Berg, 2011). Although using mixed methods is beneficial, it does have some drawbacks due to it being time-consuming, expensive and labour-intensive (Bryman & Teevan, 2005).

According to Creswell (2009), an MMA allows policy researchers to delve into complex concepts and comprehend these phenomena qualitatively, while generating qualitative assessments at the same time, which, in turn, can be used to support quantitative assessments. From this, policies can be generated with greater reliability given that they consider the views and complexity of the social world, as Andranovich and Riposa (2005) posit. The MMA allows for the enhanced understanding of these complexities. Holding a similar view to Bryman and Teevan (2005), Amaratunga et al. (2002) provided that the simultaneous or iterative use of qualitative and quantitative methods allow for the exploration of complex concepts in society. In the end, the outcomes of the research will be far stronger, and perhaps more reliable, compared to the outcomes of research that applies a single method (Amaratunga et al., 2002). MMA allows one to “gain a more rounded and holistic understanding of the phenomena under investigation” (Creswell, 2009: 189).

In addition, Babbie (2010) posited that MMA assists to create a balance between the limitations and strengths of each of the methods, wherein the limitations of one approach may be compensated for by the strengths of the other approach. In agreement with Babbie (2010), Berg (2007) contended that MMA builds on the strengths of both the qualitative and the quantitative aspects, while Andranovich and Riposa (2005), observed that MMA has the potential to adequately address the multiplicity of interests among different stakeholders insofar as policymaking and knowledge generation are concerned.

The MMA was applied in this study as it allows for the collection and utilisation of both qualitative and quantitative data. This, in turn, helps strengthen the research and ensured that the output resulted in increased strength and richness of the research.

Finally, this perspective enhances the strength and reliability of the findings within the study (Andranovich and Riposa, 2005). It allows for the objective measurement of social capital indicators and their impact on student success. On the other hand, the qualitative aspect of this design allowed the researcher to obtain the viewpoints of the research participants concerning their perceived knowledge and experiences of networks and university support systems and how these have shaped and contributed to their success at university. Furthermore, the qualitative approach assisted with identifying the challenges faced by students that may be impeding their success at university. In the end, the researcher could triangulate both qualitative and quantitative data, as Berg (2007) noted, enhancing the validity of research findings.

4.5 Quantitative Research Approach

Quantitative research collects numerical data to generalise it across sections of the population or to use it to explain a particular phenomenon (Babbie, 2007). It intends to control, explain and predict a phenomenon by answering questions on relationships with quantifiable variables (Kyle et al., 2004). Quantitative research provides a macro view as it often involves large sample sizes and is appropriate in situations where systematic, standardised comparisons are needed (Babbie, 2007). It is also believed to be more credible than qualitative research because its goal is to limit extraneous variables within the study's internal structure. An additional advantage is that quantitative research can be standardised when testing phenomena (Berg, 1999). The disadvantage of using quantitative research is that it cannot always account for non-numerical data such as behaviour, beliefs and feelings. It can, therefore, not always be used to explain social phenomena.

4.6 Data Collection Methods

Data collection can be divided into two categories: primary and secondary data. The most prominent method of collecting primary data is fieldwork (Berg, 1999). Primary data is original and is collected for the first time (Babbie, 2007). Various methods may be used to collect primary data, including observation, interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions. Secondary data, on the other hand, already exists and has been collected and analysed by another party. According to Berg (1999), secondary data can be published or unpublished data and is important when analysing and giving inferences of some empirical knowledge. Secondary data sources include research journals, government publications, books and research reports (Babbie, Mouton & Strydom, 2011). This study utilises primary data as the essential method of collecting data.

4.7 Quantitative Data Collection

4.7.1 Semi-structured questionnaires

A questionnaire may be defined as a fixed set of questions that are themed to gather precise data about one or more specific topics (Babbie, 2010). With a semi-structured questionnaire, closed-ended questions are used to collect survey information and structural numerical data. The use of closed-ended questions is advantageous because they require less effort and a large number of individuals can be accessed at a low cost in less time (Dexter, 1993). The limitation of a semi-structured questionnaire is that it cannot be helpful when seeking information about complex behaviours related to research subjects and may pose challenges for people with limited literacy (Dexter, 1993). This study used a structured questionnaire with largely closed-ended questions and, in the latter part of the instrument, a few open-ended questions were posed.

In the light of applying an MMA, the structured questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions allowed for the convergence of both quantitative and qualitative data, to be collected at the same time (Mishler, 2006). The questionnaire, therefore, had quantitative closed-ended questions and a few open-ended questions which allowed for qualitative analysis.

The closed-ended questions were interpreted using the SPSS statistical programme, while the open-ended questions were interpreted using a qualitative thematic analysis. The questionnaire comprised 34 questions in total, of which 28 were closed-ended and the remaining six were open-ended. The open-ended questions were utilised in this study to elicit students' perspectives on the topic. This allowed questions on more complex issues and learning about the contextual factors that govern students' experiences. Students completed the questionnaire online due to distance learning conditions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown restrictions.

The structured self-administered questionnaire was chosen for its ability to reduce bias errors caused by the characteristics of the participant (Mishler, 2006). The questionnaire was administered to undergraduate students. The time frame for the administration of the questionnaire allowed respondents to be able to access and reply to questions virtually and allowed sufficient time for the respondents to respond to the contents. Questionnaires were emailed to participants and completion of the questionnaire took approximately 20 minutes.

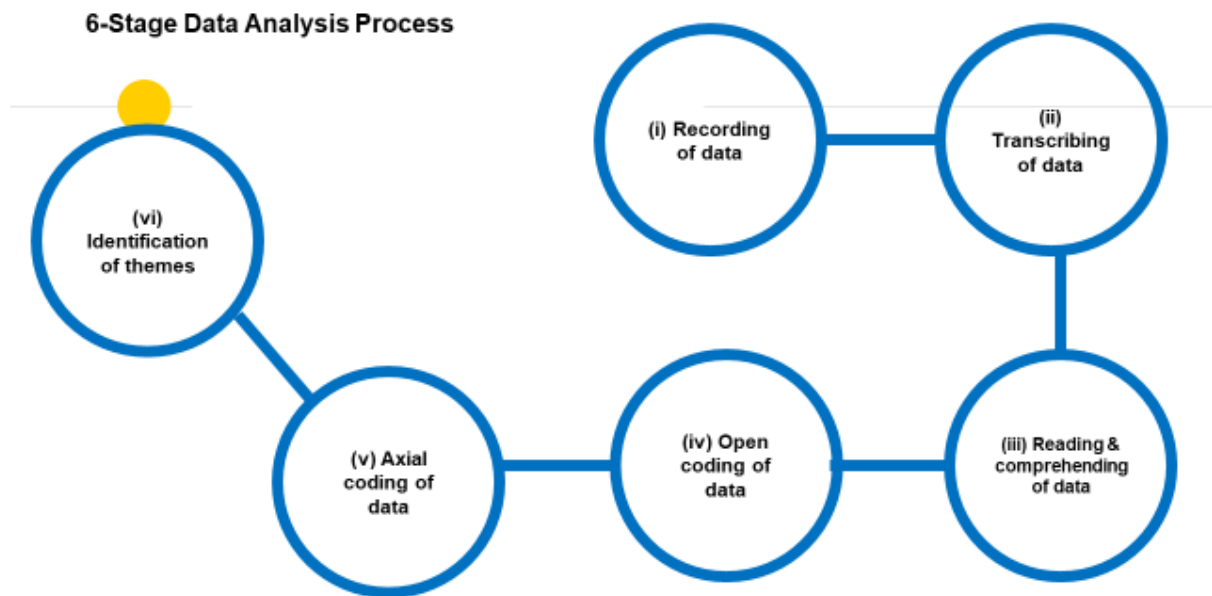


Figure 2: Six-stage data analysis process

4.7.2 Population

A population can be defined as the universe of units from which a sample is to be selected (Dandekar, 2005). The term sample is used to refer to the subset or segment of the population that is selected for research (Dandekar, 2005). When embarking on research, it is important to choose a sample population that best reflects the target population as inferences can be made from the sample to the entire population (Seidman, 2008). The targeted population in this study was undergraduate students at UWC who had lived experiences as part of the university community. The data for the study was collected during the month of September 2021.

4.8 Sampling

In the collection of the data, snowball sampling was used in this study. Snowball sampling involves the selection of participants through referrals made by the first selected participant (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). This technique is often used to reach participants who share the same characteristics but are considered 'hidden' in the sense that they are "...difficult to identify, to study and to recruit for the imposed investigation" (Seidman, 2008: 97). Dyck (2004) stated that this technique is useful in conducting research within marginalised societies. Bryman and Teevan (2005) also suggest that it can be used as an alternative technique if other preferred techniques are not feasible in the research environment. In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the remote nature of learning and interaction within the student community on campus, the snowball sampling technique was considered best suited as a recruitment technique due to the difficulty in reaching the participants. Remote learning also gave

rise to an environment of isolation that impacted the accessibility of participants. A sample size of 13 students was used in this study.

The initial participants (2 in total) were referred to the researcher via the Centre for Student Support Services. The above participants shared the details of the study with their networks and on this basis student's volunteered to participate. Recruiting research participants was a challenge due to COVID, isolation and remote interaction of students. Based on these factors, the sample size was limited to 13 individuals. The 13 participants were also able to share sufficient information for this study ensuring that the aims of the research had been achieved.

4.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical guidelines are important to protect research participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2006). The study commenced only once the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the University of Western Cape's Economic and Management Sciences Higher Degrees Committee and the Senate Higher Degrees and Ethics Committees.

Babbie (2010) and Berg (2011) indicated there to be four main ethical guidelines that researchers should follow when conducting a study. These principles are informed consent, voluntary participation, protection from harm and the right to privacy.

4.9.1 Informed consent and voluntary participation

According to Babbie (2007), the participants are entitled to full disclosure about the research. Participants were fully informed through information sheets obtained from UWC that described the topic and purpose of the research and disclosed the contact details of the researcher including myself, supervisor and Head of Department. The participants were assured that the study was strictly conducted for academic purposes and that, even after consenting to participate, they could withdraw from the study at any point for whatever reason.

4.9.2 Protection from harm and right of privacy

Participants were assured that they would be free from any form of psychological or emotional harm during the conduct of the research. Ensuring confidentiality is another way of protecting participants (Kyle et al., 2004). All measures to ensure the protection and confidentiality of the respondents were taken.

4.10 Limitations of the Study

The research sample consisted of 13 participants and the findings cannot be generalised to the larger population of students because of the sample size. The participants displayed high levels of motivation and academic rigour. Given that snowball sampling was used, participants may have connected or referred like-minded individuals. The study took place during COVID-19 restrictions which limited

the choice of methodology to remote interactions. All interactions between the researcher and participants occurred online via e-mail. The findings may have been different had face-to-face research options been available.

Lastly, two participants in the study were first-year students who had experienced limited exposure to the university during the pandemic due to campus lockdown restrictions. This has impacted the results as their responses may have differed if they had had access to typical in-person experiences of university life.

Conclusion

The above paragraphs provides a description of the mixed methods approach utilised in this study. This was followed by executing the research instrument leading to the data related to the research questions. This is further discussed in the chapters which follow.



Chapter 5: Findings and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the raw data that was elicited from the self-administered structured questionnaires mentioned in Chapter 4. The questionnaire consisted of 37 questions of which 31 was closed-ended and six were open-ended. The responses to the 31 questions are presented quantitatively and the six remaining questions were analysed using a systematic thematic analysis.

The questionnaire included a segment of questions related to the pandemic which probed participants' coping in relation to their networks during this time. This augmented the information on social capital accessed during this time and how it impacted their coping and success at university. It was important to include COVID-19-related questions because of the extent of its impact on society and daily functioning. This also served to provide extended data related to the topic to provide a realistic account of students' experiences during this time.

The respondents' demographic information¹ is presented in table 2 below.

Table 2: Respondents Demographics

	Valid	Valid	Total
Gender	8 males	5 females	13
Ethnicity	10 Coloured	3 African Black	13
Age	18 years (min)	22 years (max)	
Year of Study	1st—4th year		

5.2 Networks and Groups

5.2.1 Formal and informal networks

The different approaches to the concept of social capital indicate its similarities to and differences with other forms of capital, i.e. financial and human capital. Social capital could facilitate the management of information, helping individuals to achieve objectives that otherwise would not have been achieved,

¹ The demographic categories 'Coloured' and African Black' correspond to two ethnicities used for statistical purposes in South Africa and generally referred to as 'population groups' in official terms. They should not be construed as spurious notions of 'race'.

and offering them a system of recognition that links individuals to groups and integrates (networks) them through the fulfilment of group expectations.

Debates on the concept of social capital (Lin, 1999) have claimed a distinction between formal and informal aspects. Formal social capital is defined by formal participation in civic organisations (Pribesh & Downey, 2001; Putnam, 1993), while informal social capital is defined by social relationships that individuals establish with family, friends, colleagues, neighbours, etc. Qian and Blair (2007) showed evidence that these two dimensions of social capital are related to each other by the accumulation and substitution that changes across countries.

