

Investigating engaged and disengaged emotions among South African black and white students

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REMARKS

The following information should be taken into account upon reading the mini-dissertation:

- The reference style followed as well as the editorial style was considered from the Publication Manual (6th edition) of the American Psychological Association (APA). This practice is in line with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology of North-West University.
- The mini-dissertation is submitted in the form of three chapters, of which chapter 2 is the research article. The guidelines of the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology (SAJIP) governed chapter 2. However, the length of the article exceeds the requirements of SAJIP. With regard to the tables, APA style is utilised as the guidelines are similar to those of SAJIP. Chapters 1 and 3 followed the guidelines pertaining to the research unit, WorkWell.
- Ethical clearance was granted by the North-West University's ethics council for this mini-dissertation (project number ZEIN2009PR363).

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“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.” - Paul, to the Colossians 1:15-23

“It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out” – Proverb of Solomon.

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CONFIRMATION WITH REGARD TO EDITING

30 November 2016



I, **Ms Cecilia van der Walt**, hereby confirm that I took care of the **editing** of the **mini-dissertation** of **Mr PJ Gouws** titled ***Investigating engaged and disengaged emotions among South African black and white students.***

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DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY OF RESEARCH

I, Pieter Johannes Gouws, declare that this specific mini-dissertation “*Investigating engaged and disengaged emotions among South African black and white students*” is distinctly my own work. The interpretations, ideas, and viewpoints formulated within this study are those of the author, accounted for by the relevant references as from the literature, which are listed in the reference list. Furthermore, the content of this study will only be submitted for the relevant qualification, and no other, as well as only submitted to the appointed tertiary institution.

PJ Gouws



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disengaged emotion components

SUMMARY

Title: Investigating engaged and disengaged emotions among South African black and white students

Keywords: Engaged and disengaged emotions, Componential Emotion Approach (CEA), emotions, emotion theory, positive and negative emotions, students, South Africa, appraisals,

Markus and Kitayama's self-construal theory states that the way in which the self is constructed in an individual directly influences their motivations, cognitions and emotions. Self-construals influence emotions primarily by their social alignment. Engaged emotions bring about connectedness with others while disengaged emotions bring about social distance between individuals. Literature's understanding of the self-construal of black and white South Africans is that white individuals should display more disengaged and less engaged emotions than should black individuals. Engaged and disengaged emotions have recently been saliently demonstrated in South Africa. However, the applicability of Markus and Kitayama's self-construal theory to black and white individuals has recently been brought into question.

The purpose of this current research was to investigate engaged and disengaged emotion episodes between white Afrikaans, white English and black English students (n=293). Emotion episode questions were posed in two different contexts, namely the home and the university by applying the Componential Approach to Emotions. A five-step framework analysis was utilised to interpret the data. Log-linear analysis was conducted on the emotion episodes as imbedded in the self-construal theory. This was done to determine whether engaged and disengaged emotional differences emerge between cultural groups. Intrapersonal vs. interpersonal emotions, positive and negative emotions, as well as three emotion components (appraisals, action tendencies and subjective feelings) were utilised to investigate the emotional episodes.

Results indicated that engaged and disengaged emotions were salient. However, no cultural differences in the emotion processes of students were reported. This is in contrast to the expectations of literature that white students should experience more disengaged emotions and less engaged emotions than should black students. Furthermore, context was indicated to significantly influence the experience of engaged and disengaged emotions. In this regard, the university was closely associated with negative intrapersonal emotional episodes, while the

home context was associated with positive interpersonal emotional episodes. Post-hoc explanations for the results include acculturation and social class similarities.

At a componential level, only appraisals saliently displayed engaged and disengaged emotions, while subjective feelings and action tendencies did not. This may be due to the centrality of appraisals in the emotion process. Implications of the self-construal similarities among students for intervention and counselling services are discussed. Primarily, focusing on cognitive based counselling models, mitigating negative environmental influences and teaching students to tap into social support networks would best-facilitate promoting student support.

OPSOMMING

Titel: Die ondersoek van betrokke en onbetrokke emosies onder Suid-Afrikaanse swart en wit studente

Sleutelwoorde: emosies, betrokke en onbetrokke emosies, sosiale emosies, self, positiewe en negatiewe emosies, studente, Suid-Afrika, Emosie-Komponent benadering, emosie-teorie, self-konstrueringsteorie

Markus en Kitayama se self-konstrueringsteorie stel dat die wyse waarop die self in 'n individu gekonstrueer is, die motiverings, kennisies en emosies van sodanige persoon direk beïnvloed. Self-konstruerings beïnvloed emosies primer deur hul sosiale verbondenheid. Betrokke emosies bring verbondenheid met andere mee, terwyl onbetrokke emosies sosiale afstand tussen individue meebring. Die literatuur se opvatting van die self-konstruerings van swart en wit Suid-Afrikaners is dat wit individue meer onbetrokke en minder betrokke emosies behoort te toon as wat dit die geval met swart individue behoort te wees. Betrokke en onbetrokke emosies is onlangs opvallend in Suid-Afrika gedemonstreer. Die toepasbaarheid van Markus en Kitayama se self-konstrueringsteorie is onlangs bevraagteken tussen wit en swart Suid Afrikaners.

Die doel van hierdie huidige navorsing was om betrokke en onbetrokke emosie-episodes tussen wit Afrikaanse, wit Engelse en swart Engelse studente (n=293) te ondersoek. Emosie-episodevrae is in twee verskillende kontekste gestel, naamlik die huis en die universiteit aan die hand van die Emosie-Komponent benadering. 'n Vyf-stap raamwerk is benut om die data te interpreteer. Log-lineêre analise is op die emosie-episodes uitgevoer soos ingelê in die self-konstrueringsteorie. Dit is gedoen om te bepaal of emosionele verskille tussen kulturele groepe voorkom. Intrapersoonlike vs. interpersoonlike emosies, positiewe en negatiewe emosies, asook drie emosiekomponente (waardebepalings, geneigdheid tot optrede en subjektiewe gevoelens) is aangewend om die emosionele episodes te ondersoek

Resultate het aangedui dat betrokke en onbetrokke emosies opvallend was. Geen kulturele verskille in die emosieprosesse van studente is egter gerapporteer nie. Dit is in teenstelling met die verwagtinge van die literatuur dat wit student meer onbetrokke emosies en minder betrokke emosies as swart student behoort te ondervind. Hierbenewens is daar aangedui dat konteks 'n betekenisvolle invloed op die ervaar van betrokke en onbetrokke emosies uitoefen. Ten opsigte

hiervan is die universiteit ten nouste geassosieer met negatiewe intrapersoonlike episodes, terwyl die huis-konteks met positiewe interpersoonlike emosie-episodes geassosieer is. Post-hoc-verduidelikings vir die resultate sluit in akkulturasie en sosialeklas-ooreenkoste.

Op 'n komponensiële vlak het slegs waardebepalings betrokke en onbetrokke emosies opvallend vertoon, maar subjektiewe gevoelens en geneigdheid tot optrede het nie betrokke of onbetrokke emosies vertoon nie. Dit kan moontlik toegeskryf word aan die sentraliteit van waardebepalings in die emosieproses. Implikasies van die ooreenkomste in self-konstuerings onder studente vir intervensie en voorligtingsdienste word bespreek. Deur hoofsaaklik op kognitiefgebaseerde voorligtingsmodelle te fokus wat negatiewe omgewingsinvloede temper en die studente leer om uit sosiale-netwerkbronne te put sou die bevordering van studenteondersteuning die beste fasiliteer.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This mini-dissertation focuses on the engaged and disengaged emotions of black and white students in South Africa. Within this chapter, attention is given to the gap in research, the evidence surrounding it and the implications for understanding this gap. Furthermore, an appropriate approach is provided for following a step-by-step method to study emotions as well as self-construals. Lastly, a summary of this chapter is provided.

1.1 Problem statement

Student success has massive economic implications for South Africa. Student dropouts drain South Africa's economy by nearly 4.5 billion Rand annually (Statistics South Africa, 2016). In higher education, the situation is not getting any better. Especially since the #MustFall movement, the higher education sector has been characterised by violence, unrest and economic strain (Murris, 2016). Furthermore, the job market is under pressure due to a lack of qualified students entering their respective fields of work (McLachlan & Justice, 2009). Students are in a difficult position at institutions that are already known for their levels of stress.

The university setting is stressful and full of challenges for students. Students in South Africa face problems that are unique to its context. Many South African students face financial difficulties, causing significant stress (Pillay & Ncgobo, 2010). Furthermore, bursaries for students of lower income only cover admission costs, not living costs. Research has shown that South African students have high levels of languishing (van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012). The stressful environment has implications for the retention of students (Holinka, 2015).

Worldwide, student dropout levels amount to approximately 50%. In South Africa, the dropout rates are even higher (Council on Higher Education, 2013). More than 60% of students in South Africa do not complete their studies (Letseka & Breier, 2008). For black and coloured South African students, up to 95% of students do not complete the studies they started off with (Council on Higher Education, 2013). However, retaining more students has a direct positive effect on the economy and the job market. Well-functioning students are more employable. Therefore, it is critical to understand student wellbeing (Olwage, 2012) and the underlying factors that influence the wellbeing process.

Students have to cope with their environment in order to complete their studies successfully. To assist in improving the situation, universities are increasingly adopting more student support systems (Prebble *et al.*, 2004; Vogan, McKimm, da Silva, & Grant, 2014). Research has shown that students apply emotion-focused rather than problem-solving coping strategies to enable them to deal with stress (Brougham, Zail, Mendoza, & Miller, 2009). Understanding emotional wellbeing of students is of utmost importance for their wellbeing, especially since individuals from different cultures approach and experience situations differently.

The divergent emotional experiences of cultural groups are reflected in the self-construal theory of Markus and Kityama (1991). Self-construals refer to the different manners in which individuals define and make meaning of themselves (view themselves) in relation to others (Cross, Gercek-Swing, & Hardin, 2011). Markus and Katayama (1991) distinguish two types of self-construal, namely independent and interdependent. Each self-construal type influences an individual's cognitive, emotional, and motivational processes. According to their theory, exposure to either Western or non-Western cultures fosters independent or interdependent self-construal and further influences how people think, feel, and what motivates them (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

To illustrate the differences between the two types of self-construal, their motivational process can be explained as follows: with independent self-construal, the self is seen as a bounded entity. That is, seeing oneself as distinct from other people. With independent self-construal, personal accomplishments rank as the primary motivator of the self. Conversely, with interdependent self-construal, the self consists of its position of relationships with regard to others in the group. Self-achievement is synonymous with group achievement. With an Interdependent self-construal, harmony is the primary motivator of the self (Taras, Steel, & Kirkman, 2012). Markus and Kitayama (1991) maintain that the cognitions, motivations, and emotion processes of all individuals are affected by their self-construal.