5.3 Quantitative Data Presentation

5.3.1 Section A: Formal networks

When respondents were asked about their membership in organisations/ sports clubs/ societies on campus, eight of the 13 respondents indicated their membership in an organisation on campus (Table 3).

QUESTION: *Which organisations/ sports clubs/ societies on campus do you belong to?*

Table 3: Organisation, Sports clubs and Societies membership

Organisations/ sport clubs/ societies				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Does belong	8	61,5	61,5
	Does not belong	5	38,5	100,0
	Total	13	100,0	

Of the eight respondents who indicated belonging to an organisation/ sports club/ society on campus, the majority belong to a sports club (N=5) and/or a religious group (N=3). Membership of a formal network on campus is present with sports clubs and religious groups being the most prominent choice for students.

QUESTION: *How many hours per week do you spend participating in campus groups?*

Table 4: Hours spent in campus groups

Hours per week				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	0—2 hrs	7	63,6	63,6
	3—5 hrs	2	18,2	81,8
	None	2	18,2	100,0
	Total	11	100,0	

The majority of the students (63.6%) spent 0—2 hours of their time per week participating in their formal networks on campus, while two (18.2%) spent 3—5 hours of their time participating in formal groups and two (18.2%) dedicating no time to formal networks during the week.

QUESTION: *Which are the most important groups?*

Table 5: Most important groups/ formal networks

Important groups				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Political group	1	7,7	7,7
	Cultural group	1	7,7	15,4
	MSA	1	7,7	23,1
	Religious group	6	46,2	69,2
	Sports group	4	30,8	100,0
	Total	13	100,0	

The types of organisations/ sports clubs/ societies that the respondents belong to on campus are illustrated in table 5. Respondents were asked to list the groups they belong to from the most to the least important. The most important groups according to respondents are religious groups (46.2%) and sports groups (30.8%).

The study of youths' religious development has burgeoned over the past 30 years, with an increasing number of disciplines recognising the importance of this aspect of human development. Specifically, there has been noticeable interest in religion and spirituality in the social sciences around positive youth development (Astin & Astin, 2003). For example, prior literature suggests that religious participation fosters identity development, a critical aspect of youth development (Bray et al., 2010). In multicultural societies, religious participation gives young people the opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs and values as they develop worldviews about other faith traditions and cultures (Smith & Snell, 2009). Furthermore, religious communities may foster intergenerational relationships and provide youth with opportunities for building social capital, such as expanding support networks (Astin & Astin, 2003).

Youth in the current study drew an immense amount of resources from their religious participation. Similar to previous studies on religious development (Bray et al., 2010), the study concluded that religion and spirituality provided youth with emotional and social support.

The empirical literature suggests that sport in South Africa is a social activity that plays a valuable role in building a common identity, that membership in sports clubs and teams is one of the key forms of associational life and, finally, that sports groups form networks that go beyond the respondents themselves. In particular, the creation of community associations is one of the social capital dimensions. Brown (2015) showed that membership of sports and recreational organisations leads to exceptionally

high scores in some social capital measures. Such social capital presence in the structures of sports participation seems to be important for the existence and continuation of these communities and for members to remain in an organisation and continue their activity, including physical activity.

Sport has a significant role in South African culture. Sport is not only a physical activity but an area where people interact socially. Sport and leisure activities form an integral part of social life in all communities (Morrow, 2001). It is seen as a tool for conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development by United Nations agencies (Smith-Maddox, 2003). According to Riddle, Harmes and Danaher (2017), people jointly participating in active sport, especially in team sports, enter into “direct physical contact” with one another, which practically provokes “the emergence of intensive interpersonal relationships” (Smith-Maddox, 2003: 7). Sport has often been used as a tool for social cohesion in communities, particularly by youth development organisations in poorer communities.

The study confirmed various forms of social capital identified in the broad categories of formal and informal networks at UWC. Formal networks were primarily clubs and societies and religious and sports groups were the most prominent. Additional formal networks were Student Support Services and members of the Financial Aid Office on campus. Informal networks identified were peer groups on campus. These peer groups were primarily their social connections.

QUESTION: *How did you find out about these groups?*

Table 6: Referral channels for groups

How did you find out				
		Responses		% of Cases (N=11)
		N	%	
Valid	Friends	11	57,9	100,0
	Campus advertising	5	26,3	45,5
	Social media	3	15,8	27,3
Total		19	100,0	

Friends (57.9%) facilitating access to groups, clubs and societies were the strongest referral channel, followed by campus advertising (26.3%) and social media (15.8%). Contemporary sociological research has shown the strong connection between network development and its impact on access to institutional resources, opportunities, and privileges. Researchers (Bates, 2011) also admit that the role that social networks play is often understated and can be classified as far more valuable in opening up access opportunities for students.

With regard to the marketing of campus resources, Harpham (2008) stated that the institution is seen as another context that opens up opportunities for social relationships and also contributes to the students’

performance. Relationships with peers and institutional agents are also viewed as a strong form of social capital (Khanchel & Ben Kahla, 2013).

QUESTION: *What are the main benefits derived from joining groups on campus?*

Table 7: Main benefits of joining groups

Main benefit of joining groups				
		Responses		% of Cases (N=12)
		N	%	
Valid	No benefit	3	12,0	25,0
	Spiritual	3	12,0	25,0
	Increases social status	4	16,0	33,3
	Improves self-esteem	5	20,0	41,7
	Improves knowledge base/ education	4	16,0	33,3
	Recreational	6	24,0	50,0
Total		25	100,0	

When questioned about the key benefits of belonging to these formal networks, six respondents (24%) identified recreational benefits as the most important and five (20%) reported that membership of these groups helped to improve their self-esteem.

The above shows the process of social capital formation as resources are readily accessible to the actors in the network. In this sense, a social support network can potentially generate plentiful social capital. Individual actors' abilities, aptitudes or motives are viewed as involved in forming or generating social capital within the network. Portes (2009) proposed conceptually separating 'resources themselves' from the ability of actors (students) to secure benefits through membership. This allows the ability to distinguish the resources themselves from the ability to obtain them through membership in different social structures (Portes, 2009: 15—16).

5.3.2 Characteristics of groups

QUESTIONS: *Do members of groups share the same education, political viewpoint, socio-economic status, language and age?*

Table 8.1: Shared characteristics of members of groups

Members share: Education				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	8	30,8	30,8
	No	18	69,2	100,0
	Total	26	100,0	

Table 8.2: Political views

Members Share: Political views				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	7	26,9	26,9
	No	19	73,1	100,0
	Total	26	100,0	

Table 8.3: Socio-economic status

Members Share: Socio-economic status				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	5	19,2	19,2
	No	21	80,8	100,0
	Total	26	100,0	

Table 8.4: Language

Members Share: Language				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	18	69,2	69,2
	No	8	30,8	100,0
	Total	26	100,0	

Table 8.5: Age frequencies

Members Share: Age				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	12	46,2	46,2
	No	14	53,8	100,0
	Total	26	100,0	

Tables 8.1—8.5 present the frequency of each of the characteristics measured in the questionnaire. Language is indicated as the only characteristic that is shared by the individuals, with age exhibiting the smallest variance between *yes* and *no*.

Language showed the strongest variance for the respondents in their formal networks on campus. Shared language is commonly mentioned as one of the elements of the cognitive dimension of social capital. This approach was systematically explored and elucidated by Mann (2008), building on Granovetter's (1992) discussion of structural and relational embeddedness. Shared language is critical for the effective social interaction necessary for people to work together for collective action. It provides a "common conceptual apparatus" that is essential for effective interaction and exchange (Mann, 2008: 47). Shared language includes the terms, vocabulary and jargon that are used by a social group or in a social setting. It can include scientific, academic or technical terms and acronyms as well as subtleties

of language such as colloquialisms and words that carry specific meaning in that social context. Social groupings develop and use language differently and are the staples of day-to-day interactions.

Shared language is an important part of the cognitive dimension of social capital that is vital to various other aspects of social capital. Social structures create the opportunity, the relational dimension helps to create motivation, and shared language provides the ability to create and use social capital. Social capital is built and realised primarily by social interaction. Since shared language is required for effective interaction, language is essential to both the creation and use of social capital.

Regarding age, given the tertiary education context, it could be assumed that most first-time entering undergraduate students at public universities will range between the ages of 18 and 24 years (Stats SA, 2017). The study finding in terms of this shared characteristic confirmed the statistic. This may be seen as one of the distinctive network dynamics within this formal network.

5.3 Bridging Social Capital

Table 8.1—8.5 depicts bridging social capital which refers to more distant ties of like persons, such as loose friendships and workmates. Often people in bridging networks differ in key personal characteristics. Bridging is more outward-looking, more engaged in civic society, narrows the gap between different communities and exercising open membership, and is, therefore, crucial to organising solidarity and pursuing common goals (Steele, 2009). Bridging describes social relationships of exchange, often of associations between people with shared interests or goals but contrasting social identity. Bridging social capital is defined as the connections between individuals who are dissimilar (or heterogeneous) with respect to socioeconomic and other characteristics. This dissimilarity in characteristics is supported by the reports in tables 8.1—8.5, with language and age being the most commonly shared characteristics within these networks.

In terms of social capital, keeping in contact with people who are outside the group is more beneficial than contact with those in the closest relationships (Steele, 2009). The issue that is highlighted here is that social capital not only refers to connections with other people but connections with the right people who can grant access to influence, power, recognition—the proverbial ‘moving in the right circles’ (Granovetter, 1973).

Granovetter (1973) held a firm belief in the strength of weak ties. He believed that they have a significant bridging function and can act as a facilitator between cliques and sub-groups, thereby opening up opportunities. He labelled these connections ‘local bridges’, as they gave rise to efficient pathways and links between social groups.

5.4 Types of Social Capital

Bridging social capital was depicted in respondents' affiliations to their clubs and societies. Shared characteristics were not high between members, weak ties were apparent, and one main reason for membership to these networks was to 'get ahead', using the ties and resources available from these associations. An emergent theme from the responses elicited, in terms of derived benefits, was the networking opportunities that respondents could access through network membership.

Linking social capital was clearly present between students and representatives of the university like lecturers, tutors and support services. Students' relations with those in power were evident. Relationship building was distinct within these network relations. Herrington and Curtis (2002) stated that it is vital to have an appropriate balance of the types of social capital because research found that one type of social capital alone was insufficient for community development to occur. They found that communities with sufficient levels of the different forms of social capital were more likely to mobilise in the face of adversity and less likely to have negative outcomes. A similar resilience was certainly palpable among participants during the pandemic.

Peer social groups were the highest-ranking association identified and the students were all affiliated to some form of peer group from which they derived both academic and emotional support. These networks provided emotional support during stressful times. They were knowledge agents for assimilating their academic work in various ways and participants had established themselves in very clear communities of learning wherein a range of academic and related processes were taking place. These included elements of problem-solving, assistance with assimilating knowledge, normalising challenging experiences, providing emotional support and assisting each other's skills transfer and improvement of time and stress management.

These derived benefits were sustained and increased especially during the pandemic period. The social capital indicators increased and became more nuanced towards online learning and providing support among ties in other ways. The derived benefits were reciprocal and participants were spurred on by a collective drive to succeed. Overall, of the two different types of social capital that were manifested for students, the informal networks were reported as more prominent by participants, followed by formal networks like academics and membership of clubs and societies.

QUESTION: *Would you say that your participation in the clubs/ organisations on campus has had an impact on your personal growth?*

Table 9: Personal growth

Personal growth				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	7	58,3	58,3
	No	5	41,7	100,0
	Total	12	100,0	

When asked about whether membership of the formal networks on campus had impacted their personal growth, seven respondents (58.3%) confirmed that it had influenced their personal development while five (41.7%) said such membership had not had an impact on their personal growth. As mentioned, it should be noted that two respondents were first-year students who had little opportunity to engage in any extra-curricular activities in the campus community due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.5 Section B: Informal Networks

5.5.1 Social network descriptions

Tables 10—15 present a description of the informal networks respondents belong to and the impact that these networks have on their lives.

QUESTION: *Give the number of close friends you can generally speak to when needed?*

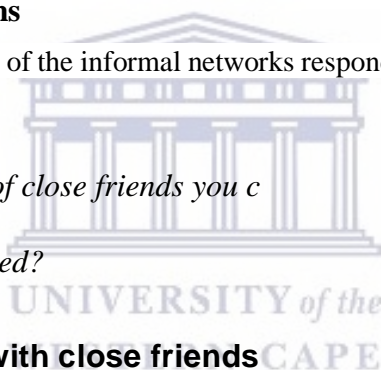


Table 10: Communication with close friends

Close friends you can speak to				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	1—3	7	53,8	53,8
	3—5	5	38,5	92,3
	5—10	1	7,7	100,0
	Total	13	100,0	

When asked about the number of close friends whom they are able to speak to (53.8%) reported having 1—3 close friends, 38.5% between 3—5 friends and 7.7% having 5—10 friends.

QUESTION: *What are the socio-economic statuses of your friends in relation to your own socio-economic status?*

Table 11: Socio-economic status of friends

Socio-economic status of friends				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Higher	2	15,4	15,4
	Lower	1	7,7	23,1
	The same	9	69,2	92,3
	Mixed	1	7,7	100,0
	Total	13	100,0	

When asked about the socio-economic status (SES) of their friends in relation to their own socio-economic status, 69% of respondents reported sharing the same SES while 15% said their peers had a higher SES than themselves. Only 1 (7.7%) reported that their peers had a lower SES than themselves. Overall, the more homogeneous ties reported by respondents indicate evident bonding social capital.

QUESTION: *Will your friends on campus check in on you to see how you are doing if you are absent from lectures?*

Table 12: Friends checking on absence

Friends checking in on you				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes, always	8	61,5	61,5
	Yes, sometimes	5	38,5	100,0
	Total	13	100,0	

Note that all respondents recorded *yes* to this question, of which eight (61.5%) responded that friends *always* reach out to check on them if absent from lectures while 5 (35.5%) said their friends would only check up on them sometimes. The 100% *yes* response to this question showed the support present in respondents' connections with their informal networks.

QUESTION: *Do your friends help each other out?*

Table 13: Assistance provided by friends

Friends help each other				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes, always	7	53,8	53,8
	Yes, most of the time	6	46,2	100,0
	Total	13	100,0	

Again, all respondents recorded *yes* to this question. Although to different degrees, all respondents reported that they could rely on the help of friends, which demonstrates the social capital value of these informal networks.

QUESTION: *Do friends on campus provide you with support during stressful/ difficult times?*

Table 14: Support of friends

Support during stressful times				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	11	91,7	91,7
	No	1	8,3	100,0
	Total	12	100,0	

Only one (8.3%) of 12 participants who responded to this question did not have the support of friends when experiencing difficult times. The other 11 were experiencing the benefit of social capital in the form of network support.



QUESTION: *What type of support is provided by your close friends?*

Table 15: Support of close friends

Friends Support				
		Responses		% of Cases
		N	%	
Valid	Emotional support	10	19,6	76,9
	Financial support	1	2,0	7,7
	Sharing information relevant to my studies	13	25,5	100,0
	Provide networking opportunities for studies and career	6	11,8	46,2
	Offer guidance and advice on personal issues	10	19,6	76,9
	Offer guidance and advice on academic issues	11	21,6	84,6
Total		51	100,0	392,3

The type of support provided by friends was analysed as a multiple response set. The majority of respondents indicated they receive support from friends in the form of advice on academic issues (84.6%), followed by guidance and advice on personal issues and emotional support (both 76.9%).

5.6 Section C: Peer Characteristics

QUESTION: *What do you have in common with your friends on campus?*

Table 16: Characteristics shared with friends

In common with friends				
		Responses		% of Cases
		N	%	
Valid	Study the same courses	12	24,5	92,3
	Come from the same community	3	6,1	23,1
	Identify with the same ethnic group	8	16,3	61,5
	Share the same social status/ prestige/ class	7	14,3	53,8
	Share the same sports interests	4	8,2	30,8
	Same political orientation	1	2,0	7,7
	Awareness of current social issues	8	16,3	61,5
	Share the same artistic and creative interest	4	8,2	30,8
	Popularity	2	4,1	15,4
Total		49	100,0	

Common characteristics with friends were analysed in a multiple response set. 92.3% (N=12) indicated the commonality they have with their friends is that they study the same courses. This is followed by awareness of current social issues 61.5% (N=8), identifying with the same ethnic group 61.5% (N=8) and sharing the same social status 53.8% (N=7). These were the four highest response rates to this question.

Responses in Tables 11—16 indicate bonding social capital, which is a type of social capital that describes connections within a group or community characterised by high levels of similarity in demographic characteristics, attitudes, and available information and resources. Bonding social capital exists between ‘people like us’ who are ‘in it together’ and who typically have strong close relationships. Examples include family members, close friends and neighbours.

Bonding social capital is found in the strong relationships that develop between people of similar backgrounds and interests, usually include family and friends, provide material and emotional support, and are more inward-looking and protective. Bonding social capital refers to networks with a high density of relationships between members, where most, if not all, individuals belonging to the network are interconnected because they know each other and interact frequently with each other.

Friendships are often considered to be bonding social capital, as they are frequently formed between people who share common characteristics or interests. Friends are people that we turn to when we are in a crisis, and with whom we feel close. Sometimes, friendships may also act as bridging relations, in

that they may be between people of different cultural backgrounds, socio-economic backgrounds or ages, who may provide access to information and other groups or individuals not previously known to the other.

Note the contrasting differences in results yielded for formal networks on campus (clubs and societies) versus informal networks above. The different characteristics of each of these sets of networks illustrate bridging and bonding social capital respectively.

5.7 Section D: Academic Support on Campus

QUESTION: *Who would you approach to assist with personal/academic support?*

Table 17: Academic Support

Source Support				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Source Support	Tutors	7	14.6%	53.8%
	Lecturers	11	22.9%	84.6%
	Faculty student advisor	1	2.1%	7.7%
	Academic support services	3	6.3%	23.1%
	Friends	12	25.0%	92.3%
	Family	10	20.8%	76.9%
	Try to solve on my own	4	8.3%	30.8%
Total		48	100.0%	

Pertaining to Table 17, friends are indicated as the primary source of information for support with 92.3% (N=12) of respondents responding accordingly. This is followed by lecturers 84.6% (N=11) and family 76.9% (N=10). Given the responses above, as has been ascertained earlier in this chapter, *bonding* social capital was apparent and identified as the type of social capital shared between respondents and their peers. *Bonding* social capital is reinforced with the results in Table 22, and an additional association to this are family members. With regard to the response rate for lecturers (84.6%), this demonstrates *linking* social capital.

Linking social capital describes norms of individuals or trusting relationships between people who are working with each other across hierarchies in a community/ society. This interaction usually takes place across formal and institutional authority positions in society. The fundamental characteristic here is the difference in social position or power between the various role-players. An example of *linking* social

capital is the relationships between a community and government stakeholders. This is a type of social capital that describes norms of respect and networks of trusting relationships between people who are interacting across explicit, formal or institutionalised power or authority gradients in society. These relationships are described as ‘vertical’ and the key feature is differences in social position or power. An example could be relationships between a community-based organisation and government or other funders.

As such it is the extent to which individuals build relationships with institutions and individuals who have relative power over them (e.g. to provide access to services, jobs or resources). This is exemplified in the results indicated between the participants and academics (lecturers) at UWC.



5.8 Section E: COVID-19 Context

QUESTION: *What is the most challenging aspect during the COVID-19 period?*

Table 18: COVID-19 challenges

COVID-19 challenges				
		Responses		% of Cases
		N	%	
Valid	Online learning	9	32,1	69,2
	Financial problems	4	14,3	30,8
	Personal problems	4	14,3	30,8
	Mental problems	11	39,3	84,6
Total		28	100,0	

Respondents identified mental health problems as the most challenging difficulty for them during the period of COVID-19, followed by online learning. Earlier educational and psychological research appears to indicate that concerns about students' mental health under lockdown restrictions that enforced the sudden switch to online learning systems are valid. Investigations pointed out that students have at times experienced an increase in stress, anxiety and depression (De Silva et al., 2005), and have felt some negative feelings intensified, such as fear, worry or boredom (De Silva, 2016). Several studies have highlighted the protective effect that the connection with the rest of the academic community can have on anxiety, depression and stress (Fujiwara & Kawachi, 2018). Although mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic has received much attention in the academic field, studies have focused on analysing adverse mental states such as depression, stress or anxiety. A broader perspective is needed to look at treatment interventions under these circumstances (De Silva, 2016).

QUESTION: *Have the groups or societies that you belong to assisted you with coping during COVID-19?*

Table 19: Coping during COVID-19 through formal networks

Coping				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	8	61,5	61,5
	No	5	38,5	100,0
	Total	13	100,0	

With regard to receiving support from their formal networks on campus, 61.5% (N=8) felt supported during COVID-19 while 38.5% (N=5) did not feel supported by their formal networks on campus.

QUESTION: *Have you and your friends (on campus) supported each other during the COVID-19 period?*

Table 20: Coping with COVID-19 through informal networks

Supportive friends				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	13	100,0	100,0

Support from their informal networks/ friends during COVID-19 was confirmed by all respondents in the study compared to only eight feeling supported by formal networks (Table 18). The higher support received from informal networks may be as a result of the close network ties, the common characteristics they share and a clear display of high levels of trust within this network.

QUESTION: *Do you think that the support you receive from friends has helped you cope better at university during this time?*

Table 21: Support received from friends during COVID-19

Coping (1)					
		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	13	100.0	100,0	100,0

All respondents felt that support received from their informal network/ friends on campus helped them cope better during the COVID-19 period where 100% (N=13) affirmed this.

QUESTION: *Do you think that the support you receive from the clubs and societies at university has helped you cope better at university during this time?*

Table 22: Support received from clubs/ societies during COVID-19

Coping (2)				
		Frequency	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	7	53,8	53,8
	No	6	46,2	100,0
	Total	13	100,0	

53.8% (N=7) of the respondents felt that the support from their formal networks on campus (clubs and societies) assisted them to cope better at university during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. These results confirm the different types of social capital shared between the formal and informal networks.

The informal networks possessed norms of behaviour different to the formal networks and performed different functions for individuals.

QUESTION: *Which university services do you find to be the most beneficial?*

Table 23: Beneficial university services

Services most beneficial				
		Responses		% of Cases
		N	%	
Valid	Career services	1	14,3	20,0
	Lecturers	2	28,6	40,0
	Tutors	1	14,3	20,0
	Financial Aid	3	42,9	60,0
Total		7	100,0	

The university services found most beneficial by students during the time of COVID-19 were Financial Aid, 60% (N=7), followed by lecturers (academics) at 40% (N=2). The financial impact of the pandemic has weighed heavily upon economies across the world and placed the local economy under severe duress during which time unemployment rates have also increased. It is not surprising that the Financial Aid service became a much-needed resource during this time.

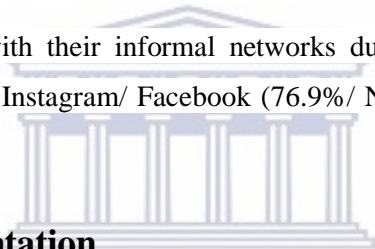
Face-to-face learning came to an abrupt stop and the sudden switch to online learning created a new academic environment with many adjustments to be made. Lecturers were a crucial resource and the availability and engagement of academic staff with students remained high during this time. This explains the lecturers being considered the second-most beneficial service.

QUESTION: Which media of staying connected with friends are used during COVID-19?

Table 24: Communication media used during COVID-19

		Medium of staying connected		
		Responses		% of Cases
		N	%	
Valid	Email	4	9,5	30,8
	WhatsApp	13	31,0	100,0
	Instagram/ Facebook/ other platforms	10	23,8	76,9
	Face-to-face	8	19,0	61,5
	I have not seen my friends during this time	1	2,4	7,7
	I hardly see them	1	2,4	7,7
	I am still in touch with my friends	5	11,9	38,5
Total		42	100,0	

Respondents maintained contact with their informal networks during COVID-19 most frequently through WhatsApp (100%/ N=13), Instagram/ Facebook (76.9%/ N=10) and face-to-face interaction (61.5%/ N=8).



5.9 Qualitative Data Presentation

This section presents prominent themes that emerged from the qualitative data and further confirm and extend the findings of this study. Participants' feedback in response to the open-ended questions posed in the questionnaire provides additional information to the main themes identified from the data. Theoretical perspectives from the literature are included below to provide a context for how some of these themes are positioned in the research related to social capital and student success.

5.9.1 Belonging and connectedness

One of the understandings of social connectedness (which is a sense of belonging) relates to "one's opinion of self in relation to other people" (Christie et al., 2008: 239). Individuals expend great effort in developing relationships with others, even when distance and material circumstances limit interaction (Coughlan, 2006). Such behaviour makes it evident that social connectedness is a fundamental need among humans (Herrington & Curtis, 2002) that can predict positive outcomes.

Gee (2002) developed a self-report scale aimed at measuring the sense of belonging among university students. The initial sample of the study consisted of undergraduate students from a large, urban south-eastern university in the USA. Since the completion of this study, numerous versions of social connectedness scales have been utilised among university students in that country. A similar study was

adapted to the South African context after undergoing a language review to render it more appropriate to the South African context. This study concluded that high-quality interpersonal relationships are very significant in cultivating an individual's ability to function efficiently in academic life (Kurfiss, 1988) with more current research suggesting a positive relationship between healthy interpersonal relationships and academic performance (Christie et al., 2008).

The respondents in the current study described the connections they experienced within their formal and informal networks and how meaningful the sense of belonging derived was. In addition, connection gave rise to advantages for them in academic and other ways. Comments expressed included:

“Different advice and coping mechanisms have been given and shared among our friend group that we use most of the time.”