Importantly, self-construal influences and predicts emotion processes (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Independent and interdependent self-construal have been strongly linked to disengaged and engaged emotions respectively (Basabe *et al.*, 2002; Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000; Marian & Kaushanskaya, 2004). Engaged and disengaged emotions are either directed at, or create distance from, social bonding. Engaged emotions bring about connectedness to

others. Feelings such as love and joy are examples of engaged emotions, as it bonds people. Engaged emotions affirm an interdependent self-construal. Disengaged emotions bring about a separateness or autonomy of the individual. For example, feelings such as shame and pride bring about a separation between the person and his social context. Disengaged emotions affirm an independent view of self (Kitayama, Mesquita, & Karasawa, 2006). It is expected that people from individualistic cultures should experience more disengaged emotions, as their primary motivators are self-orientated. Conversely, people from collectivistic cultures should experience more engaged emotions since the primary motivator is other-orientated. This theory is supported by literature (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006; Matsumoto, Yoo, & Nakagawa, 2008; Stoeber, Kobori, & Tanno, 2013).

The self-construal theory also has application in the South African context. Cultural groups are directly influenced by their history. White Afrikaners are of western European descent, and are renowned for their pursuit of civil liberty (Kaplan, 2014). Throughout history, the majority of Afrikaners have been theologically grounded in Protestantism, which affirms that every aspect of life is both a gift from God and worship to God. The development of Protestantism brought about a sense of responsibility for one's actions (Abulof, 2015; Barker, 2008). These factors have been closely associated with and attributed to the forming of an independent self-construction (Cohen & Hill, 2007; Sampson, 2000).

Black South African groups have been shown to display interdependent self-construal (Eaton & Louw, 2000). The concept *Ubuntu*, which is a belief that a human being is a human being because of other human beings, is central to the cultural construction of black groups in South Africa (Broodryk, 2007; Mkhize, 2008). Culturally, black groups see themselves as bound to one another, and that they are responsible for one another. Research conducted by Valchev, van de Vijver, Nel, Rothmann and Meiring (2013) found white and black South African groups to fall within the opposite ends of the Individualism–Collectivism continuum. White groups reported an individualist view of self, and black groups a collectivist view of self. The study also found that Indian and Coloured populations present an intermediate placement on the Individualism–Collectivism continuum (Sampson, 2000).

Cross *et al.* (2011) explain that “...the connection between independent self-construal and individualism and between Interdependent self-construal and collectivism is clear, so clear in fact, that it can be difficult to distinguish between self-construal and individualism–

collectivism” (p. 2). This corresponds with what Eaton and Louw (2000) found, namely that white students reported more independent self-descriptions, while black students reported more interdependent self-descriptions. Thus, from literature, it is expected that black South Africans should display more engaged emotions, and white South Africans more disengaged emotions. The concept *engaged* and *disengaged emotions* is an under-researched field, but it may be critical to the emotional wellbeing of students in different cultural groups. In order to be capable of undertaking such a task, an appropriate emotional theory is required.

Studying emotions can be a daunting task (Scherer, 2005). Research on emotions leaves a vast range of meaning and models that aim at explaining parts or contradicting parts of emotions. The only model that holistically measures emotions is the Componential Emotion Approach (CEA) (Scherer, 2013). The CEA is based on the Componential Process Model (Scherer, 2009). According to the CEA, emotions are viewed as processes that are triggered by events which are relevant to a person’s goals and needs (Fontaine & Scherer, 2013). The CEA comprises interplay between five major emotion components, namely appraisal, action tendency, bodily reaction, expression, and subjective feeling (Scherer, 2001). The unique interplay between these components leads to the emotions a person experiences. With this method of studying emotions, the meaning of terms can be identified by investigating each of the components of the CEA. This is due to the notion that meaning is built on a profile of features (Scherer & Fontaine, 2013c). The CEA has been studied with 35 samples from 30 countries in 25 languages and has shown to be universally consistent (Scherer & Fontaine, 2013c). Asking participants about emotion episodes and by breaking the questions down to the different emotion components of the CEA will provide a meaningful ground for evaluating the emotion type by looking at the unique interplay of components.

Although the theoretical groundwork of emotions and types of self-construal has been established, a recent study by Kgantsi, Fontaine, and Temane (2015) has shown that South African students reported emotions that are incongruent with the predictions of Markus and Kitayama (1991). Participants rated the frequency of experience of a set of 55 emotion terms that represents the emotion domain in different contexts. Kgantsi *et al* (2015) indicated that although engaged and disengaged emotions are salient, South African students reported no cultural differences between the engaged and disengaged emotions between different groups. Thus, white students did not experience more disengaged, and less engaged emotions than black students. This is in direct contrast to previous literature and the established understanding

of different cultural groups in South Africa (Cohen & Hill, 2007; Eaton & Louw, 2000; Valchev *et al.*, 2013).

Studying engaged and disengaged emotions in light of emotion episodes requires parameters in which to work. *Firstly*, engaged emotions are necessarily interpersonal. Levenson (1999) described intrapersonal emotions as the emotion components that are experienced internally, and interpersonal emotion episodes those components that are expressive towards others. *Secondly*, emotions should be studied in an episodic, holistic manner so as to infer the meaning of emotion (Mulligan & Scherer, 2012). By investigating emotions holistically as an episode, it is possible to gain insight into the emotion's social salience, whether it is interpersonal or intrapersonal.

Thirdly engaged and disengaged emotions are always studied alongside positive and negative emotions (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006). Positive emotions are more common with interpersonal self-construal and less common with independent self-construal (Kitayama *et al.*, 2006). The prevalence of positive and negative emotion episodes are also associated with cultural differences, which can be expected in South Africa. *Finally* the study by Kgantsi *et al.*, (2015) found that context differences emerged in terms of engaged and disengaged emotions. The university setting was associated with disengaged emotions and the home context associated with engaged emotions.

In light of the above, the wellbeing and success of students are of importance both to universities, the economy and the direct employability of students. Furthermore, the self-construal theory is very well-established world-wide but has been brought into question within the South African context. Thus, investigating the engaged and disengaged emotions between different cultural groups would contribute to the understanding of students' emotion experiences in different cultural groups. This research study will revisit the findings of Kgantsi *et al.* (2015) by investigating engaged and disengaged emotions in light of the Componential Emotion Approach. This study will allow students to express their emotion experiences in their own words as a whole episode. Similarities and differences in the engaged and disengaged emotion episodes of students from different groups are analysed at a global as well as a componential level. Furthermore, subtle cultural nuances in the emotion episodes of students can be investigated.

This research study's methodology employs three distinct advantages over that of Kgantsi *et al.* (2015). *Firstly*, self-construals influence emotions (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). By asking participants to describe a whole emotion episode through the CEA, it is possible to determine not only what emotions are experienced, but also how they are interpreted by the person. As an example, the experience of pride will be interpreted by an individual with an independent self-construal as distinguishing between the self and others, while for an individual with an interdependent self-construal, pride will be interpreted as being proud of someone around the self. Consequently, the self-construal can be investigated along with the emotion's social salience, because the global meaning is not lost. In the study of Kgantsi *et al.* (2015), self-construals of different cultural groups were inferred by literature.

Secondly, one of major critiques against cross-cultural research is that it enforces a usually western view of psychology on other contexts (Jack & Westwood, 2009). Oftentimes, methods and theories are simply translated and applied in different contexts. In the case of Kgantsi *et al.* (2015) the emotion domain was applied to the South African context. However, since the participants did not express emotions in their own terms, researchers cannot take into account complex cultural and linguistic subtleties that emerges in every culture (Fontaine, Poortinga, Delbeke, & Schwartz, 2008). In this study, students are free to indicate emotion episodes in their own words. The Componential Emotion Approach has been validated internationally in over 30 countries and 25 languages (Fontaine, 2013). Students can also answer the open-ended questions in their home language, allowing for deeper freedom of expression. Furthermore, cultural nuances in the emotion episodes of students can be investigated at both a global and componential level. *Thirdly*, the data is used transformatively through a mixed-method approach to research, as discussed in depth in later sections of this chapter. Thus it can be understood that this research study clearly identifies whether the emotions experienced are engaging or disengaging, along with group similarities or differences and bypasses limitations of working with only qualitative or quantitative data.

1.2 Research questions

This research study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How are self-construals, emotions, engaged and disengaged emotions, positive and negative emotion and students in South Africa conceptualised according to literature?
2. How prevalent are intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes in a sample of university students?
3. Do cultural groups and context have an effect on intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes?
4. Are there differences in the prevalence of positive and negative emotion episodes in a sample of university students?
5. Do cultural groups, context, intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions have an effect on positive and negative emotion experiences in a sample of university students?
6. Do cultural groups and context have an effect on positive and negative emotions components in a sample of university students?
7. Are engaged and disengaged emotions salient in the emotion components in a sample of university students?
8. Do context and cultural groups and positive and negative emotion episodes have an effect on engaged and disengaged emotion components in a sample of university students?
9. What recommendations can be made for future research and practice?

1.3 Contributions

1.3.1 Contribution for the Individual

The researcher is of opinion that this study may deepen the understanding of fundamental differences and similarities in emotion processes among students in South Africa. Insight into how self is construed and its implications for South African students can have a direct impact on the motivations, cognitions and emotions of individuals around a person.

1.3.2 Contribution for the field of Industrial Psychology

Although the primary focus of the research is cross-cultural in nature, the study has direct implications for the field of Industrial and Organisational Psychology. This study firstly aims at confirming previous research which stands in contrast to the mainstream understanding of

the self and secondly, at adding to literature by investigating possible salient cultural phenomena in the South African context. Furthermore, cultural similarities and differences in the self-construals of individuals should be inexorably linked to research on motivation, cognition and emotion processes of individuals in South Africa.

1.3.3 Contribution to the Literature

Insights are provided into self-construal and emotions in South Africa. Specifically, the two types of self-construal of South African students are investigated alongside the influence thereof on emotion episodes. The CEA provides a means to investigate the emotion processes at both a global and componential level to investigate cultural differences and similarities in students' emotion experiences.

1.4 Research objectives

The research objectives are divided into a general objective and specific objectives.

1.4.1 General objective

The general objective of this research is to investigate the applicability of Markus and Kitayama's (1991) self-construal theory in the South African context by investigating the engaged and disengaged emotion episodes of black and white South African students.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

- To conceptualise self-construals, emotions, engaged and disengaged emotions, positive and negative emotion in South African students, according to literature.
- To determine the prevalence of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes in a sample of university students.
- To determine the effect of cultural groups and context on intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes in a sample of university students.
- To determine the prevalence of positive and negative emotion episodes in a sample of university students.
- To determine the effect of cultural groups, context, intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes on positive and negative emotion episodes in a sample of university students.

- To determine the effect of cultural group and context on positive and negative emotion components in a sample of university students.
- To determine the prevalence of engaged and disengaged emotion components in a sample of university students.
- To determine the effect of context and cultural groups and positive and negative emotion episodes on engaged and disengaged emotion components in a sample of university students.
- To make recommendations for future research and practice.

1.5 Research design

1.5.1 Research approach

This research study utilises a sequential mixed method approach (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). The sequential mixed method approach entails approaching the research sequentially, employing both qualitative and quantitative approach. This research is conducted in two phases. In the first phase, qualitative emotion episodes at university and at home are explored by open-ended questions, assisting the participants in reflecting on their own unique experiences. A cross-sectional design is used to obtain this data. De Vos *et al.* (2011) describe a cross-sectional design as a method by means of which a number of people are surveyed during one point in time.

In the second phase these qualitative descriptions (emotion episodes) are coded into an analytical framework. An analytical framework is a robust, step-by-step framework that allows studying qualitative data in light of either qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid, & Redwood, 2013). This paved the way for the data to be quantitatively analysed in phase two. This practice is in accordance with the design as described by Greene *et al.* (1989) in which data from the qualitative phase is used to develop the quantitative phase. This also fits the argument of Creswell (2009) that the quantitative phase is used to facilitate the interpretation of the qualitative findings. A framework analysis methodology is employed to sequence the data analysis process. This guides the process by investigating emotion episodes according to the existing theory of engaged and disengaged emotions. The framework analysis methodology is eclectic in its epistemology, and borrows

from different traditions within the field of social science such as grounded theory and phenomenology (Mertens, 2014; Richie, Spencer, & O'Connor, 2003).

Ontologically, the framework analysis methodology is closely aligned to subtle realism (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) conceptualises the subtle realism paradigm as that the social world's existence is independent of the individual, however, it is accessible in qualitative research through participants' interpretations (Hammersley, 2002). Emotions are deeply internal phenomena (Scherer, 2001). With engaged and disengaged emotions involving the outside world, the framework methodology is able to accurately investigate the complex and dynamic world within and around the participant through its robust and systematic approach (Gale *et al.*, 2013).

1.5.2 Research strategy

The 293 home and 293 university emotion episodes (586 emotion episodes in total) are employed as multiple qualitative cases to develop the analytical framework. Prior to data collection, students are given a presentation by means of which the purpose of the research is explained. Students are made aware of what is expected from them, the voluntary nature of the research, and their rights as participants. Consequently, time is allowed for any questions and concerns. The researcher hands out questionnaires based on the language preference of the students. Students who are in a rush or have other responsibilities are also free to complete the questionnaire at home and return it to the researcher. Questionnaires are enclosed in a secure box to ensure anonymity.

1.6 Research method

1.6.1 Literature review

For this research, a complete literature review regarding engaged and disengaged emotions will be conducted. The sources consulted include: Google Scholar; Academic Search Premier; PsycInfo, APA PsycArticles; NWU Library One search; EbscoHost; Emerald; Proquest; SACat; SAEpublications; and Science Direct. Relevant journals will be consulted such as Cognition & Emotion; Emotion; South African Journal of Industrial Psychology; Journal of Personality; Personality and Social Psychology Review; The Journal of Social Psychology; Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology; Journal of Psychological Issues in Organizational

Culture; Journal of Psychology in Africa; Journal of Personality and Social Psychology; Psychological review; European Journal of Personality; and the Journal of Applied Psychology. Textbooks such as the Components of emotional meaning: A sourcebook (Fontaine, Scherer, & Soriano, 2013).

Keywords that will be included in the research are: “Engaged emotions” “Disengaged emotions”, “Markus and Kitayama”, “self-construals”, “Emotions”, “South Africa”, “CEA”, “Appraisals”, “Scherer”, “Frijda”, “Fontaine”, “Bodily Sensations”, “Emotion expression”, “Emotion regulation”, “Action Tendencies in emotions”, “Gestures in emotions”, “Afrikaners”, “Tswana”, “Componential Emotion Approach”, “Componential Process Model”, “positive and negative emotions”, “emotion valence”, “interpersonal emotions”, “cultural differences”, “students”, “student wellbeing”, “student stressors”, “emotion components”.

1.6.2 Research setting

The research setting occurs in a single higher education institution and included a historical white student population and a historical black student population. The data is collected in numerous classrooms, the reason being that a classroom is an environment familiar to the students. Accordingly, a safe environment helps in facilitating participant co-operation (de Vos *et al.*, 2011).

1.6.3 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

Entrée is established prior to the research study. Permission from all key authority positions are gained by means of a gatekeeper. A gatekeeper can be seen as an individual who holds the authority to provide access to the prospective research field and the participants, and who is also the link between the researcher and the participants (de Vos *et al.*, 2011). Ethical clearance is obtained from an Ethics committee of the university to ensure that participants will not be disadvantaged by the research process. Secondly, lecturers at the university granted permission prior to their class time being used.

The researcher plays a few roles through the process. The researcher pays specific attention to the sampling, data collection, analysis and coding processes. Before the research study, the researcher spends a significant amount of time planning for the study, anticipating possible pitfalls in the research methodology. The researcher plays the role of administrator, printing

and preparing booklets. During data collection, the researcher plays the role of presenter and expert to the students, addressing questions and presenting the information of the research study to the students. Next, the researcher played the role of transcriber and coder. These processes are conducted rigorously to ensure the data analysis and transcription was accurate.

1.6.4 Research participants and sampling

A total of 300 (n=300) students participate in this study and a total of 600 emotion episodes (home and university emotion episodes combined) act as the qualitative cases. Considering that two contexts are asked per participant, the sample is large enough for purposes of the research study. Purposive sampling is used to collect the data. With purposive sampling, the sample is based on the judgement of the researcher (de Vos *et al.*, 2011). Purposive sampling is utilised in order to ensure enough participants per cultural group were approached. White Afrikaans, white English and black English participants were chosen based on their necessary characteristics (Creswell, 2009; 2013).

1.6.5 Data collection methods

Multiple qualitative cases of emotion episodes are collected by means of the Emotion Episode Questionnaire. The Episode Grid was developed with the Emotion Research Project at Ghent University in Belgium as part of an initiative of the International Society for Cross-Cultural Research on Affect, which resorts under the Swiss Affect Sciences Centre (Jonker, van der Merwe, Fontaine, & Meiring, 2011).

The EEQ is translated into Afrikaans for participants to answer in their mother tongue. To ensure that the translations are accurate, back translation is used to ensure that the meaning is retained in Afrikaans using the successive development method (van de Vijver & Poortinga, 1997). Back translation is an effective method to ensure that translations accurately reflect the question in its original context (de Vos *et al.*, 2011)

A brief demographic section is included as a first section of the questionnaire along with a consent form. Questionnaires consisted of eleven questions covering all emotion components that form an emotion episode according to the Componential Emotion Approach. Questions are designed to measure all the components of the CEA in two contexts: at home and at university. Participants are able to respond in either Afrikaans or English. Students were asked

to describe the last significant emotion episode in the context of home and university. The questions of the EEQ are listed in table one.

Table 1

Questions used to evaluate emotion episodes according to the Componential Emotion Approach

Number	Question
1.1	Which was the last emotion you experienced at home? Please, describe
1.2	How long ago did you experience the emotions?”
1.3	Why do you think that this situation caused your emotions?
1.4	In an emotional situation people often have various feelings. What were the feelings you had during that situation?
1.5a	People often express their emotions on their face. How did you express your emotions on your face in that situation?
1.5b	People often express their emotions by their posture. How did you express your emotions by your posture in that situation?
1.5c	People often express their emotions through their voice. How did you express your emotions through your voice in that situation?
1.6	In an emotional situation, people often feel a reaction in their body. How did your body react in that situation?
1.7	In an emotional situation, people often feel an inner drive to do something. What did you feel driven to do in your situation?
1.8	What did you eventually do in that situation?
1.9	In an emotional situation, people often try to control their emotions. How did you control your emotions in that situation?
1.10	Did your answers to the previous questions fully describe your personal experience during that situation? If they did not, what would you like to add?

1.6.6 Recording of data

Every questionnaire has a corresponding participant number to compare with the demographic information and facilitate anonymity. To ensure that the participants’ privacy is in line with the Protection of Personal Information act, the private information was stored separately in a sealed box. Only the researcher has access to the participant information. Submitted questionnaires are entered into Microsoft Excel by the researcher. The data was transcribed according to the

participant number, context (home or university), ethno-linguistic group (White Afrikaans, White English and Black English) and CEA question. By transcribing the interviews, the researcher familiarises himself with the data which is an important requirement of qualitative data (de Vos *et al.*, 2011).

1.6.7 Data analysis

Phase 1

To analyse its applicability to the South African context, an analytical framework method (Gale *et al.*, 2013; Smith & Firth, 2011) is employed to ensure a robust standard by means of which the self-construal theory of Markus and Kitayama (1991) is tested. The framework methodology is widely established in social, psychological and cross-cultural sciences, with a history of more than 35 years' application (Richie & Lewis, 2003). One of the strengths of the framework methodology is its flexibility in research fields (Gale *et al.*, 2013). It is adaptable to multi-disciplinary research as well as inductive and deductive studies (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2008). The analytic framework provides a clear step-by-step process (Smith & Firth, 2011) for conducting research. Furthermore, it is highly suitable for studying emotions (Gale *et al.*, 2013).

Analytic Framework

An analytic framework is developed to analyse the emotion episodes in terms of engaged and disengaged emotions amongst a student sample. A set of five categories is used to evaluate engaged and disengaged emotion episodes of different cultural groups in different contexts. The analytic process is applied by following the process described hereafter: Firstly, to determine whether or not emotion episode is interpersonally directed; secondly, whether the emotion episode is positive or negative; and thirdly, whether or not three CEA categories are clearly engaged. CEA categories that are too open to interpretation and cannot noticeably point to the social state of emotions were discarded for the sake of accuracy of the framework. The three components and categories of analysis used are appraisals, action tendencies and subjective feelings.

Subsequently a description follows of the categories for coding in the analytic framework.