“We feel comfortable with each other, and this helps when there are any academic and personal problems with one of us.”

“I don't get so stressed about things anymore because I know that I have friends and tutors who will give me good advice.”

Social connectedness may also decrease feelings of loneliness. Chapman and Pyvis (2006) state that students who experience less loneliness and higher levels of social support are more likely to exhibit greater academic persistence. While research does not suggest an explicit link between academic persistence and academic performance, academic persistence has been found to increase the likelihood of staying at university (Tinto, 2010). It, therefore, is important to foster academic persistence in the South African context, given that it contributes to higher student retention rates.

Participants explicitly acknowledged the value of not experiencing challenges “alone” and having a network available to them for support when needed:

“I don't feel like I'm going through these rough patches alone and this helps a lot in getting through it.”

“It's so nice to know that I know people on campus who have my back.”

Various researchers suggest that belonging, as a feeling of being connected, is so instrumental that when the need is not fully met, negative behavioural and psychological symptoms can manifest, including mental illness and criminal tendencies (Knoblauch et al., 2004).

The sense of belonging refers to students' feeling of being connected to their institutions. Luckett and Luckett (2009) conducted a series of studies exploring the concept of students' belonging in educational environments, and its effects on students. They define students' sense of belonging, or 'psychological membership, as “the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and

supported by others in the [education] social environment” (Lockett & Lockett, 2009, p. 89). Tinto (2010: 72, citing Hoffman et al., 2003), presents a sense of belonging as “a generalised sense of membership that stems from students’ perception of their involvement in a variety of settings and the support they experience from those around them”. Mann (2008: 45) describes it as “an individual’s sense of identification or positioning in relation to a group or to the university community, which may yield an effective response”.

The social recognition of others assists students in higher education to feel accepted and valued. This is clear in the remarks below:

“We keep each other motivated and study together to keep the work ethic. My friends also make studying much easier for me when they send their tips and videos to make it easier to understand. They are always there when I have a work-related question as well.”

“My lecturers were helpful and always answered emails when I wrote to them. One of them even told me to go to the campus support services for more help. I felt very proud to be in my faculty after getting such awesome support.”

5.9.2 Mutual trust

Trust is closely related to social capital. Coleman (1988) contends that a system of mutual trust is an important form of social capital on which future obligations and expectations may be based. Putnam (1993) regards trust as a source of social capital that sustains economic dynamism and governmental performance. Marshall and Case (2010) treat trust as a key facet in the relational dimension of social capital. These different but related perceptions of the relationship between trust and social capital partially reflect the close relationship between the sources of trust and the sources of social capital (Christie et al., 2008).

The levels of trust between respondents and their informal networks and the reliance and faith that they have in each other are unmistakable in these respondent statements:

“There were times when I didn’t have data and my friends would give me their notes and I know that its good notes and the same information they will use for themselves.”

“We help each other with studying for tests and exams and we all make notes to help each other with the workload. I know that I don’t have to repeat my reading because the work we offer each other is our best effort.”

5.9.3 The relationship between trust and social capital

Researchers offer different arguments on the relationship between trust and social capital (Coughlan, 2006). There are converging and diverging views, with one school of thought considering trust a precondition of social capital while a second regards trust as a product or a benefit of social capital. For

many researchers, social capital depends on trust. The relationships, communities, cooperation and mutual commitment that characterise social capital could not exist without a reasonable level of trust. While Bourdieu does not specifically mention trust, it is implied in his argument concerning social reproduction: “The reproduction of social capital presupposes an unceasing effort of sociability, a continuous series of exchanges in which recognition is endlessly affirmed and reaffirmed” (Bourdieu, 1984: 197). People must base their commitments on trust to expand their useful connections.

One comment from a participant precisely mirrors Bourdieu’s concept of social reproduction:

“We make notes for each other, we share all additional resources such as videos and websites to make it easier for each other to understand concepts. My classmates alone always answer any queries we have immediately so that nobody is left behind or confused. We also visit each other a lot to have study sessions so that we still learn in an interactive, working environment. We open up our houses to each other in case one of us has network issues. We also act as alarm clocks for each other and will call one another before a test just in case.”

Both Coleman (1990) and Putnam (1995) define trust as a key component of social capital. Trust also plays an important role in Fukuyama’s concept of social capital: “Social capital is a capability that arises from the prevalence of trust in a society or in certain parts of it” (Fukuyama, 2000). Likewise, Rose (2001) argues that trustworthiness is the economically relevant component of a society’s culture and hence comprises its social capital. The comments below show that participants have intuited the importance of trust to the value they derive from their formal and informal networks:

“I know that we can depend on each other, and this makes the friendship worthwhile. I feel valued, and I know we will continue to be there for each other.”

“My lecturers made such a difference in my life this year – I was so comfortable speaking to them about my academic problems. They are my heroes.”

Unlike Coleman, Putnam and Fukuyama, Woolcock (1999) argued that definitions of social capital should focus primarily on resources rather than consequences. “Trust and norms of reciprocity, fairness, and cooperation are ‘benefits’ that are nurtured in and by particular combinations of social relationships; they are undeniably important for facilitating and reinforcing efficient institutional performance, but they do not exist independently of social relationships. Consequences may be one indicator of the types of *social capital* that are present, but they are not to be confused with social capital itself” (Woolcock, 1999: 289). Woolcock (2005: 23) proposes that trust may better be seen as “a consequence of social capital rather than as an integral component of social capital”.

Notwithstanding differences, the authors agree that trust is closely related to social capital. Coleman (1988) contends that a system of mutual trust is an important form of social capital on which future

obligations and expectations may be based. Putnam (1993) regards trust as a source of social capital that sustains economic dynamism and governmental performance. Chapman and Pyvis (2006) treat trust as a key facet in the relational dimension of social capital. These different but related perceptions of the relationship between trust and social capital are partially the result of the close relationship between the sources of trust and the sources of social capital (Chapman & Pyvis, 2000).

5.9.4 Improved coping skills

The relationship between social capital, physical health and mental health, and the potential of mental health promotion to enhance social capital are current topics of research and debate. The power of social capital lies in the interaction between environmental and social factors and connected groups of individuals. Individuals interacting with environments can explain an array of collective outcomes beyond that explained by aggregated individual health outcomes (Kawachi, Subramanian & Kim, 2008). Much work remains to be done in accounting for the mechanisms underlying community health (Fujiwara & Kawachi, 2018) and the interrelations between social capital and mental health. It is also unclear if the relations between these two variables are multidirectional and of causality or correlation (Herrington & Curtis, 2002). However, social networks are believed to promote social cohesion, informal caring and protection during crises, better health education, better access to health services, and to enforce or change societal norms that have an impact on public health (Herrington & Curtis, 2002).

The comments from students below shows the mental health outcomes and strengthening of their coping skills achieved as a result of their connection to their informal networks, which increased their fortitude in taking on the challenges of their environment:

“Being part of sports clubs has assisted me with managing and relieving me from stress and anxiety.”

“Sports is definitely my stress relief – it motivates me to find ways to solve my problems.”

“Yes, especially in my religious societies. The different types of advice I have been offered have really helped me gain different perspectives and coping mechanisms.”

5.9.5 Emotional support received from networks

‘Emotional capital’ (generally understood as ‘emotional resources’) can provide a useful conceptual tool to educational researchers for two reasons. First, the use of emotional capital as situated in Bourdieu’s work provides a rich account of how emotions-as-resources are circulated, accumulated and exchanged for other forms of capital (John, 2005). The concept of emotional capital offers a tool for thinking about how emotion practices are regulated within an educational context, based on emotional norms that may change but are also reproduced. In these terms, emotional capital is both generated by and contributes to the generation of the habitus of a particular educational context. Second, the notion

of emotional capital can help educational researchers understand the importance of educators' and students' emotion practices as forms of resistance to prevalent emotion norms (Plagens, 2011).

Emotional capital and education related to Bourdieu's notions of habitus and capital yield an understanding of society as a differentiated and open structure and provide a framework that conceptualises the uneven ways in which emotional embodiment and capital are realised in relations between groups or individuals. Bourdieu himself never referred explicitly to the concept of emotional capital in his theory of social capital (Gendron, 2013). Several sociologists of education drew on the work of Bourdieu to theorise the notion of emotional capital and highlight how emotional involvement is implicated in social relationships such as parenthood (McNeal, 2012) or vocational and childcare education and training (Horvat & Antonio, 2009). Khattab (2003), in particular, has made important contributions in using the concept of emotional capital in education, but admits that he has utilised the concept more "as a heuristic device" than as an overarching conceptual frame and thus suggests that "it requires further refining both theoretically and empirically" (Khattab, 2003: 69). According to Ho (2003), Tschannen-Moran (1984) was the first to employ the term 'emotional capital'. Tschannen-Moran theorised emotional capital as a form of social capital and saw it as the social and cultural resources generated through affective relations, especially in the sphere of the family. As she argued, emotional capital denotes the "knowledge, contacts, and relations as well as access to emotionally valued skills and assets, which hold within any social network characterised at least partly by affective ties" (Tschannen-Moran, 1984: 59).

According to the understanding of emotional capital developed here, it is important to emphasise the importance of retaining Bourdieu's idea on the interconnections among the various forms of capital and the notion that emotional orientations provide different opportunities for converting emotional capital into other forms of capital (and vice versa). The concept of emotional capital is valuable not only because it illustrates the importance of emotions within a particular habitus, but because of the significance of emotions and their effects on the circulation of other forms of capital. Therefore, like the major social capitals Bourdieu identified, emotional capital is integrally linked with other resources—political, cultural and social—and blends with them to facilitate or prevent certain practices and discourses.

The appreciation of emotional capital's role in the accumulation of additional resources and social capital and the interconnection between the various forms of social capital within networks come through clearly in the following comments from participants:

"My club offered me a safe space to relieve the stresses of school and to meet others who were going through the same. After our matches, we would always talk about our problems on campus and share information on how to cope."

“My friends were always available to support me for issues about university or my other problems. They were not only friends but also study buddies.”

Conceptualising emotional capital as political, cultural and social enriches educators’ understanding of the power relations involved in affective relations and illustrates how previously established emotional capital—solidarity, trust, hope, loyalty, enmity and so forth—may influence later practices. The comment illustrates how the affective component of networking influenced future reciprocity:

“Support from my teammates is very uplifting, I feel that I want to do the same should they also have problems.”

Bourdieu’s work offers the ground for developing links among affects, emotions and bodies that go beyond reproductionist implications (Borgatti et al., 2008). Particularly, given the demands for conformity and homogeneity within universities—for example, through the calls for emotional intelligence and emotion management—Bourdieu’s framework of ideas provides a powerful analysis of the possibilities for theorising change.

The analysis provided here makes possible an interpretation of the differential impact of emotional capital on educators’ and students’ emotional practices, such as how emotional norms come and go. In making these observations, it seems that educators’ and students’ emotional practices are profoundly influenced by their participation in particular, affective higher education economies.

5.9.6 Networking opportunities

Building social capital networks can improve individuals’ social capital by influencing: (1) the size of their social network, (2) the strength of their relationships in the social network, (3) their pattern of relationships in their social network, and (4) the resources of their social network (Khanchel & Ben Kahla, 2013), as discussed below.

1) Size refers to the number of members in a social network. Through networking, individuals expand their relationship constellation by forming relationships with those internal to the organisation (e.g. peers) and those external to it (e.g. members of professional associations) (Burt, 2000). Dougherty and Whitehead (2011) identified five types of networking behaviours that help individuals to increase and maintain the size of their networks: increasing internal visibility (e.g., joining organisational task forces); engaging in professional activities; participating in social gatherings; becoming involved in community events; and, maintaining contacts with others by sending cards or e-mail to keep in touch.

In sum, building and maintaining relationships with others results in a network that individuals can turn to for social support, ideas, advice or sponsorship as illustrated by the following participant comment:

“My sports coach helped me meet other coaches and gave me information for a postgraduate sports scholarship.”

2) Strength of relationships in a social network refers to the degree of closeness that characterises a relationship. The strength of a relationship can be assessed on a continuum based on the frequency of contact, degree of intimacy and emotional investment (Granovetter, 1981), with weak ties on one end of the continuum and strong ties on the other. Both types of relationships (weak ties and strong ties) can be of assistance. For instance, Granovetter (1984) found that our acquaintances were more helpful than our close friends for finding jobs because our acquaintances are a source of more unique information (i.e. our close friends tend to know about the same job openings). Furthermore, in a study of new product development teams, Hao and Bonstead-Bruns (2004) showed that weak ties were beneficial for accessing routine information, but strong ties were necessary for obtaining complex knowledge. This benefit is illustrated by the student comment below in relation to the relationship (weak tie) with the tutor (formal network):

“My tutor showed me the best tutor sites for some of my courses.”

Networking relationships are typically considered to be weak ties (Beele, 2006) and, hence, a good source of information about job opportunities and other assistance. Moreover, networking relationships may evolve into stronger ties (possibly becoming mentoring relationships) if contact becomes more frequent and the relationship becomes characterised by greater familiarity and comfort.

3) Burt's (2000) structural hole theory focuses on the pattern of relationships in a social network, i.e., whether the members of an individual's social network are connected. A structural hole exists when there is no connection between two members of a social network. One key advantage of having structural holes is that members of a network who do not know one another are more likely to provide access to diverse information. Researchers have found that structural holes are associated with upward mobility (Burt, 2000).

The student below illustrates the structural whole theory whereby a benefit flowed from a referral because contacts in a formal network were unconnected:

“My lecturer advised me to see a counsellor and they told me to visit the Career Centre as part of my plan to improve my situation. It gave me more options to follow through with.”

4) The resources of a social network are the benefits that may be derived. Developing relationships with high-status individuals has the potential to provide valuable outcomes. In their study of job-seekers, Adams et al. (2016) found that the status of the contact had a strong positive effect on the prestige of the attained job, indicating the ability of powerful contacts to exert influence on one's behalf. Networking is related to career outcomes of managers such as promotions and salary progression (Yigit, 2015), as well as to more immediate benefits such as information and ideas, social support, job search assistance and business assistance (e.g. providing business leads and gaining access to financial resources). Boughey postulates that having multiple developmental relationships has been shown to be

associated with greater work satisfaction, career progress and retention (Boughey, 2010). Overall, the results on networking show the powerful impact that relationships with others can have on one's career which is a fundamental benefit for a student working towards career development.

5.9.7 Academic achievement

Academic achievement in adolescence is a key determinant of future educational and occupational success. Informal networks play an important role in the educational process. They provide support and resources and can both encourage and discourage academic achievement. As a result, the preferences of adolescents for friends are very important. These preferences determine the group of friends with whom adolescents spend their time and, in turn, how adolescents spend their time. In principle, the same holds for university students. If high-achieving students make high-achieving friends, their achievement is reinforced and maintained by their friendships (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 2002). This is depicted in the learning communities that were erected within the informal networks and made was explicit in the research results by this comment:

“My study groups with my friends was the one thing that got me through this year.”

Although Coleman (1992) argues that access to friends who support academic achievement is a key determinant of educational success, the actual mechanisms of friendship formation and the role academic achievement plays in friendship dynamics remain poorly measured and understood (Coleman, 1992). Similarly, Jislin-Goldberg, Bernstein and Tanay (2012) argued that peers and friends are a key academic stratifying feature of students within educational settings, but little understanding is available on how friends are made. This gap in this understanding stems largely from methodological issues.

Though difficult to measure and quantify, Monge (1999) set out to study how the social networks that informally develop between students can affect their academic performance. The overall objectives of the study were to increase understanding of how multiple social networks emerge within the student community and how much integration in these networks explains students' success in the final examination. The study found that, most often, informal relationships lead to friendships, and, if students spend more time together and support each other, friendships ultimately lead to the formation of study groups. Regarding how much integration in these networks explains students' success at university, researchers found that students who remained isolated in the network performed worse with their examinations and were more likely to drop out of university than students that were more strongly integrated into the network (Jowett & Stead, 1994). Further, students do not form strategic networks with those students who best understood the subject matter; instead, their networks grew out of their informal relationships (Lane, 2017).

The comment below shows how academic growth resulted from the familiarity that the student had with the informal network rather than from experts in the subject matter.

“Studying with my friends helps a lot because we explain things to each other and can ask questions openly. We don’t feel embarrassed to ask questions about stuff we don’t understand.”

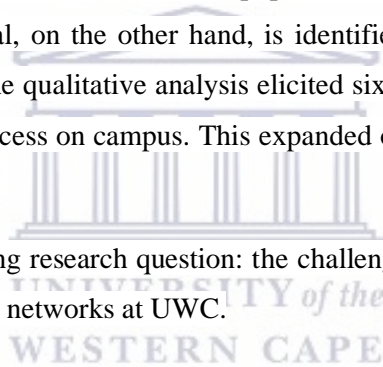
5.10 Concluding Remarks

This chapter discussed the findings produced in the study that essentially addressed three of the research questions posed:

- How do students’ cope at university within a framework of social capital?
- How do students’ access the formal and informal networks available to them?
- How do these networks contribute towards their success and progress at university?

In this study, no unusual findings were discovered for gender, ethnicity, income or first-generation status. The strongest tie was shown in informal networks, particularly in the associations with friends/ social interactions. The researcher found strong evidence among the respondent group that learning advancement during the study period at UWC arose from ties that emerged from informal networks. The main finding is that informal networks are the most popular form of social capital and manifest the strongest ties. Formal social capital, on the other hand, is identified most strongly with academics, followed by clubs and societies. The qualitative analysis elicited six themes related to students’ social capital and how it links to their success on campus. This expanded on the quantitative findings within the study.

Chapter 6 will address the remaining research question: the challenges experienced by students when accessing their formal and informal networks at UWC.



Chapter 6: Discussion, Analysis and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The data collected from respondents was presented and discussed in Chapter 5 in the context of the research objectives and the literature review conducted. This chapter answers the final research question of this study and proceeds to discuss how social capital impacts students' success at UWC. The chapter also provides insights into social capital best practices through unique themes that emerged in the study, recommendations that may contribute to higher student success and suggestions for future research in concluding the study.

The overall experience of participants' social networks and ties at university was generally positive and students reported that they benefitted from participation in social network circles in terms of their general functioning and success. The data showed that network connections and associations are prominently established both within formal and informal networks. These associations displayed confirmation of the different kinds of social capital: bridging, bonding and linking social capital. Attaining academic and personal success was frequently foregrounded and was prioritised as a key feature for students. The awareness of mental health issues was always evident, which may be linked to the study taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.2 Discussion of Research Question 4

RQ 4: *What are the challenges identified when accessing formal and informal networks at university?*

Based on the findings of the study, the challenges raised by participants were directly linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. These, discussed below, relate to lack of resources, problems with remote learning and challenges for first-time students entering the institution.

6.2.1 Lack of resources

The switch to online learning was a clear challenge for participants—some had similar difficulties while others had unique difficulties. A theme elicited from the data was the lack of sufficient necessary resources for online learning. This lack included the physical requirements such as technology (computer or laptop, mobile phone), functional aspects (physical space, desk, chair, quiet) and financial needs (data, airtime, power, transport).

6.2.2 Remote learning

Not being able to physically interact face-to-face with lecturers and classmates as well as normal social interactions of campus life were highlighted as working in isolation was a serious challenge in addition to the normal intellectual demands of studies. Participants reported that it was easier to attend in-person lectures than working online and aspects such as spending time with friends during, between and after

classes were sorely missed. Making independent decisions, staying motivated and dealing with issues such as time management were emotionally and psychologically harder under the circumstances.

6.2.3 First-time students

First-time-entering university students at the beginning of 2020 and 2021 experienced a disrupted taste of university life before COVID-19. This was more stark for first-year students in 2021 as transferring and postgraduate students would at least have experienced normal campus life elsewhere. The adaptation to online learning and other factors related to university life became amplified given the absence of any physical exposure to student life at UWC. Although specific questions related to mental health were not posed in the study, participants' responses showed that mental health difficulties were among the highest challenges for students during the COVID-19 period. First-year participants had to cope with online distance learning without having been prepared for it, with no or restricted access to public libraries, and while working in and sharing living spaces with their families (where many were living independently before and had access to study facilities on campus). The participants also experienced financial difficulties which were highlighted by response rates which indicated that Financial Aid Services was the most-valued support service during the time of the pandemic. Many students who had been employed part-time on or off-campus suffered loss of income and all students faced increased expenses on technology and communication.

Faced with the challenges of COVID-19, it appears that from a social capital perspective, the social norms associated with remote studying were weakly developed given its newness and the resources needed to function in this environment, which were unevenly available to everyone. Norms and acceptable behaviours may have been present but not well established. Despite these difficulties, participants seem to have succeeded in organising themselves into communities of learning and support which had strong supportive and growth mechanisms for their informal networks. In so doing, the value of fostering social capital was confirmed as, even under the circumstances of COVID-19, the respondents were able to progress as a result of their networks, ties and associations with each other.

6.3 Unique Themes that Emerged from the Study

6.3.1 Communities of learning

The formation of communities of learning established by students during remote learning is commendable. There were high levels of trust established in these groups with strong ties. The theme of emotional and academic support was raised numerous times, both from within formal and informal networks. There was a communal drive to succeed supported by collective initiatives from all actors in the study and the institution. This habit of learning is clear evidence of sound social capital among the participants despite adverse conditions and challenging circumstances.

6.3.2 Common characteristics

The strongest characteristics shared by participants were *language* and *age*. The most prominent formal networks participants were part of were *sports* and *religious groups* rather than academic formations. Rather, participants worked informally with other students for academic support. Other characteristics that were probed in the questionnaire were *education*, *political views* and *socio-economic status*. These scored very low and were not identified as factors that were held in common. The derived social capital benefits highlighted from these associations were *recreational engagement*, *improved self-esteem and confidence*. The study showed the presence of strong *bonding* and *bridging capital* within these groups, how weak the ties were and how these groups were used primarily to ‘get ahead’.

6.3.3 Agency and motivation to succeed

The participants in this study displayed a strong sense of agency and self-motivation to succeed academically. Their sound work ethic was evident in their responses. All possessed high educational aspirations despite the problems caused by the pandemic. While it may be possible that the students who self-selected were more motivated than the typical student, it is notable that all the participants possessed these characteristics and expressed them in explicit ways.

6.3.4 Ethos of care

This came across clearly in the reporting of participants within their peer groups and within informal networks related to academic staff. The venerable descriptions used by students when describing the role of their lecturers and tutors were notable. Participants used descriptive phrases such as “*they were my heroes*” and “*I would have failed were it not for the care shown by my lecturer*”. Universities have often been described as a potentially harsh environment, especially for vulnerable students. These responses indicate the potential for establishing stronger, more nurturing institutional ties and laying the groundwork for an improved educational model that involves more student agency and conscious institutional investment in growing social capital.

6.4 Recommendations

- Opportunities for building social capital at universities should be intentionally created because students’ success depends on it. This should be high on the agenda of faculties and student support departments and they should take the initiative and responsibility to realise this.
- The presence and role of social capital should be strengthened and endorsed by all university stakeholders. An intentional plan to feed a culture of social capital should be developed. The role of academics is paramount as they are skilled to advise and guide students towards their academic and professional identities. They are uniquely positioned

to contribute strongly to both these areas of student life. This role would not only ensure academic success while studying but create a platform for success beyond graduation.

- Students from low SES backgrounds have pre-university social capital limitations, setbacks and gaps that may disadvantage them before entering university. Low SES students can be taken on a social capital trajectory that will support and assist with improving their academic careers. These opportunities should consist of bonding, bridging and linking social capital, to allow students maximum prospects within and beyond their university experience.
- Embarking on an institutionalised culture of active social capital for students will ensure that all students benefit equitably from available resources within the university. Institutional barriers to social capital should be explored and strategies identified to remove them.
- With remote and blended learning becoming the norm online models of social capital development should be identified to create new norms of being in the virtual reality space and to establish social capital practices for the future.

6.5 Areas for Future Research

Engaging with the literature and research highlighted areas of focus for further research. Local studies documenting social capital and how it relates to education in South Africa are largely unavailable. Institutional barriers to developing social capital for students, and especially low SES students, historically disadvantaged communities and women, require interrogation at all universities.

Much of the current literature on social capital is cushioned in a framework of an essentially colonised archetype. There is space for further development in understanding social capital from more diverse perspectives and more inclusive practices of marginalised groups which will add to a broader range of knowledge for social capital.

Lastly, with remote learning an increasing trend, much scope remains to develop data related to new norms for online social capital practices, norms and values.

6.6 Conclusion

Relationships matter and social networks are pivotal to all facets of human development. This study showed the value of social capital as a vital resource for participants to ‘get-by’ through bonding social capital and to ‘get-ahead’ via linking social capital. Informal networks, especially peer support, were positively linked as a factor that impacts academic success. Formal networks were also shown to be significant influences on students’ academic success. Different types of social capital with varying

outcomes were shown to contribute to academic achievement at university. Although small, this study represents a significant contribution to the knowledge base relating to social capital to student success in South Africa. In many ways, the findings tie in with extant literature that suggests a modest positive relationship between social capital and students' academic success. While much remains unknown, the potential value that can be unlocked and the enormous challenges faced by the low SES students who constitute the majority of UWC's students, make it imperative that the opportunities for further social capital research should be seized with urgency.