Codings

Codings are used to classify the data in order to systematically compare parts with others in the data set. An analytic framework is developed to analyse each emotion episode. To code the data set, Microsoft Excel is used. Codings were evaluated according to five categories in the following process: Firstly, codings were used to account whether the emotion episode is interpersonal; intrapersonal; both intrapersonal and interpersonal; or not clearly intrapersonal or interpersonal. The second step was to evaluate whether the emotion episode is positive; negative; both positive and negative or not clearly positive or negative. If the emotion episode is not clearly interpersonal or both intrapersonal and interpersonal, the episode is not coded further because engaged emotions are clearly interpersonal by nature (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000). If the emotion is intrapersonal, it could automatically be understood as being disengaged. The third step is to code the three CEA components as being engaged; disengaged; both engaged and disengaged; or not clearly engaged or disengaged. Only the components that most-clearly indicates engaged and disengaged emotions are selected by guidance of the components of emotional meaning textbook by Fontaine, Scherer, and Soriano (2013). According to Fontaine, Scherer and Soriano (2013), the components of expressions and bodily sensations do not lucidly indicate social salience. Therefore, only appraisals, action tendencies and subjective feelings are utilised. An extra column for analytic memos is added in the coding file for any notes, thoughts or examples, such as clear examples of emotions, difficult codings or new coding notes. Each coding category is given a number for each coding option for easy identification.

1.6.8 Strategies employed to ensure quality data

The researcher independently codes a few emotion episodes in all three ethno-linguistic groups. The codings are then shown and discussed with an interdisciplinary team consisting of a cross-cultural psychologist and an independent industrial psychologist. This is done to ensure that alternate viewpoints could be incorporated (Morse *et al.*, 2008). After consensus was reached, the coder completes all the codings, and highlighted all difficult codings in the data. The difficult codings are debated by the co-coding team until the correct coding matrix is decided on (Morse *et al.*, 2008). The co-coding team then sets rigorous standards by which to evaluate the data set consistently (Gale *et al.*, 2013). Applying rigour and transparency in data analysis is key to quality in qualitative analyses (Polit & Beck, 2013).

1.6.9 Statistical Analysis

Phase 2

After the previous steps have been completed, step two initiates. The qualitative analytical framework is analysed quantitatively by using log-linear analysis. Log-linear analysis is a statistical method that examines the structural relationship between two or more categorical variables, similar to Pearson's Chi square statistic (χ^2) (van der Heijden, de Falguerolles, & de Leeuw, 1989). According to Field (2013), Log-linear analysis can be used even if the categories are cross-classified. Goodness of fit was found through significant likelihood ratios ($p < 0.05$), strong beta values and low degrees of freedom values (categorical fields minus one) (Field, 2013; Knoke & Burke, 1980). Only parsimonious models are selected. Salient differences between the emotion episodes among different ethno-linguistic groups and their contexts are reported on.

1.6.10 Ethical considerations

Research ethics are critical guides to any research projects, especially to protect the participants who are involved (Miller, Birch, Mauthner, & Jessop, 2012). Ethical consideration in the study remains a prominent guide for the duration of the research. The researcher maintains a professional standard throughout the study. Before handing out questionnaires, participants are informed of the purpose of the study, and a full disclosure of what the research entails regarding them.

Each participant is given a consent form that outlined their rights, and their participation-role in the research. Participants are allowed to distance themselves at any point of the research. The incentives, potential risks and research benefits and limits of confidentiality were laid out (American Psychological Association, 2010). Furthermore, anonymity is pursued, in accordance to the POPI act (Republic of South Africa, 2013). Anonymity is only broken only if the researcher is ethically compelled to. The researcher assigned an anonymous number to each participant, by which the data will be coded into Microsoft Excel. Data will be stored in a locked, safe room. Coders and co-coders will sign a form of confidentiality, and will not be allowed to disclose any information that could be considered private.

Furthermore, the APA code of ethics (APA, 2010) is summarised by Goodwin and Goodwin (2014) that provides five ethical principles that will guide the researcher:

- The researcher will act with beneficence and non-maleficence, by constantly weighing up the benefits of the research, while seeking to achieve the greatest good in the research;
- The researcher is obligated by fidelity and responsibility to be aware of their responsibility to society, as well as their role to illustrate the highest standards of professional behaviour;
- The researcher is compelled by integrity to be brutally honest in the entire research endeavour;
- The researcher should act with justice to treat every participant in the research with fairness and aim to maintain the highest level of expertise that will reduce any form of bias, and
- The researcher has a special need to enforce respect for people's rights and dignity by being vigorous in their attempt to ensure the welfare of the participants, and furthermore protecting the rights of the participants

This study forms part of the VLIR-UOS, (project number ZEIN2009PR363) for which ethical clearing has been granted by the North-West University's ethics council.

1.7 Chapter division

The chapters in this mini-dissertation are presented as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction.

Chapter 2: Research article.

Chapter 3: Conclusions, limitations, and recommendations.

1.8 Chapter summary

Chapter one, in summary, focuses on the mismatch of literature and recent findings surrounding self-construals and engaged and disengaged emotions in South Africa (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Kgantsi *et al.*, 2015). Within this chapter, the Componential Emotion Approach is introduced as an encompassing point by which to study engaged and disengaged emotions. The framework methodology is also discussed to guide the emotion experiences of students to meaningfully investigate engaged and disengaged emotions among different cultural groups in South Africa. The following chapter will be an execution of this chapter. It will set out to

achieve the research objectives set out in chapter one. Chapter two will be in the form of a research article.

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CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH ARTICLE

INVESTIGATING ENGAGED AND DISENGAGED EMOTIONS AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN BLACK AND WHITE STUDENTS

Orientation: Emotions are characterised by numerous synchronised components and can also be used to make significant inferences regarding the socially guided emotions and experiences.

Research purpose: This study seeks to investigate similarities and differences between the engaged and disengaged emotions of students of different cultural groups.

Motivation for the study: Recent studies have indicated that the engaged and disengaged emotions as well as self-construal of students were experienced in contrast to the expectations of literature. Self-construal has direct implications for people's emotional, cognition and motivational processes, and should be investigated further.

Research design, approach and method: A sequential mixed-methodology was employed. 293 (n=293) students in a prominent South African university were requested to report the last significant emotional event in two contexts, namely home and university, in their own words. The Emotion Episode Questionnaire was employed to ask emotions according to the Componential Emotion Approach. An analytic framework was developed to investigate the episodes in terms of engaged and disengaged emotions. Log-linear analysis was conducted in the LEM program. Significant effects were reported on.

Main findings: Engaged and disengaged emotions were salient for different groups in South Africa. However, no cultural differences were found in the emotion experiences of students. Context was shown to be the strongest contributor to emotion episodes. At a componential level, only appraisals meaningfully indicated engaged and disengaged emotions.

Practical/managerial implications: The emotion experiences of students across different cultural groups are comparable for both the home and university context. Future student interventions should focus on mitigating negative contextual circumstances and teaching social support as a resource for student wellbeing. Furthermore, the self-construals of black and white students have been shown to not differ. Therefore, black and white students do not indicate a strictly independent vs. interdependent preference as is expected from literature.

Contribution/value-add: Self-construal was not shown to influence the engaged and disengaged emotion episodes of black and white students in South Africa. Furthermore, the understanding of the student experiences, and emotion processes has been deepened at both a global and componential level. Practical implications for student interventions include focusing on the appraisal component rather than on other components for student interventions. Context was shown to most significantly influence the experience of engaged and disengaged emotions

among students. The university context is universally stressful for students, while the home context is a place of relaxation irrespective of cultural background.

Keywords: Engaged emotions, disengaged emotions, emotions, Componential Emotion Approach (CEA), self-construal, students, emotion episodes, intrapersonal emotions, interpersonal emotions, positive emotions, negative emotions, university, appraisals, subjective feelings, action tendencies.

Introduction

The university setting is characterised by constant testing, anxiety and pressure (Bayram & Bilgel, 2008; Bewick, Koutsopoulou, Miles, Slaa, & Barkham, 2010; Shamsuddin *et al.*, 2013). A large corpus of literature (upwards of 1 000 articles) has been written on student anxiety in the early 2000s (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002) and continues to be a problem (Beiter *et al.*, 2015). Research shows that about 10% of students experience serious levels of stress (Abouserie, 1994; Abdel Wahed & Hassan, 2016; Deatherage, 2014) and more than 50% of students worldwide experience unhealthy levels of anxiety (Regehr, Glancy, & Pitts, 2013).

South African students also report high levels of languishing (van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012) and exhibit high levels of suicide ideation (Bantjes, Kagee, McGowan, & Steel, 2016). Furthermore, a high percentage of students experience traumatic events while studying (Hoffman, 2002; McGowan & Kagee, 2013). Another concern will be that these factors can influence the employability of students and their transition into employment. Coetzee and Harry (2014) point out that psycho-social competencies are vital for effective transition of students to the workplace. Even more, the success of university students has serious implications for the South African economy, as student dropouts cost taxpayers up to R4.5 billion annually (Gouws & van der Merwe, 2004; Statistics South Africa, 2016a; 2016b).

To achieve academic success, students need to not only have emotional commitment to their studies, but also the emotional collaboration between students and the learning environment of the university (Christie, Tett, Cree, Hounsell, & McCune, 2008). The way in which students cope with challenges has been shown to be emotionally focused instead of being focused on employing problem-solving coping strategies (Brougham, Zail, Mendoza, & Miller, 2009). The conclusion can be drawn that these demands of the university life has serious emotional effects on wellbeing and ultimately student success. It is also evident that emotionality in student success becomes an important topic of research.

In order to improve the success of students, it is necessary to understand the emotional experience of students, especially considering that people of different cultural groups honour contrasting values of importance, and approach situations in their own way (Schwartz, 1992; 2014). If the motivations and emotions of different cultural groups differ (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Schwartz, 1992), so can the emotion experiences of students in a similar context.

In this regard, in their seminal work, Markus and Kitayama (1991) demonstrated that motivations, cognitions, and emotions may vary between cultural groups through the way individuals view themselves. It is one of the most well-established cross-cultural theories with application to a range of corroborating fields (i.e. neuro-biology; culture; life satisfaction; cognition styles, wellbeing, self-regulation). Furthermore, this self-construal theory is understood to be applicable universally, since cultures are found worldwide (Schwartz, 2014).

The key concept in Markus and Kitayama's theory is that emotions are affected by self-construal, which is imbedded in their cultural group (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000). Self-construal refers to the manner in which individuals construct and make meaning of themselves in relation to others (Cross, Gercek-Swing, & Hardin, 2011). Markus and Katayama (1991) distinguished two types of self-construal: independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal. Each type of self-construal influences an individual's cognitive, motivational, and emotional processes. Self-construal also influences the emotions elicited in similar situations (Cross, Gercek-Swing, & Hardin, 2011; DeAndrea, Shaw, & Levine, 2010).

The self-construal theory is also applicable to the South African cultural groups. White South Africans tend to identify with independent self-construal while Black South Africans tend to identify with interdependent self-construal (Eaton & Louw, 2000; Valchev, van de Vijver, Nel, Rothmann, & Meiring, 2013). This means that the way black and white South Africans experience emotions could fundamentally differ. Kitayama *et al.* (2000) explain that emotions that bind people to others are engaged emotions, while emotions that bring social distance between people are disengaged emotions. Further to this, they state that independent self-construal leads to a view of self being autonomous and self-regulating while interdependent self-construal conceptualises a person's self to the relationships around them (Basabe *et al.*, 2002).