References

- Adams, G., Berzonsky, M. & Keating, L. 2016. Psychosocial resources in first-year university students: The role of identity processes and social relationships. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 35(1): 81—91.
- Amaratunga, D., Baldry, D., Sarshar, M. & Newton, R. 2002. Quantitative and qualitative research in the built environment: Application of 'mixed' research approach. *Work Study*, 51(1): 17—31.
- Andranovich, G.D. & Riposa, G. 2005. *Doing urban research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Araya, R., Dunstan, F., Playle, R., Thomas, H., Palmer, S. & Lewis, G. 2006. Perceptions of social capital and the built environment and mental health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 62(12): 3072—3083.
- Astin, A.W. & Astin, H.S. 2003. Spirituality in college students: Preliminary findings from a national study. *Research report, Higher Education Research Institute*, Los Angeles, ERIC Collection ED482314.
- Babbie, E. 2007. *The practice of social research*. 11th Ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Babbie, E. 2010. *The practice of social research*. International Edition. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Babbie, E., Mouton, J. & Strydom, H. 2011. The research process with reference to the research method section. Social work theories and methodologies conference presentation, Dubrovnik, Croatia, 5—11 June.
- Baker, W.E. 1990. Market networks and corporate behavior. *American Journal of Sociology*, 96: 589—625.
- Bangeni, B & Kapp, R. 2015. Identities in transition: Shifting conceptions of home by black South African university students. *African Studies Review*, 48(3): 1—19.
- Berg, B.L. 2007. *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. 6th Ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Berg, B.L. 2011. *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. 8th Ed. Nadham Heights: MS: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bloch, G. 2009. *The toxic mix: What's wrong with South Africa's schools and how to fix it?* Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- Borgatti, S.P., Jones, C. & Everett, M.G. 2008. *Network measures of social capital*. *Connections*, 21(2): 1—36.

- Boughey, C. 2010. Academic development for improved efficiency in the higher education and training system in South Africa. Draft 1 to Development Bank of South Africa.
- Bourdieu, P. 1977. *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 1979. Les trois états du capital culturel. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 30(1): 3—6.
- Bourdieu, P. 1984. *Distinction: A social critique of the judgment of taste*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 1985. The forms of capital. In Richardson, J.G. (Ed.). *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*. New York: Greenwood: 241—258.
- Bourdieu, P. 1986. The forms of capital. In Richardson, J.G. (Ed.). *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press: 241—258.
- Bourdieu, P. 1988. *Homo Academicus*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 1989. Social space and symbolic power. *Sociological Theory*, 7(1): 14—25.
- Bourdieu, P. 1990. *In other words: Essays towards a reflexive sociology*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 1991. *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 1998. *Practical reason*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Bray, R., Gooskens, I., Kahn, L., Moses, S. & Seekings, J. 2010. *Growing up in the new South Africa: Childhood and adolescence in post-apartheid*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Bruen, T. 2014. Mature students' narratives of Irish higher education: A critical bourdieusian analysis. Doctoral thesis, University of Sheffield.
- Bryman, A. 2004. *Social Research Methods*. 2nd Ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bryman, A. & Teevan, J.J. 2005. *Social research methods*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
- Burt, R.S. 2000. The network structure of social capital. In Sutton, R.I. & Staw, B.M. (Eds.). *Research in Organizational Behavior*. Vol. 22. New York: Jai Press.
- Chapman, A. & Pyvis, D. 2006. Dilemmas in the formation of students' identity in offshore higher education: a case study in Hong Kong. *Educational Review*, 58(3): 291—302.
- Christie, H., Tett, L., Cree, E., Hounsell, J. & McCune, V. 2008. A real rollercoaster of confidence and emotions: Learning to be a university student. *Studies in Higher Education*, 33(5): 567—581.

- Christie, P. 2011. *Changing schools in South Africa: Opening the doors of learning*. South Africa: Heinemann.
- Chudek, M., Muthukrishna, M. & Henrich, J. 2015. Cultural evolution. In Buss, D.M. (Ed.) *The handbook of evolutionary psychology: Integrations*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley: 749—769.
- Coleman, J.S. 1986. Social theory, social research, and a theory of action. *American Journal of Sociology*, 91(6): 1309—1335.
- Coleman, J. S. 1987. Families and schools. *Educational Researcher*, 16(6): 32—38.
- Coleman, J.S. 1988. Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94 (Issue Supplement): S95—S120.
- Coleman, J.S. 1990. *Foundations of social theory*. Cambridge: Belknap Press.
- Coleman, J.S. 1992. Some points on choice in education. *Sociology of Education*, 65(4): 260—262.
- Coleman, J.S. 1993. The rational reconstruction of society. *American Sociological Review*, 58: 1—15.
- Coleman, J.S. 1994a. A rational choice perspective on economic sociology. In Smelser, N.J. & Swedberg, R. (Eds.). *Handbook of economic sociology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press: 166—180.
- Coleman, J.S. 1994b. The realization of effective norms. In Collins, R. (Ed.). *Four sociological traditions: Selected readings*. New York: Oxford University Press: 171—89.
- Coleman, J.S. 1994. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Coleman, J.S. 1999. The creation and destruction of social capital: implications for the law. *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics, & Public Policy*, 3: 375—404.
- Coleman, J.S. 1999. Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, S95—S120.
- Coleman, J.S. & Hendry, L.B. 1999. *The nature of adolescence*. 3rd Ed. New York: Routledge.
- Coleman, J.S., Hoffer, T.B. & Kilgore, S. 1982. *Public and private high schools. The impact of communities*. New York: Basic Books.
- Cook-Gumperz, J. 2006. *The social construction of literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Coughlan, F. 2006. Access for success. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 20(2): 209—218.
- Creswell, J.W. 2009. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Dandekar, H.C. (Ed.) 2003. *The planner's use of information*. Chicago: American Planning Association.

Dandekar, H.C. 2005. Qualitative methods in planning research and practice. *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, 22(2): 129—137.

De Graaf, N.D., De Graaf, P.M. & Kraaykamp, G. 2004. Parental cultural capital and educational attainment in the Netherlands: A refinement of the cultural capital perspective. *Sociology of Education*, 73, 92—111.

De Silva, M.J. 2016. Systematic review of the methods used in studies of social capital and mental health. In McKenzie, K. & Harpham, T. (Eds.) *Social capital and mental health*. London: Jessica Kingsley: 39—67.

De Silva, M.J., McKenzie, K., Harpham, T. & Huttly, S. 2005. Social capital and mental illness: A systematic review. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 59(8): 619—627.

De Souza Briggs, X. 1998. Brown kids in white suburbs: Housing mobility and the many faces of social capital. *Housing Policy Debate*, 9(1): 177—221.

De Vaus, D.A. 2001. *Research design in social research*. London: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, S.Y. 2006. *Handbook on qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dexter, L.A. 1993. *Elite and specialised interviewing*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Dika, S. & D'Amico, M.M. 2016. Early experiences and integration in the persistence of first-generation college students in STEM and non-STEM majors. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 53(3): 368—383.

Dika, S. & Singh, K. 2002. Applications of social capital in educational literature: A critical synthesis. *Review of Educational Research*, 72(1): 31—69.

Dougherty, K.D. & Whitehead, A.L. 2011. A place to belong: Small group involvements in religious congregations. *Sociology of Religion*, 72(1): 91—111.

Duncan, G., Hofferth, S. & Stafford, F. 2004. Evolution and change in family income, wealth, and health: the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, 1968–2000 and beyond. In House, J., Juster, F., Kahn, R., Schuman, H. & Singer, E. (Eds.) *A telescope on society: Survey research and social science at the University of Michigan and beyond*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press: 156—200.

Dyck, R.G. 1994. Discipline vs. profession: A comment on the meaning of design. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 13(2): 143—146.

- Dyck, A. & McLaren, T. 2004. Telling it like it is? Constructing accounts of settlement with immigrant and refugee women in Canada. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 11(4): 513—534.
- Dyk, P.H. & Wilson, S.M. 1999. Family-based social capital considerations as predictors of attainments among Appalachian youth. *Sociological Inquiry*, 69(3): 477—503.
- Fritch, W.S. 2009. An overlooked role of high school athletics: The formation of social capital through parental involvement. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada, Applications of Social Capital in Educational Literature.
- Fritch, J.W. & Cromwell, R.L. 2001. Evaluating Internet resources: Identity, affiliation, and cognitive authority in a networked world. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 52(6): 499—507.
- Fujiwara, T. & Kawachi, I. 2018. A prospective study of individual-level social capital and major depression in the United States. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 62: 627—633.
- Fukuyama, F. 1995. *Trust: The social virtues and the creation of prosperity*. New York: The Free Press.
- Fukuyama, F. 2000. Social capital and civil society. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=879582> and <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.879582>
- Furstenberg, F. & Hughes, M. 2005. Social capital and successful development among at-risk youth. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 57(3): 580—592.
- Garfinkel, I., Reichman, N.E., Teitler, J.O. & McLanahan, S.S. 2001. Fragile families: Sample and design. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 23(4-5): 303—326.
- Gee, J. 2002. *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses*. London: Falmer Press.
- Gendron, B. 2013. Emotional capital and education issues. *Journal of Research and Curriculum Development*, 2(1), 23—52.
- Gillies, V. 2006. Working class mothers and school life: Exploring the role of emotional capital. *Gender and Education*, 18(3): 281—293.
- Goffman, E. 2009. *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Granovetter, M. 1973. The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78: 1360—1380.
- Granovetter M. 1981. Toward a sociological theory of income differences. In Berg, I. (Ed.) *Sociological perspectives on labour markets*. New York: Academic Press: 11—47.

- Granovetter, M. 1984. Small is bountiful: Labor markets and establishment size. *American Sociological Review*, 49 (June): 323—334.
- Granovetter, M. 1992. *The sociology of economic life*. Boulder, Co: Westview Press.
- Grenfell, M. & James, D. 1998. *Bourdieu and education: Acts of practical theory*. New York: Falmer Press.
- Hagan, J., Macmillan, R. & Wheaton, B. 1996. New kid in town: Social capital and the life course effects of family migration on children. *American Sociological Review*, 61: 368—385.
- Hao, L. & Bonstead-Bruns, M. 2004. Parent-child differences in educational expectations and the academic achievement of immigrant and native students. *Sociology of Education*, 71: 175—198.
- Harpham, T. 2008. The measurement of community social capital through surveys. In Kawachi, I., Subramanian, S.V. & Kim, D. (Eds.). *Social capital and health*. New York: Springer: 51—62.
- Henry, M., Lingard, R., Rizvi, F. & Taylor, S. 2001. *The OECD, globalisation and education policy*. Amsterdam: International Association of Universities Press.
- Herrington, A. & Curtis, M. 2002. *Persons in process: Four stories of writing and personal development in college*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Ho, S.C. 2003. Home school collaboration and creation of social capital. *Hong Kong Journal of Sociology*, 4(1): 57—85.
- Hofferth, S., Boisjoly, J. & Duncan, G. 1998. Parents' extra-familial resources and children's school attainment. *Sociology of Education*, 71, 246—268.
- Horvat, E.M. & Antonio, A.L. 2009. Hey, those shoes are out of uniform: African American girls in an elite high school and the importance of habitus. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 30(3), 317—342.
- Hou, L., Li, F. & Zheng, Q. 2008. The impact of family background on the access to quantity and quality of higher education - from social stratification perspective. *Journal of Higher Education*, 29(10): 39—45.
- Israel, G.D., Beaulieu L.J. & Hartless, G. 2001. The influence of family and community social capital on educational achievements. *Rural Sociology*, 66(1): 43—68.
- Jenkins, R. 1982. Pierre Bourdieu and the reproduction of determinism. *Sociology*, 16(2): 270—281.
- Jislin-Goldberg, T., Bernstein, A. & Tanay G. 2012. Mindfulness and positive affect: Cross-sectional, prospective intervention, and real-time relations. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 7(5): 349—361.

- John, P. 2005. The contribution of volunteering, trust, and networks to educational performance. *Policy Studies Journal*, 33(4): 635—656.
- Jowett, V. & Stead, R. 1994. Mentoring students in higher education. *Education and Training*, 36(5): 20—26.
- Kalmijn, M. & Kraaykamp, G. 2006. Race, cultural capital, and schooling: An analysis of trends in the United States. *Sociology of Education*, 69: 22—34.
- Kandel, D.B. 2006. Coleman's contributions to understanding youth and adolescence. In Clark, J. (Ed.) *James S. Coleman*: 33—45.
- Kanters, M.A., Bristol, D.G. & Attarian, A. 2002. The effects of outdoor experiential training on perceptions of college stress. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 25(2): 257—267.
- Kawachi, I., Subramanian, S.V. & Kim, D. 2008. Social capital and health: A decade of progress and beyond. In Kawachi, I., Subramanian, S.V. & Kim, D. (Eds.) *Social capital and health*. New York: Springer: 1—26.
- Khanchel, H. & Ben Kahla, K. 2013. Mobilizing Bourdieu's theory in organizational research. *Review of General Management*, 17(1), 86—94.
- Khattab, N. 2003. Explaining educational aspirations of minority students: The role of social capital and students' perceptions. *Social Psychology of Education*, 6(4): 283—302.
- King, E.J. 2007. The purpose of comparative education. In Crossley, M., Broadfoot, P. & Schweisfurth, M. (Eds.) *Changing educational contexts, issues and identities*. London: Routledge: 21—36.
- Klassen, R.M., Rushby, J.V., Maxwell, L., Durksen, T.L., Sheridan, L. & Bardach, L. 2021. The development and testing of an online scenario-based learning activity to prepare preservice teachers for teaching placements. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 104.
- Knoblauch, C.H, Brannon, L., Straub, R., Flower, L.S., Hayes, J.R., Slattery, P. & Harvey, G. 2004. Why I blog—Andrew Sullivan. *College Composition and Communication*, 56(1): 124—149.
- Kurfiss, J.G. 1988. Critical thinking: Theory, research, practice, and possibilities. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 2, Association for the Study of Higher Education - ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, Washington, DC.
- Kyle, G., Graefe, A., Manning, R. & Bacon, J. 2004. Effects of place attachment on users' perceptions of social and environmental conditions in a natural setting. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24(2): 213—225.