Individuals in cultures with an interdependent self-construal express more socially engaged emotions such as love while individuals in cultural groups with an independent self-construal exhibit more socially disengaged emotions such as pride or hatred (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Marian & Kaushanskaya, 2004). Emotions that are not directed at others can therefore not be considered to be truly engaged. This implies that emotions that bind people socially are called engaged emotions. Conversely, emotions that isolate people from others are called disengaged

emotions (Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000). Engaged and disengaged emotions are also identifiable in intrapersonal- and interpersonal-related emotion experiences.

Levenson (1999) described intrapersonal emotions as those components of emotions that are experienced internally, while interpersonal emotion episodes are those components that are expressive in nature and involves others. It has also been argued that emotions should only be studied in an episodic, holistic manner in order to infer the meaning of emotion (Mulligan & Scherer, 2012). By investigating emotions holistically as an episode, it is possible to gain insight into the emotion's social salience, be it interpersonal or intrapersonal. This will also indicate that the emotion is engaged or disengaged in a specific context. Hence the classification of emotion episodes as intrapersonal and interpersonal will already infer on the prevalence of engaged and disengaged emotions.

However, the application of this theory to investigate differences in emotions in cultural groups does not come without its research challenges. *Firstly*, emotions are difficult to define (Scherer, 2005). Although many holistic definitions have been proposed (e.g. Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981), an accompanying theory of emotions is required to include the holistic emotion experience while not under-emphasising any component of emotions. In this regard, the CEA's (Componential Emotion Approach) conceptualisation offers a solution to investigate all that emotions encompass. There are five components that interact to form emotions. The five components are appraisals, subjective feelings (often confused with emotions), expressions, action tendencies, and regulation. Emotions form through the unique interplay of these five components. In order to fully investigate the prevalence of engaged or disengaged emotions between cultural groups, the CEA can be utilised. The CEA makes it possible for an in-depth investigation of all the aspects of emotions. This can be achieved by allowing students to write their emotions in their own terms. It allows them to express their emotions more authentically than with a pre-defined set of emotion terms.

Secondly, recent studies (Kitayama, Park, Sevincer, Karasawa, & Uskul, 2009; Santamaría, Manuel, Hansen, & Ruiz, 2010; Vignoles *et al.*, 2016) have brought into question some aspects of Markus and Kitayama's (1991) theory. Kgantsi, Fontaine, and Temane (2015) utilised a quantitative study with a set of 55 emotion terms that represent the emotion domain. Students were asked to rate the frequency of experience of these terms in different contexts with a seven rating. The results of this study suggest that the self-construal dichotomy becomes indistinct in

South Africa, with both black and white South African groups reporting emotions that are contrary to the expectations of the classically understood theory of self-construal. The study also found no distinguishable difference in engaged and disengaged emotions between black and white South African groups. On the other hand, significant differences in home and university contexts were found (Kgantsi *et al.*, 2015) with the university context associated with disengaged emotions and the home context associated with engaged emotions for all the groups investigated. It therefore becomes important not to investigate the effect of cultural groups on the prevalence of engaged or disengaged emotions only, but also to take into consideration the effect context has.

However, the current research study's approach gains distinct advantages over that of Kgantsi *et al.* (2015). Since self-construals influence emotions (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), it is possible to determine not only what emotions are experienced, but also how they are interpreted by the person by asking participants to describe a whole emotion episode through the CEA. The interpretation of emotion is influenced through an individual's self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Furthermore, the meaning of the emotion is engrained in the emotion episodes as a whole. Consequently, the self-construal is investigated along with the emotion episode's social salience. In the study of Kgantsi *et al.* (2015), self-construals of different cultural groups were inferred by literature.

One of major critiques against cross-cultural research is that it enforces a usually western view of psychology on other contexts (Jack & Westwood, 2009). In the case of Kgantsi *et al.* (2015) 55 emotion terms representing the emotion domain was applied to the South African context. However, since the participants did not express emotions in their own terms, researchers cannot take into account complex cultural and linguistic subtleties that emerges in every culture (Fontaine, Poortinga, Delbeke, & Schwartz, 2008). Furthermore, the pre-set emotion domain could possibly enforce the emotion domain on the participants, as their own interpretations could not be used. To overcome this challenge in this research study, students are free to indicate emotion episodes in their own words by means of the CEA. The Componential Emotion Approach has been validated internationally in over 30 countries and 25 languages (Fontaine, 2013). Students can answer the open-ended questions in their home language, allowing for deeper freedom of expression. Furthermore, cultural nuances in the emotion episodes of students can be investigated at both a global and componential level. The data can be used transformatively through a sequential mixed-method approach to research, as

discussed in depth in later sections of this chapter. Thus it can be understood from the above that this research study can clearly identify emotions episodes' social salience along with group similarities or differences, and that it bypasses limitations of the methodology of Kgantsi *et al.* (2015).

Thirdly, the relationship between positive and negative emotion episodes and engaged and disengaged emotions needs to be explored (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Fontaine & Scherer, 2013b). Literature predicts that positive emotions are to be associated with interdependent self-construal, while negative emotions are to be associated with independent self-construal (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000). *Fourthly*, variation in the prevalence of positive and negative emotion episodes is also associated with cultural differences. Independent groups tend to experience more positive emotion episodes, while interdependent groups tend to demonstrate no preference for positive or negative emotions (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000). To further explore possible differences and similarities in engaged and disengaged emotions between cultural groups, it is important to investigate the positive and negative valence of emotion episodes. Positive and negative emotions are always investigated alongside the social salience of those emotions (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000). The investigation of the effect of positive and negative emotion episodes on engaged and disengaged emotions therefore becomes essential.

In light of the above, the purpose of this study is to investigate the applicability of self-construal theory in South African students by investigating engaged and disengaged emotions in black and white students. As stated earlier, these emotions are best investigated within the emotion episode of which they form part. It is also important to investigate engaged and disengaged emotions in different emotion components. Furthermore, the effect of cultural group, context, and positive and negative emotion episodes on engaged and disengaged emotion components needs to be investigated.

This next section will give a deeper overview of the literature related to the study. Firstly, students and their experiences in South Africa will be investigated. It will be followed by an overview of emotions and self-construal and the influences on each other. This section will conclude with the investigation of the application of self-construal to the South African context.

Literature review

Students

High dropout rates among students in South Africa costs taxpayers upwards of R4.5 billion (Viljoen, 2012; Statistics South Africa, 2016; 2016b). Getting a throughput of students is becoming a problem of economic survival for universities (Delle Fave, Brdar, Wissing, & Vella-Brodrick, 2013; Mayo, Helms, & Codjoe, 2004) as the cost of keeping an existing student is five to ten times cheaper than acquiring a new one (Mayo *et al.*, 2004). Understanding what contributes to student wellbeing and success and the dynamics of constructs related to success is crucial for universities, especially in light of the many challenges South African students face.

The many challenges students face (Olwage, 2012; Pierceall & Keim, 2007) are often too difficult to deal with (Bewick *et al.*, 2010; Pillay & Ngcobo, 2010). The increased psychosocial stress students experience can negatively influence academic success, mental health and their quality of life (Regehr *et al.*, 2013; Robotham, & Julian, 2006). This is reflected by the high percentage of student dropouts. According to Letseka and Breier (2008), students have abnormally high dropout rates of up to 60% overall, with only 5% of black and coloured students successfully completing their studies (Council on Higher Education, 2013). Concern for failure is also common, especially with black South African students (Munro & Samuel, 2015). It is clear that universities have demanding environments.

The difficulties that South African students face are also unique. More than 70% of students experience traumatic events during studies (Hoffman, 2002) while upwards of 90% students had experienced a traumatic event by the time they started studying (McGowan & Kagee, 2013). Pillay and Ngcobo (2010) investigated the sources of stress for South African students. They reported academic work and fear of failure as being the biggest pressure followed by financial concerns, especially for rural students. Financial stress is also a large problem facing South Africa (Young, 2009), with NSFAS bursaries often only covering the academic costs, leaving students without food or accommodation (Driscoll, Comm, & Mathaisel, 2013; Letseka & Breier, 2008; Pillay & Ngcobo, 2010). Literature indicates that low socio-economic income students generally experience more stress than others (Abdel, Wahed, & Hassan, 2016). On average, black South African students are shown to have higher levels of anxiety than white

South African students, especially due to socio-economic differences (Young, 2009; Young & Campbell, 2014).

Literature points to motivational differences of students from different cultures. Success was shown to motivate western students, while failure-avoidance motivated eastern students to perform better (Hamamura, Meijer, Heine, Kamaya, & Hori, 2009; Shu & Lam, 2016). It was also demonstrated that students with an independent self-construal tends to remember positive events more and negative events less than students with an interdependent self-construal (Shu & Lam, 2016). Students' motivations and emotions are linked together (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Scholars are increasingly acknowledging the role of emotions in universities (Sheehan, McDonald, Spence, & 2009; Spelman, 2010). Research is usually focused on certain feelings as part of other factors. There are overwhelmingly more studies on student anxiety than the relative dearth of other student feelings or emotions (Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2006). Since students employ emotionally focused rather than problem-focused coping strategies (Brougham *et al.*, 2009), emotions are good predictors of academic and learning success (Pekrun *et al.*, 2006). Emotions that relate to academics and academic achievement are called achievement emotions (Pekrun, 2016).

Students experience achievement emotions such as hope, pride, anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness or boredom in university settings (Christie *et al.*, 2008). Schutz and Pekrun (2007) maintain that these emotions are critical to students' motivation, learning, performance, identity development, and health. Stated in the negative, the emotional cost of dropping out of university, and failing is significant (Parker, 1999). Furthermore, the presence of positive affective emotions (such as joy, hope, pride, gratitude, contentment, relaxation, and relief) has been demonstrated to help digest performance results (Peterson, Brown, & Jun, 2015).

Self-construal

Markus and Kitayama's self-construal theory popularised the study of the self in Psychology (Cross *et al.*, 2011). Markus and Kitayama (1991) differentiated two types of self-construal – independent and interdependent. Each self-construal type influences a person's cognitive, emotional and motivational processes (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). According to their theory, exposure to either Western or non-Western cultures fosters independent or interdependent self-

construal and influences how people think, feel, and what motivates them. Western cultures foster independent self-construal, while non-Western cultures foster interdependent self-construal. Markus and Kitayama (1991) proffer that all people's cognitions, motivations and emotion processes are affected by their self-construal as it is a universal feature (Cross *et al.*, 2011).

To demonstrate the differences between the two self-construals, their motivational process can be illustrated in the following way: with independent self-construal, the self is seen as an autonomous entity. With independent self-construal, personal accomplishments are the primary motivators of the self, while group goals are secondary. Conversely, with interdependent self-construal, the self consists of its position of relationships with regard to others in the group. Self-achievement is synonymous with group achievement. With an interdependent self-construal, harmony is the primary motivator of the self, while personal accomplishments have a secondary position (Taras, Steel, & Kirkman, 2012).

Asking the question "who am I?" will probably be answered by westerners with an independent self-construal by what distinguishes the person from others or by characteristic traits that are constant to the person, such as being "Friendly, outgoing, resilient". Other individuals are used to bringing contrast between the individual and others "I am more focused than my friends" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Cross *et al.*, 2011). The question "who am I?" will, in stark contrast, likely be answered by an individual with an interdependent self-construal by his relation to important relations (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Differences between the two types of self-construal also emerge through contrasting self-descriptions. The self-description of individuals with an interdependent self-construal has been shown to be more flexible to the surrounding situation than is that of individuals with an independent self-construal (Kanagawa, Cross, & Markus, 2001). However, individuals from interdependent self-construal tend to have a far more accurate self-perception (Balcetis, Dunning, & Miller, 2008). This further shows that interdependent individuals are more prone to influence from the people around them. It also shows that individuals with interdependent self-construals have a more accurate view of themselves. Conversely, individuals with an independent self-construal are more fixed in their self-perception, though that view may be an unrealistic or bloated view of self. The relationship between an individual's self-construal and cultural groups have also clearly been established.

According to Cross *et al.* (2011), "...the connection between independent self-construals and individualism and between interdependent self-construals and collectivism is clear – so clear, in fact, that it can be difficult to distinguish between self-construal and individualism–collectivism" (p. 2). Individuals from individualistic groups experience more disengaged emotions, as their primary motivators are self-orientated. Conversely, individuals from collectivistic cultures experience more engaged emotions as the primary motivator is other-orientated (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006; Matsumoto, Yoo, & Nakagawa, 2008; Stoeber, Kobori, & Tanno, 2013). Cross-cultural empirical value research has shown that cultures universally display either a self-focused, or other-focused value (Fontaine, Poortinga, Delbeke, & Schwartz, 2008), corroborating the universal nature of the self-construal theory of Markus and Kitayama (1991).

Context has also been shown to significantly influence self-construal. Trafimow, Triandis, and Goto (1991) found that private contexts provide a clearer understanding of self-construal than do public contexts (Chang & Feng, 2016). Self-construals also differ with regard to relationships or role contexts (Boucher, 2011). Students from both independent and interdependent self-construal groups reported both more interdependence at home toward their mothers and more independence at university towards a teacher (Coşkan, Phalet, Güngör, & Mesquita, 2016). Furthermore, the switch was more significant for the individualistic group than the more collective group (Coşkan *et al.*, 2016). Relational differences have also been found in other research (Church *et al.*, 2012; Chen, Boucher, & Tapias, 2006).

Emotions

Emotions are an especially challenging field to study (Mulligan & Scherer, 2012). Terminology and theories differ vastly in the field, causing confusion in semantics (Scherer, 2005). There are three major approaches to emotion research within psychology (Fontaine & Scherer, 2013b), namely the componential approach (Scherer, 1984; Fontaine, Scherer, & Soriano, 2013), the dimensional approach (Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, & O'Connor, 1987) and the basic emotion approach (Ekman, 1999; Izard, 1977). Previously, limited cross-research was done on the three approaches of emotions.

To add to the complexity, each approach to emotions has its own set of theories, often with only limited agreement between them. As an example within the dimensional approach, the

range of minimal dimensionality required to accurately measure emotions vary from two-(e.g., negative affect model (Watson & Tellegen, 1985), three- (Fontaine, Poortinga, Setiadi, & Suprapti, 2002; Shaver *et al.*, 1987) and even four-dimensional models (Jonker, van der Merwe, Fontaine, & Meiring, 2011; van der Merwe, 2011; Gillioz, Fontaine, Soriano, & Scherer, 2016). Recently, Fontaine (2013) demonstrated that the three approaches to emotion research (componential, dimensional and basic emotion approach) are not incompatible and can be meaningfully combined under the componential approach.

The predominant theory from the componential approach is the CEA based on the Componential Process Model (Scherer, 1984; Scherer, 2001; Scherer, 2009). The Componential Approach to Emotions (CEA) model holds that emotions are seen as a set of automatic processes that are triggered by events which are relevant to a person's goals and needs (Scherer, 2001; Fontaine & Scherer, 2013b). The CEA consists of the simultaneous interaction of five major emotion components, namely appraisal, action tendency, bodily reaction, expression, and subjective feeling (Scherer, 1984; Scherer, 2001).

Each of these emotion components relate to subsystems in the body. Appraisals relate to the information processing part of the central nervous system; Action tendencies relate to the Executive part of the central nervous system; Bodily reaction relates to the support part of the central nervous system (Scherer & Fontaine, 2013a), neuro-endocrine system and autonomic nervous system; Expression relates to the action part of the somatic nervous system; and Subjective Feeling relates to the monitoring part of the central nervous system (Scherer, 2005). According to the CEA, the unique interaction between these components causes the emotions experienced by an individual. The meaning of emotion terms can be identified through the unique expression of components of the CEA. The components and its subsystems change relatively over time.

To illustrate the emotion process, an antecedent episode triggers an emotion process that relates to the person's goals. It creates i) an appraisal. Appraisals continuously monitor the environment and create a complete interpretation of situational antecedents and potential consequences for the individual which drive the other emotion processes (Scherer, 1997; Scherer, 2001). Appraisals are dynamic and foundational to the entire emotion episode. Appraisals happen automatically and aren't necessarily conscious (Fontaine & Scherer, 2013c; Scherer, 2013), even though they can be rational (Scherer, 2001).

The appraisal is followed by ii) an Action tendency. Action tendencies are the emotional fuel that creates the impulse to create action (Fontaine & Scherer, 2013c). Action tendency is defined in the CEA according to Frijda (1987, p. 132; 2007) as “readiness to engage in action for establishing, maintaining or breaking the relation with particular aspects of the environment (“action tendency”), or as readiness to engage in relational action generally”.

Once the action tendency has been stimulated, it elicits a set of physiological responses. Firstly, iii) bodily sensations emerge. Bodily sensations are understood to be physiological changes that help the person prepare for adaptive responses (Scherer & Fontaine, 2013a). According to the CEA, these are sympathetic arousals (e.g. heartbeat slowing down, sweating), parasympathetic arousal (e.g. stomach troubles or feeling shivers), or temperature related (feeling hot, blushed, or feeling cold) (Scherer & Fontaine, 2013a).

More visibly, iv) expressions take place. Expressions are studied from the basic emotion paradigm (Cordaro, 2014; Ekman, 1992; Tomkins, 1962) which assumes emotions are limited to a few discreet and distinct types. Expressions take three forms. Facial expressions (Ekman, 1999) (such as smiling, frowning, a jaw drop etc.), vocal expressions (Bänziger, Hosoya, & Scherer, 2015; Scherer, Johnstone, & Klasmeyer, 2003) (which range in terms of e.g. intensity (spoke louder), phonation regularity (trembling voice), and vocalisation length (fell silent) (Scherer & Fontaine, 2013b) and motor expressions, which include gestural, posture or body movement (Dael, Mortillaro, & Scherer, 2012) (such as throwing one’s arms up in the air, folding one’s arms, putting one’s hands on one’s hips). The fields of vocal and motor expressions are under-researched (Dael *et al.*, 2012; Bänziger *et al.*, 2015).

Thirdly, subjective feelings emerge within the person. According to the CPM, feelings (often confused with emotions (James, 1884; Scherer, 2005) brings awareness of the continuing emotion process in order to monitor it (Fontaine & Scherer, 2013b). Examples of terms describing feelings are, amongst others, sad, happy, angry, contempt, disgust and joy. Finally, the emotion is v) regulated. The regulation of emotions can either be up or down. Up-regulation refers to making more of an emotional situation. An example would be a person making a fuss of bad service to set a president. The function of down-regulation is to suppress or calm an emotional situation. Viewing the emotion as a whole provides a global meaning to the episode.

Self-construal and engaged and disengaged emotions

Emotions are influenced by self-construal in two ways. Firstly, the same episodes cause different emotional responses in independent and interdependent self-construal. Secondly, the proclivity to showing socially aligned emotions is influenced by its self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Engaged and disengaged emotions are focused on either social bonding or creating distance from social bonding (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000). Engaged emotions bring about connectedness to others. Feelings such as love and joy are examples of engaged emotions, since it is bonding. Engaged emotions affirm an interdependent self-construal. Disengaged emotions bring about a separateness or autonomy of the individual. For example, feelings such as pride bring about a separation between the person and his social context. Disengaged emotions affirm an independent self-construal (view of self) (Kitayama *et al.*, 2006; Rothman & Magee, 2016).

In order to investigate the classification of emotions as being engaged or disengaged, the classification of Levenson (1999) can be utilised. Levenson's view of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions correlates closely with engaged and disengaged emotions. Emotions that are disengaged from others can be viewed as taking place within the individual (intrapersonal) while engaged emotions (having the emotions as a result of engaged with others), can be viewed as an interpersonal-related emotion. This current research will view intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes in terms of meaning of the emotion experience.

Each CEA component can be evaluated in terms of engaged or disengaged emotions. By breaking down each CEA component to its dimensions, it is possible to evaluate whether an emotion instance is engaged or disengaged. After having evaluated the Subjective Feelings, Facial Expressions, Vocal Expressions, Action Tendency, Appraisals and Regulation components of the CEA, it was found that they are aligned socially. However, Motor Expressions and Gestures cannot be evaluated in terms of engaged and disengaged emotions (Scherer & Fontaine, 2013b).

Of the range of components that are aligned with engaged and disengaged emotions, some provide clearer bases by which to evaluate the social salience (Fontaine, Scherer, & Soriano, 2013). Research by Boiger, Mesquita, Tsai, and Markus (2012) on the action components (*action tendencies, regulation and appraisals*) of emotions found a definite cultural effect on students' emotion episodes, while Kgantsi *et al.* (2015) demonstrated that subjective feelings

can be used as a way of evaluating engaged and disengaged emotions. The three components that best indicate the engaged or disengaged state of the CEA are Subjective Feelings, Appraisals, and Action Tendencies. Finally, since self-construal influences emotions, it isn't possible to determine the socially aligned state of an isolated coding without taking into consideration its context, so the emotion components will have to be evaluated in terms of the episode as a whole.