- Lane, T. 2017. How does happiness relate to economic behaviour? A review of the literature. *Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics*, 68: 62—78.
- Lang, R.E. & Hornburg, S.B. 1998. What is social capital and why is it important for social policy? *Housing Policy Debate*, 9: 1—16.
- La Porta, R., Lopez-de Silanes, F., Shleifer, A. & Vishny, R.W. 1996. *Trust in large organizations*. *American Economic Review*, 87(2).
- Lareau, A. & Horvat, E.M. 2004. Moments of social inclusion and exclusion: Race, class, and cultural capital in family-school relationships. *Sociology of Education*, 72(1): 37—53.
- Lareau, A. 2001. Linking Bourdieu's concept of capital to the broader field: The case of family-school relationships. In Biddle, B.J. (Ed.) *Social class, poverty, and education: Policy and practice*. New York: Routledge: 77—100.
- Leach, L. & Zepke, N. 2011. Engaging students in learning: A review of a conceptual organiser. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 30(2): 193—204.
- Lin, C.P. 2011. Assessing the mediating role of online social capital between social support and instant messaging usage. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 10(1): 105—114.
- Lin, N. 1990. Social resources and social mobility: A structural theory of status attainment. In Breiger, R.L. (Ed.) *Social mobility and social structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 247—271.
- Lin, N. 1999. Building a network theory of social capital. *Connections*, 22(1): 28—51.
- Lin, N. 2010. *Social capital: A theory of social structure and action*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lin, X. 2001. Designing metacognitive activities. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 49(2): 23—40.
- Lloyd, C. 2006. Removing barriers to achievement: A strategy for inclusion or exclusion? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 12(2): 221—236.
- Lopez, E. 2006. *Social capital and the educational performance of Latino and Non -Latino youth*. San Luis Obispo, CA: Julian Samora Research Institute.
- Luckett, K. & Luckett, T. 2009. The development of agency in first-generation learners in higher education: A social realist analysis. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 14(5): 469—481.
- Mann, S. 2008. *Study, power and the university*. London: McGraw Hill, Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press.

- Marshall, D. & Case, J. 2010. Rethinking ‘disadvantage’ in higher education: A paradigmatic case study using narrative analysis. *Studies in Higher Education*, 35(5): 491—504.
- McCubbin, I. 2003. An examination of criticisms made of Tinto’s 1975 student integration model of attrition. Retrieved from <https://www.psy.gla.ac.uk/~steve/localed/icubb.pdf>
- McNeal, R. 1999. Parental involvement as social capital: Differential effectiveness on science achievement, truancy, and dropping out. *Social Forces*, 78(1): 117—144.
- McNeal, R.B.J. 2012. Parental involvement as social capital: Differential effectiveness on science achievements, truancy, and dropping out. *Social Forces*, 78(1): 117—144.
- Mishler, T. 2006. *Research interviewing: Context and narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Monge, P.R. 1999. The network level of analysis. In Berger, C.R. & Chaffee, S.H. (Eds.) *The Handbook of Communication Science*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage: 239—270.
- Morgan, S. & Sørensen, A. 2005. Parental networks, social closure, and mathematics learning: A test of Coleman’s social capital explanation of school effects. *American Sociological Review*, 64: 661—681.
- Morrow, V. 1999. Conceptualising social capital in relation to the well-being of children and young people: A critical review. *The Sociological Review*: 744—765.
- Morrow, V. 2001. Using qualitative methods to elicit young people’s perspectives on their environments: Some ideas for community health initiatives. *Health Education Research*, 16(3): 255—268.
- Myers, K. 2005. *Racetalk: Racism hiding in plain sight*. Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishing.
- Nahapiet, J. & Ghoshal, S. 2002. Social capital, intellectual capital, and the organizational advantage. *Academy of Management Review*, 23(2): 242—266.
- Naicker, S.M. 2005. Inclusive education in South Africa: An emerging pedagogy of possibility. In Mitchell, D. (Ed.) *Contextualising inclusive education: Evaluating old and new international perspectives*. London: Routledge: 230—252.
- Narayan, D. & Pritchett, L. 2000. Social capital: Evidence and implications. In Dasgupta, P. & Serageldin, I. (Eds.) *Social capital: A multifaceted perspective*. Washington, DC: World Bank: 269—295.
- Norodien-Fataar, N. 2018. The cultivation of learning dispositions among first-generation disadvantaged students at a South African university. *Educational Studies*, 54(5): 505—521.

- Palmer, R.T. & Dancy, T.E. 1998. Shaping success among Black males in an HBCU: Study of barriers and benefits. *Georgia Journal of College Student Affairs*, 22(1): 59—22.
- Palmer, R.T. & Gasman, M. 2008. It takes a village to raise a child: The role of social capital in promoting academic success for African American men at a black college. *Journal of College Student Development*, 49(1): 52—70.
- Parcel, T.L. & Dufur, M. 2001. Capital at home and at school: Effects on child social adjustment. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(1): 32—47.
- Pather, S. & Chetty, R. 2015. *The habitus and social capital of first-year students: A case study*. Durban: CSSALL Publishers.
- Pishghadam, R. & Zabihi, R. 2011. Parental education and social and cultural capital in academic achievements. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 1(2): 50—57.
- Plagens, G.K. 2011. Social capital theory and the metropolitan university: Reframing ideas about neighborhood interactions. *Metropolitan Universities*, 21(3): 118—138.
- Pong, S.L. & Hao, L. 2008. The role of school in the upward mobility of disadvantaged immigrants' children. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 620(1): 62—89.
- Portes, A. 1996. The informal economy. Perspectives from Latin America. In Pozo, S. (Ed.) *Exploring the underground economy*. Kalamazoo, Mich: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research: 147—165.
- Portes, A. 2001. Introduction: The debates and significance of immigrant transnationalism. *Global Networks*, 1(3): 181—194.
- Portes, L.S.V. 2009. Remittances, poverty and inequality. *Journal of Economic Development*, 34(1): 127—140.
- Portes, A. & Landolt, P. 1996. The downside of social capital. *The American Prospect*, 26: 18—21.
- Pribesh, S. & Downey, D.B. 2001. Why are residential and school moves associated with poor school performance? *Demography*, 36(4): 521—534.
- Pusztai, G. 2014. The effects of institutional social capital on students' success in higher education. *Hungarian Educational Research Journal*, 4(3): 60—73.
- Putnam, R.D. 1993. The prosperous community: Social capital and public life. *The American Prospect*, 4(13): 35—42.

- Putnam, R.D. 1995. Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1): 65—78.
- Putnam, R.D. 1997. *Democracy in America at century's end*. In Hadenius, A. (Ed.) *Democracy's victory and crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 27—70.
- Putnam, R.D. 2000. *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Putnam, H. 2013. *Meaning and the moral sciences* (Routledge Revivals). Abingdon-on-Thames, Oxfordshire: Routledge.
- Pym, J. & Kapp, R. 2013. Harnessing agency: Towards a learning model for undergraduate students. *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(2): 272—284.
- Qian, Z. & Blair, S.L. 2007. Racial/ ethnic differences in educational aspirations of high school seniors. *Sociological Perspectives*, 42(4): 605—625.
- Ra, E. 2011. Understanding the role of economic, cultural, and social capital and habitus in student college choice: An investigation of student, family, and school contexts. Doctoral thesis, School of Education, University of Michigan.
- Reay, D., David, M.E. & Ball, S. 2018. *Degrees of choice: Social class, race and gender in higher education*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.
- Reid, B., Archer, L. & Leathwood, C. 2003. Challenging cultures? Student conceptions of 'belonging' and 'isolation' at a post-1992 university. *Studies in Higher Education*, 28: 261—277.
- Riddle, S., Harmes, M.K. & Danaher, P.A. (Eds.) 2017. *Producing pleasure in the contemporary university*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.
- Robbins & Craig. 2011. Evaluating the quality of learning: *The SOLO taxonomy* (Structure of the Observed Learning Outcome). Academic Press.
- Roscigno, V.J. & Ainsworth-Darnell, J.W. 1999. Race, cultural capital, and educational resources: Persistent inequalities and achievement returns. *Sociology of Education*, 72(3): 158—178.
- Rose, N. 1990. *Governing the soul: The shaping of the private self*. Abingdon-on-Thames, Oxfordshire: Taylor & Frances/Routledge.
- Rose, M. 2003. *Lives on the Boundary*. New York: Penguin.
- Rose, R. 2000. How much does social capital add to individual health? *A survey study of Russians*, *Social Science and Medicine*, 51(9): 1421—1435.

Rose, R. 2001. The impact of social capital on health. *Centre for the Study of Public Policy, No. 358*, University of Strathclyde.

Schaefer-McDaniel, N.J. 2004. Conceptualizing social capital among young people: Toward a new theory. *Children, Youth and Environments, 14*(1): 140—150.

Schiff, M. 2002. Regional integration and development in small states. *Policy Research Working Paper No. 2797*. Washington, DC: World Bank. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=634419>.

Schoeman, S. 2005. Educating democratic minds in South African public schools: African teachers' perceptions of good citizenship. *Journal of Negro Education, 74*(1): 275—286.

Schuller, T. & Field, J. 1998. Social capital, human capital and the learning society. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 17*(4): 226—235.

Schuller, T., Baron, S. & Field, J. 2000. Social capital: A review and critique. In Baron, S., Field, J. & Schuller, T. (Eds.) *Social capital: Critical perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1—38.

Seidman, I. 2008. *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the Social Sciences*. Accessed online web studies, University of Stellenbosch.

Shucksmith, J. & Spratt, J. 2002. Young people's self-identified health needs. *HEBS Young People and Health Initiative Working Paper*, The Rowan Group, University of Aberdeen.

Smith, C. & Snell, P. 2009. *Souls in transition: The religious and spiritual lives of emerging adults*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Smith-Maddox, R. 2003. The social networks and resources of African American eighth graders: Evidence from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988. *Adolescence, 34*(133): 169—183.

Stanton-Salazar, R.D. 1997. A social capital framework for understanding the socialization of racial minority children and youths. *Harvard Educational Review, 67*(1): 1—40.

Stanton-Salazar, R.D. 2001. *Manufacturing hope and despair: The school and kin support networks of U.S.-Mexican youth*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Steele, C. 2009. Thin ice: "Stereotype threat" and Black College students. *The Atlantic Monthly, 284*(2): 44—54.

Sullivan, A. 2002. Bourdieu and education: how useful is Bourdieu's theory for researchers? *The Netherlands Journal of Social Sciences, 38*(2): 144—166.

Sun, Y. 1998. The academic success of East-Asian-American students: An investment model. *Social Science Research, 27*(4): 432—456.

- Sun, Y. 1999. The contextual effects of community social capital on academic performance. *Social Sciences Research*, 28(4): 403—426.
- Taylor, S.J., Bogdan, R. & DeVault, M. 2015. *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource*. 4th Ed. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley.
- Temkin, K. & Rohe, W.M. 2002. Social capital and neighbourhood stability: An empirical investigation. *Housing Policy Debate*, 9: 61—88.
- Tierney, W.G. 2006. *Trust and the public good: Examining the cultural conditions of academic work*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Tinto, V. 1975. Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Educational Research*, 45(1): 89—125.
- Tinto, V. 1993. Building community. *Liberal Education*, 79(4): 16—21.
- Tinto, V. 1997. Enhancing learning via community. *Thought and Action*, 13(1): 53—58.
- Tinto, V. 1998. Colleges as communities: Taking research on student persistence seriously. *Review of Higher Education*, 21(2): 167—177.
- Tinto, V. 2010. From theory to action: Exploring the institutional conditions for student retention. In Smart, J.C. (Ed.) *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*. Volume 25. New York: Springer: 51—86.
- Tschannen-Moran, M. 2004. *Trust matters: Leadership for successful schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Tzanakis, M. 2011. Bourdieu's social reproduction thesis and the role of cultural capital in educational attainment: A critical review of key empirical studies. *Educate*, 11(1): 76—90.
- Tzanakis, M. 2013. Social capital in Bourdieu's, Coleman's and Putnam's theory: Empirical evidence and emergent measurement issues. *Educate*, 13(2): 2—23.
- Valenzuela, A. & Dornbusch, S.M. 2004. Familyism and social capital in the academic achievement of Mexican origin and Anglo adolescents. *Social Science Quarterly*, 75(1): 18—36.
- Wells, A. 2008. Metacognitive therapy: Cognition applied to regulating cognition. *Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 36(6): 651—658.
- White, M.J. & Glick, J.E. 2000. Generation status, social capital, and the routes out of high school. *Sociological Forum*, 15(4): 671—691.