South Africa and self-construal

White Afrikaners are of western European descent, and are renowned for their pursuit of civil liberty (Kaplan, 2014). The majority of Afrikaners are Protestant Christians. Protestantism affirms that all of life is both a gift from God and worship to God. The development of Protestantism brought about a sense of responsibility for one's actions (Abulof, 2015; Barker, 2008). These factors have been closely associated with and attributed to the forming of an independent self-construal (Cohen & Hill, 2007; Sampson, 2000).

In contrast, Black South African groups form an interdependent self-construal (Eaton & Louw, 2000). Central to the cultural construction of black groups in South Africa is the concept *Ubuntu*, which is a belief that a human being is a human being because of other human beings (Broodryk, 2007; Mkhize, 2008). Culturally, black groups are bound to each other, and their responsibility to one another. Research done by Valchev *et al.* (2013) indicated that white and black South African groups fall on the opposing ends of the individualism–collectivism continuum, with white groups reporting an individualist view of self and black groups a collectivist view of self. The study also found that Indian and Coloured populations present an in-between placement on the individualism–collectivism continuum. This corresponds with what Eaton and Louw (2000) found, namely that white students automatically reported more independent self-descriptions, while black students reported more interdependent self-descriptions. Thus it is expected that black South Africans would display more engaged emotions, and white South Africans would display more disengaged emotions. However, the field of engaged and disengaged emotions is under-researched in South Africa.

Against this background the following objectives were formulated:

- To determine the prevalence of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes in a sample of university students.

- To determine the effect of cultural groups and context on intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes in a sample of university students
- To determine the prevalence of positive and negative emotion episodes in a sample of university students.
- To determine the effect of cultural groups, context, intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes on positive and negative emotion episodes in a sample of university students.
- To determine the effect of cultural group and context on positive and negative emotion components in a sample of university students.
- To determine the prevalence of engaged and disengaged emotion components in a sample of university students.
- To determine the effect of context and cultural groups and positive and negative emotion episodes on engaged and disengaged emotion components in a sample of university students.

Research design

Research approach

This research study utilised a sequential mixed method approach (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). The sequential mixed method approach entails approaching the research sequentially, employing both qualitative and quantitative approach. This research was conducted in two phases. In the first phase qualitative emotion episodes at university and at home were explored by means of open-ended questions by means of which participants could reflect on their own unique experiences. A cross-sectional design was used to obtain these data. De Vos *et al.* (2011) describe a cross-sectional design as one in which a number of people are compared at a single point in time.

From these qualitative descriptions an analytical framework was used as design to code the emotion episodes. This paved the way for the data to be quantitatively analysed in phase two. This practice is in accordance with the design as described by Greene *et al.* (1989) in which data from the qualitative phase is used to develop the quantitative phase. This also fits the argument of Creswell (2009), namely that the quantitative phase is used to facilitate the interpretation of the qualitative findings.

A framework analysis methodology was employed to sequence the data analysis process. This guided the process by investigating emotion episodes according to the existing theory of engaged and disengaged emotions. The framework analysis methodology is eclectic in its epistemology, and borrows from different traditions within the field of social science such as grounded theory and phenomenology (Richie, Spencer, & O'Connor, 2003).

Ontologically, the framework analysis methodology is closely aligned with subtle realism (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) explicate that the subtle realism paradigm holds that the social world's existence is independent of the individual. However, it is accessible in qualitative research through participants' interpretations (Hammersley, 2002). Emotions are deeply internal phenomena (Scherer, 2001). However, with engaged and disengaged emotions involving the outside world, the framework methodology is able to accurately investigate the complex and dynamic world within and around the participant through its robust and systematic approach (Gale *et al.*, 2013).

Research strategy

Of the data, 293 (n=293) questionnaires could be utilised in two contexts, namely home and university (586 emotion episodes in total). These episodes were employed as multiple qualitative cases to develop the analytical framework. Prior to data collection, students were given a presentation explaining the purpose of the research. Students were made aware of what was expected from them, the voluntary nature of the research, and their rights as participants. A time was then given for any questions or concerns from the students. The researcher handed out questionnaires based on the language preference of the students. Students who were in a rush or had other responsibilities were also free to complete the questionnaire at home and bring it back to the researcher. Questionnaires were enclosed in a secure box to ensure anonymity.

Research method

The research method consists of the research setting, entrée and establishing researcher roles, sampling, research procedure, data collection methods, data recording, strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity, ethical considerations, data analysis, and reporting style.

Research setting

The research setting occurred in a single higher education institution and included a historical white student population and a historical black student population. The data was collected in classes at the end of a lecture. The classroom is an environment that is familiar to the students. De Vos *et al.* (2011) point out that a safe environment helps facilitate participant co-operation.

Entrée and establishing researcher roles

Entrée was established prior to the research study. Permission from all key authority positions were gained by means of a gatekeeper. A gatekeeper can be seen as an individual who holds the authority to provide access to the prospective research field and the participants, and who is also the link between the researcher and the participants (de Vos *et al.*, 2011). Ethical clearance was obtained from an Ethics committee of the university to ensure that participants would not be disadvantaged by the research process. Secondly, lecturers at the university granted permission for the use of their class time.

The researcher played a few roles during the process. The researcher paid specific attention to the sampling, data collection, analysis and coding processes. Prior to the research study, the researcher spent significant time planning for the study, anticipating possible pitfalls in the research methodology. The researcher fulfilled the role of administrator, printing and preparing booklets. During data collection, the researcher fulfilled the role of presenter and expert towards the students, addressing questions and presenting the information of the research study to the students. Next, the researcher fulfilled the role of transcriber and coder. These processes were done rigorously to ensure that the data analysis and transcription were done accurately.

Research participants and sampling

A total of 293 (n=293) students participated in this study and a total of 586 emotion episodes (home and university emotion episodes combined) acted as the qualitative cases. Considering that two contexts were covered per participant, the sample is sufficiently large for purposes of the research study. Purposive sampling was used to collect the data. Within purposive

sampling, the sample is based on the judgement of the researcher (de Vos *et al.*, 2011). Purposive sampling was utilised in order to ensure enough participants per cultural group were approached. Participants were chosen based on their necessary characteristics (Creswell, 2009; 2013). The following characteristics served as prerequisites for participation:

- Participants had to be registered at university.
- Participants had to be full-time students.
- Participants could be under- or postgraduate students.
- Participants were from different ethno-linguistic groups, namely Black English-speaking, White English-speaking and White Afrikaans-speaking students.
- Participants were willing and able to participate voluntarily in the research.
- Participants were literate in either Afrikaans or English.

The characteristics of the participants are presented in table one.

Table 1

Characteristics of the participants (n=293)

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	199	67.9
	Female	91	31.1
	Missing	3	1
Age	18-20 years	138	47.4
	21-23 years	137	47.0
	24-27 years	13	4.4
	28-40 years	3	1
	Missing	2	0.6
Ethno-linguistic group	White Afrikaans	134	45.7
	White English	66	22.5
	Black English	93	31.7
Academic year	Grade 12 (Matric)	144	50.5
	Diploma	9	3.2
	BA	64	22.5
	BCom	46	16.1
	BSc	8	2.8
	Honours	13	4.6
	Masters	1	0.4

Research participants totalled 293 (n=293) Afrikaans and English university students. Students of both under- and postgraduate level were sampled. The majority of students were from the North West Province. The cultural groups are distributed as 31.7% (n=93) Black English, 22.5% (n=66) White English and 45.7% (n=134) White Afrikaans. In terms of gender, females comprise 68.6% (n=199) of the sample and males 31.4% (n=91). The overwhelming majority of students were 20 years old with the mean age at 20.73 years.

Data collection methods

Multiple qualitative cases of emotion episodes were collected by means of the Emotion Episode Questionnaire. The Episode Grid was developed with the Emotion Research Project at Ghent University in Belgium as part of an initiative of the International Society for Cross-Cultural Research on Affect that resorts under the Swiss Affect Sciences Centre (Jonker *et al.*, 2011).

The EEQ was translated into Afrikaans for participants to answer in their mother tongue. To ensure that the translations were accurate, back translation was used to ensure that the meaning was retained in Afrikaans using the successive development method (van de Vijver & Poortinga, 1997). Back translation is an effective method for ensuring that translations accurately reflect the question in its original context (de Vos *et al.*, 2011). Variability in language preference allowed of deeper richness of data as their emotions could be expressed in their mother tongue.

A brief demographic section was included as a first section of the questionnaire along with a consent form. Questionnaires consisted of eleven questions covering all CEA components that form an emotional episode. Questions are designed to measure all the components of the CEA in two contexts: at home and at university. Participants were able to respond in Afrikaans and English. Students were requested to describe the last significant emotion episode in the context of home and of university. The questions of the EEQ are listed in table two.

Table 2

Questions used to evaluate emotion episodes according to the Componential Emotion Approach

Number	Question
1.1	Which was the last emotion you experienced at home? Please, describe
1.2	How long ago did you experience the emotions?"
1.3	Why do you think that this situation caused your emotions?
1.4	In an emotional situation people often have various feelings. What were the feelings you had during that situation?
1.5a	People often express their emotions on their face. How did you express your emotions on your face in that situation?
1.5b	People often express their emotions by their posture. How did you express your emotions by your posture in that situation?
1.5c	People often express their emotions through their voice. How did you express your emotions through your voice in that situation?
1.6	In an emotional situation, people often feel a reaction in their body. How did your body react in that situation?
1.7	In an emotional situation, people often feel an inner drive to do something. What did you feel driven to do in your situation?
1.8	What did you eventually do in that situation?
1.9	In an emotional situation, people often try to control their emotions. How did you control your emotions in that situation?
1.10	Did your answers to the previous questions fully describe your personal experience during that situation? If they did not, what would you like to add?

Describing emotions is a psychological act (HPCSA, 1974). Asking participants to describe emotions can elicit unexpected emotional responses. To ensure the psychological well-being of the students, a registered Industrial Psychologist was on-site to answer any question or give counselling as was needed. Data collection continued for the period of approximately a month in the higher education institution.

Data Recording

Every questionnaire had a corresponding participant number to compare to the demographic information and facilitate anonymity. To ensure that the participants' privacy was in line with the POPI act, the private information was stored separately in a sealed box. Only the researcher has access to the participant information. Submitted questionnaires were entered into Microsoft Excel by the researcher. The data was transcribed according to the participant number, context (home or university), ethno-linguistic group (White Afrikaans, White English and Black English) and CEA question. By transcribing, the researcher familiarised himself with the data – an important requirement of qualitative data (de Vos *et al.*, 2011).