- Winter, R. 2009. Academic manager or managed academic? Academic identity schisms in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 31(2): 121—131.
- Woolcock, M. 1998. Social capital and economic development: Toward a theoretical synthesis and policy framework. *Theory and Society*, 27(2): 151—208.
- Woolcock, M. 2001. The place of social capital in understanding social and economic outcomes. *Canadian Journal of Policy Research*, 2(1): 11—17.
- Woolcock, M. 2005. Calling on friends and relatives: Social capital. In Fay, M. (Ed.). *The urban poor in Latin America. Directions in development*. Washington, DC: World Bank: 219—238.
- World Bank. 2006. *World Development Report 2007: Development and the next generation*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank. 2011. *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, security, and development*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Wright, J.P., Cullen, F.T. & Miller, J.T. 2001. Family social capital and delinquent involvement. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 29: 1—9.
- Yan, W. 2000. Successful African American students: The role of parental involvement. *Journal of Negro Education*, 68(1): 5—22.
- Yosso, T.J. 2005. Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1): 69—91.
- Zhou, M. & Bankston, C. L. 1996. Social capital and the adaptation of the second generation: The case of Vietnamese youth in New Orleans. In Portes, A. (Ed.) *The new second generation*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation: 197—220.
- Zipin, L. 2009. Dark funds of knowledge, deep funds of pedagogy: Exploring boundaries between lifeworlds and schools. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 30(3): 317—331.



ADDENDUM A:

INFORMATION SHEET (Key Respondents)

Title: *Exploring Social Capital and its contribution to student success at the University of the Western Cape*

What is this study about?

My name is Wiedaad Dollie and this is a research study about students at university and the different support structures they use to achieve success at university. In view of this, I am inviting you to participate in this research project. Your opinions and information will be of huge value to the study, and your participation is highly appreciated.

What will you be asked to do if you agree to participate?

If you agree to participate in this research project, you will be asked to answer questions pertaining to your studies and involvement at university. The questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Would my participation in this study be kept confidential?

All your personal information, including your name will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone. Pseudonyms will be used in the final report and all subsequent published reports to protect your privacy. Your identity will be protected throughout the course of the research and in the future. All information obtained from the questionnaire will be treated with strict confidentiality and will be used for research purposes only. Furthermore, you and I will be asked to sign a Consent Form that binds me to keep to this agreement.

What are the risks of this research?

In the event of stressful or upsetting conditions the student is welcome to visit the Student Wellness Services to debrief on the matter and experience.

What are the benefits of this research?

This research is not designed to help you personally, but the results may help the researcher understand the support and conditions that facilitate success for students at university.

Do I have to participate in this research and may I stop participating at any time?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalised or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.

Is any assistance available if I am negatively affected by participating in this study?

This research will not expose you to any harm as a result of your participation.

What if I have questions?

If you have any questions feel free to contact Wiedaad Dollie, the researcher on email address: wiedaad.dollie@gmail.com or mobile number: 078 560 4857.

If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Director, Dr R. Karriem at The Institute for Social Development (ISD), University of Western Cape on the office telephone number: 021-959 3858.

Should you have any questions regarding this study and your rights as a research participant or if you wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact the Supervisor:

Prof Amina Bayat: abayat@uwc.ac.za
School of Government Building,
University of the Western Cape
Private Bag X17
Bellville 7535

This research has been approved by the University of the Western Cape's Senate Research Committee and Ethics Committee and has received Ethical Approval from the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape, Tel. 021 959 4111, E-mail: research-ethics@uwc.ac.za;



University of the Western Cape
 Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535, Cape Town, South Africa
 Telephone : (021) 959 3858/6 Fax: (021) 959 3865
abayat@uwc.ac.za

ADDENDUM B:

Letter of Consent² for Key Respondents

Title: *Exploring Social Capital and its contribution to student success at the University of the Western Cape.*

Researcher: Wiedaad Dollie

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask any questions about the project.
2. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary. I am free not to participate and have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without having to explain myself. I am aware that this interview might result in research which may be published, but my name will NOT be used.
3. I understand my response and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that the information derived from this research is confidential and will be treated as such.
4. I agree that the data and information collected from my responses can be used in future research.
5. I herewith also agree to take part in this research project through my written responses.

Name of the participant: _____ Signature: _____

Name of the interviewer: Wiedaad Dollie Signature: _____

Date: _____ 2021

² In this research e-Consent (voluntary participation), will be obtained prior to research.



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE
 Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535, South Africa
 Tel: +27 21-959 3332, Fax +27 21-959 3219
 E-Mail: abayat@uwc.ac.za / 9280524@myuwc.ac.za

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

INDIVIDUAL SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

QUESTIONNAIRE

Protocol Date: SEPTEMBER 2021
 Location: University of Western Cape
 Researcher: Wiedaad Dollie
 Respondent:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. I am conducting a research study on *Social Capital* for students at the University of the Western Cape and how it impacts on students' success at university. Please feel free to share your views and the information as honest as possible. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, your responses are based on your experiences. Note that your responses and the information that you share will be anonymous and your details will not be shared with anyone else.

YEAR OF STUDY:

SCHOOL

1. Did anyone influence your decision to come to university? Tick options below.

a. Yes	
b. No	

2. If yes, who were the people who motivated you to come to university?

a. My parents	
b. Siblings	
c. Other family members	
d. Non family members	
e. Other (please specify)	

NETWORKS AND GROUPS

3. When you were at school, to which organisations, sports clubs or societies did you belong?

Tick as many options as are applicable.

a. None	
b. political groups	
c. religious groups	
d. sports clubs	
e. environmental	
f. cultural groups	
g. Other (please list these)	

4. On campus, which organisations/societies/ groups do you belong to? Tick as many options as are applicable.

a. None	
b. political groups	
c. religious groups	
d. sports clubs	
e. environmental groups/clubs	
f. cultural groups	
g. Other (please list these)	

5. In your community, which organisations/societies/ groups do you belong to?

None	
political groups	
religious groups	
sports clubs	
environmental	
cultural groups	
Other (please list these)	

6. Of all the groups that you belong to, which are the most important to you? Can you list them in order of importance with the most important mentioned first and the least important mentioned last?

I do not belong to any groups/societies/organisations	
1 (most important)	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8 (least important)	

7. How did you find out about these groups in question 6? (tick as many as necessary)

a. Friends	
b. Campus advertising	
c. Internet	
d. Social media	
e. Other (please explain)	

8. (ON CAMPUS) What is the main benefit from joining these groups in question 6?

(Please tick as many as necessary)

a. No benefit	
b. Spiritual	
c. Increase social status	
d. Improve self-esteem	
e. Improves knowledge base / education	
f. Recreational	
g. Other: Please list	

9. (IN THE COMMUNITY) What is the main benefit from joining these groups in question 6?
(Please tick as many as necessary)

Spiritual	
Increase social status	
Improve self-esteem	
Improves knowledge base / education	
Recreational	
Other: Please list	

10. Thinking about these groups in question 6, do most members share the same level of education, political viewpoint, socio-economic status, language, and age? Please tick what is applicable to each of the groups that you mentioned in question 6 above.

	Education	Political views	Socio-economic status	Language	Age
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					

11. (ON CAMPUS) How many hours per week do you spend participating in these groups per week?

0-2 hrs	
3-5 hrs	
5-10 hrs	
Other	

12. (IN THE COMMUNITY) How many hours per week do you spend participating in these groups per week?

0-2 hrs	
3-5 hrs	
5-10 hrs	
Other	

TYPE 3: SOCIAL NETWORKS

13. How many close friends do you have on campus who you can speak to about private matters or ask for help?

1-3	
3-5	
5-10	
More than 10	
None	
Other: Please explain	

14. Are most of your friends on campus similar or higher in socio-economic status than you?

Higher	
Lower	
the same	
Other: Please explain	

15. Will your friends on campus check in on you to see how you are doing if you are absent from lectures?

Yes always	
Yes sometimes	
Don't know	
Never	

16. In your circle of friends on campus, do you help each other out?

Yes, always	
yes, most of the time	

yes, sometimes	
Rarely helping	
No, never	

17. Would you say that your participation in the clubs/organisations on campus has had an impact on your personal growth?

Yes	
No	
Please explain your answer.	

18. Would you say that your friends on campus provide you with support during stressful / difficult times?

Yes	
No	

19. Please indicate the type of support you would receive from your friends on campus?
(Please tick as many as necessary)

Emotional Support	
Financial help	
Sharing information relevant to my studies	
Provide networking opportunities for studies and career	
Offer guidance and advice for personal issues	
Offer guidance and advice for academic issues	
Other: Please explain	

TYPE 4: PEER CHARACTERISTICS

20. What do you have in common with your friends on campus? (Tick as many as is necessary)

We study the same courses	
We come from the same community	
We identify with the same ethnic group,	
We share the same social status / prestige / class	
We share the same sports interests	
We have the same political orientation	
Awareness on current social issues	
We share the same artistic and creative interests	
Popularity	
Other, please specify	

TYPE 5: ACADEMIC SUPPORT ON CAMPUS

21. Do you allow others (friends, lecturers, tutors, support services) to support you when you are having problems on campus? These problems may be for academic and personal matters.

	Academic		Personal
Yes, sometimes		Yes, sometimes	
Yes, Most of the time		Yes, Most of the time	
Rarely		Rarely	
No, Never		No, Never	

22. If you are having any academic problems, who would you approach to assist with these problems? (Tick as many as is necessary)

tutors	
lecturers	
faculty student advisor	
academic support services	
Friends	
family	
religious leader/ community leader,	

sports coach	
Keep it to myself and try to solve it on my own	
Other, please specify	

23. With reference to question 22 (the services that you have used) what were the benefits for you/ what did you find most useful.

24. How did you find out about these services in question 22?

Friends	
Internet	
Lecturers	
Other (please explain)	

25. How have the support services on campus helped with your success as a student? Please explain.

26. Please share how you cope with personal challenges at university?

TYPE 6: THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

27. What has been the most challenging for you during the Covid-19 period?

Online learning	
Financial problems	
Personal problems	
Mental health problems	
Other (please explain)	

28. How have you coped with online learning at university during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Very well	
Well	
Average	
Poorly	
Very poorly	

29. Please explain your answer to question 28.

--

30. Have the groups or societies that you belong to assisted you with your coping.

Yes	
No	
If yes, please explain your answer.	

31. Have you and your friends (on campus) supported each other during the Covid-19 period?

Yes	
No	
If yes, please explain your answer.	

32. Do you feel that you have the necessary support and resources to study effectively during Covid-19? (Campus life and personal life)

	Campus life		Personal life
Yes		Yes	
Yes, sometimes		Yes, sometimes	
Not really		Not really	
Not at all		Not at all	
Please explain your answer.		Please explain your answer.	

33. Do you think that the support you receive from friends has helped you cope better at university during this time?

Yes	
No	
Please explain your answer.	

34. Do you think that the support you receive from the clubs and societies at university has helped you cope better at university during this time?

Yes	
No	
Please explain your answer.	

35. Which university services have you found to be the most beneficial during the Covid-19 period to help you cope with the challenges? (Tick as many as is necessary).

And rate the services you selected on a scale of 1-10

(1=most important & 10=least important)

a. Counselling service		
b. Health services		
c. Career service		
d. Food bank		
e. Lecturers		
f. Tutors		
g. Financial Aid		
h. SRC		
i. Other (please explain)		

36. How do you stay connected to your friends at university during Covid-19? (Tick as many as is necessary)

Email	
WhatsApp	
Instagram / Facebook/ other platforms	
Face-to-face	

I have not seen my friends during this time	
I have not spoken to my friends during this time	
I hardly see them	
I am still in touch with my friends	
Other (please explain)	

37. What do you miss the most about physically attending university?

TYPE 8: Contribution towards university success

38. How would you describe the role that you play in the groups that you belong to? (Tick as many as is necessary)

Leader	
More comfortable being a follower	
Listener	
I try to assist when there are problems	
I try to mediate when members are having problems with each other	
I prefer the administrative tasks	
Other (please explain)	

Respondents are informed to contact any of the following should there be any queries:

1. The Researcher Wiedaad Dollie: E-Mail - 9280524@myuwc.ac.za / wiedaad.dollie@gmail.com or mobile 078 560 4857.
2. The Supervisor Prof. Aminah Bayat at the Institute of Social Development, EMS, UWC: E-Mail - abayat@uwc.ac.za or office contact number 021-959 3332.
3. The HOD Dr R. Abdurazaq at the Institute of Social Development, EMS, UWC: E-Mail – rabdurazaq@uwc.ac.za or office contact number 021-959 9294.