Data Analysis

Phase 1

To analyse its applicability to the South African context, an analytic framework method (Gale *et al.*, 2013; Smith & Firth, 2011) was employed to ensure a robust standard by means of which to test the self-construal theory of Markus and Kitayama (1991). The framework methodology is widely established in social, psychological and cross-cultural sciences, with a history of more than 35 years' application (Richie & Lewis, 2003). One of the strengths of the framework methodology is its flexibility in research fields. It is adaptable to multi-disciplinary research and to inductive and deductive studies (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2008). The analytic framework provides a clear step-by-step process (Smith & Firth, 2011) for conducting research. Furthermore, it is highly suitable for the study of emotions (Gale *et al.*, 2013).

Analytical Framework

A framework was developed to analyse the emotion episodes in terms of engaged and disengaged emotions among a student sample. A set of five categories were used to evaluate engaged and disengaged emotion episodes of different cultural groups in different contexts. The analytic process was applied as follows: *Firstly*, whether or not emotion episode was interpersonally directed; *secondly*, whether the emotion episode was positive or negative; and *thirdly*, whether or not three CEA categories were clearly engaged. CEA categories that were too open to interpretation and cannot noticeably point to the social state of emotions were discarded for the sake of accuracy of the framework. Elimination of components were made in light of the Components of Emotion Meaning Project of Fontaine *et al.* (2013). The three

components and categories of analysis used were appraisals, action tendencies, and subjective feelings.

Next follows a description of the categories for coding in the analytical framework.

Codings

Codings were used to classify the data in order to systematically compare parts with others in the data set. An analytic framework was developed to analyse each emotion episode. Microsoft Excel was used to code the data set. Codings were evaluated according to five categories in the following process: *Firstly*, codings were used to account whether the emotion episode was interpersonal; intrapersonal; both intrapersonal and interpersonal; or neither clearly intrapersonal nor interpersonal. The *second step* was to evaluate whether the emotion episode was positive; negative; both positive and negative or neither clearly positive nor negative. If the emotion episode was not clearly interpersonal or both intrapersonal and interpersonal, the episode was not coded further because engaged emotions are clearly interpersonal by nature (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000). If the emotion was intrapersonal, it could automatically be understood as being disengaged. The *third step* was to code the three CEA components as being engaged; disengaged; both engaged and disengaged; or neither clearly engaged nor disengaged.

An extra column for analytic memos was added in the coding file for any notes, thoughts or examples, such as clear examples of emotions, or difficult codings. Each coding category was given a number for each coding option for easy identification.

Strategies to ensure quality data

The researcher independently coded a few emotion episodes in all three ethno-linguistic groups. The codings were then shown and discussed with an interdisciplinary team consisting of a cross-cultural psychologist and an independent industrial psychologist. This was done to ensure that alternate viewpoints could be incorporated (Morse *et al.*, 2008). After consensus was reached, the coder completed all the codings, and marked all difficult codings in the data. The difficult codings were debated by the co-coding team until the correct coding matrix was decided on (Morse *et al.*, 2008). The co-coding team set rigorous standards by which to evaluate the data set consistently (Gale *et al.*, 2013). Applying rigour and transparency in data analysis is key to quality in qualitative analyses (Polit & Beck, 2013).

The agreed upon precedents to ensure the quality of the codings included:

- The overarching focus of the episode is reported on. For example, emotion episodes often focus on two or more aspects of the episode. The primary focus or the overarching focus is selected, because the secondary discussions are influenced by the primary coding.
- Engaged and disengaged emotions need not be directed towards humans. Clear examples of appreciation, sorrow, grief, joy and anger were directed towards pets or even God. Although the emotions weren't directed towards humans, it was still socially engaged.
- If action tendencies were not reported on, but emotion regulation was reported, then the action tendency was inferred based on the action.
- Emotion episodes that do not provide enough information cannot be coded.
- A number of students started to describe their emotion episode, filling in the contextual, appraisal and subjective feeling questions but not the rest. In these cases, the contextual information provides four of the five categories of coding, so it was included. The uncoded category, action tendency was left out of the data coding process.
- Sadness is generally engaged, while anger is generally disengaged.
- Shame is engaged and guilt is disengaged (Dean & Fles, 2016)

This process will be illustrated in the terms of an example from two contexts. For the full questions, please refer to the method section. The example of a home emotion episode is given in tables three and four below:

Table 3

Home context emotion episode example

Emotion	Sadness, hatred, frustrated
Why	My mum had to left for cape town & me for Potch. Mum, me, brother, sister & father. We all ended up talking about Seeing each other soon again & decided it's part of our lives to leave some behind.
When	2 weeks back
Appraisal	It's a goodbye session. Mostly everyone hates goodbye's & the emotions associated with it

Feeling	Bad, angry, upset, happy, anxious, uneasy, weak, depressed, loveable, grateful
Face	Grumpy face. Whatever facial expression
Posture	Cross arms, standing straight, just nodding my head
Voice	Soft and gentle as if I am going to burst into tears right there
Body	Headache, gooseflesh, discomfort in the belly
Action	Run away. Make the year-end to be surrounded by my family. End studies just to be with my family
Regulation	Calm myself. Cried myself out and told myself I am almost done at varsity. Just keep your head high these last couple of weeks. No one's going to get you under you had a goal in life and you gonna finish it and then leave for home
Control	Smiling even when I wasn't in the mood and told everyone I am just fine, no need to worry about me
Extra	Yes

Table 4

Home context emotion episode coding

Number	Ethno	Site	Intra/Inter	Neg/Pos	AP	AT	SF
84	WE	Home	1	1	1	2	2

The episode was coded as interpersonal, which is clear because the family is directly involved in the episode, as the participant said “*We all ended up talking about seeing each other soon again & decided it’s part of our lives to leave some behind*”. The situation was coded as generally positive both in regulation and attitude. Because the situation was interpersonal, the CEA codings can be interpreted. The appraisal was coded as engaged, as even goodbyes need to be engaged to exist. Next, the action tendency was coded as disengaged, because in order to pass the sadness of the moment, the urge was to get away from the situation even though the goal is engaged. Next, the subjective feelings were coded as disengaged. Though some of them are positive, they are all interpersonally directed “*upset, happy, anxious, uneasy, weak, grateful*” or disengaged “*anger*”. It is important to note that the frustration is, however, not directed at the family, but at the situation.

This participant’s university coding is detailed in table five and six below:

Table 5

University context emotion episode

Emotion	Disappointment, hatred
Why	We went to see our marks on the board. Me and some fellow students. I ended up going to the lecturer to find out about my marks.
When	3 days ago
Appraisal	because I felt I could've done better I actually like the module
Feeling	Hatred, sickness offended
Face	Turned red. Wanted to cry. Emotionless
Posture	Relaxed. Arms hanging down just stared at the ground
Voice	Voice tone was 'as if I was about to cry'. One word at a time with extremely long pauses.
Body	Nausea, sick, diarrhoea, sweating, hotness
Action	Earth could just open and swallow me in; scream; run away;
Regulation	Cried. Talk to my friends and eventually went to see my lecturer
Control	Hoped for the best and believed everything happened for a reason. I came so far-I can make it till the end
Extra	Yes

Table 6

University context emotion episode coding

Number	Ethno	Site	Intra/Inter	Neg/Pos	AP	AT	SF
84	WE	U	2	2	2	2	2

The university coding coded as both intra and interpersonal, because it is mentioned that “*I felt I could've done better I actually like the module*” indicating personal disappointment, but also that the student said “*Talk to my friends and eventually went to see my lecturer*”. The episode was coded as both positive and negative as the person both “*Turned red. Wanted to cry*” but also thought “*I came so far-I can make it till the end*”. The appraisal was disengaged “*because I felt I could've done better I actually like the module*”, as was the action tendency “*Earth could just open and swallow me in; scream; run away*” and the subjective feelings of “*Hatred, sickness, offended*”.

These examples provide insight that emotion episodes are not necessarily simple to define, and are extremely complex to the individual experiencing them. Furthermore, it is possible to be engaged, but have components or aspects of an episode expressed in a disengaged manner, or vice versa.

Statistical Analysis

Phase 2

The qualitative analytical framework was analysed quantitatively by using log-linear analysis. Log-linear analysis is a statistical method that examines the structural relationship between two or more categorical variables, similar to Pearson's Chi square statistic (χ^2) (van der Heijden, de Falguerolles, & de Leeuw, 1989). According to Field (2013), Log-linear analysis can be used even if the categories are cross-classified. Goodness of fit was found through significant likelihood ratios ($p < 0.05$), strong beta values and low degrees of freedom values (categorical fields – 1) (Field, 2013; Knoke & Burke, 1980). Only parsimonious models were selected. Salient differences between the emotion episodes among different ethno-linguistic groups and their contexts were reported on.

Results

The prevalence of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes in a sample of university students was investigated, and is presented in table seven:

Table 7

The prevalence of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes

Effect	beta	std err	z-value	exp(beta)	Wald	df	p
Intra	0.15	0.08	1.77	1.16			
Inter	0.72	0.07	9.83	2.06			
Both	-0.87			0.42	103.77	2	*0.00

* $p < 0.05$

Students generally reported nearly twice as many interpersonal emotions ($\beta=0.7233$; $\exp\beta=2.06$; $Wald=103.77$; $df=2$; $p=0.00$) as intrapersonal ($\beta=0.15$; $\exp\beta=1.16$) emotions and

reported significantly less both intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions ($\beta=-0.87$; $\exp\beta=0.42$) than purely interpersonal or interpersonal emotions.

Next, the effect of cultural groups and context was investigated for engaged and disengaged emotions in table eight. All interaction effects were found to be insignificant.

Table 8

Group and context's interaction with intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions

Effect		Wald	Df	p
Group	Intra/Inter	6.29	4	0.18
Context	Intra/Inter	92.92	2	*0.00

* $p<0.05$

The results show there were no significant cultural group interactions with intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions ($p=0.18$). Context did show a significant interaction with intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions ($p=0.00$). The effect of context on intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions is reported further in table nine:

Table 9

The effect of context on intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes

Effect		beta	std err	z-value	exp(beta)	Wald	df	p
Context	Inter/intra							
Home	Intra	-0.58	0.08	-7.03	0.56			
Home	Inter	0.53		7.21	1.70			
Home	Both	0.05			1.05			
University	Intra	0.58			1.78			
University	Inter	-0.53			0.59			
University	Both	-0.47			0.96	92.92	2	*0.00

* $p<0.05$

Within the home context, students report less intrapersonal and more interpersonal emotion episodes ($\beta=0.51$; $\exp\beta=1.70$; $Wald=92.92$; $df=2$; $p<0.05$), while the reverse is observed in the

university context. In the university context, students report far more intrapersonal emotions ($\beta=0.58$; $\exp\beta=1.7817$; $\text{Wald}=92.92$; $\text{df}=2$; $p<0.05$) than interpersonal emotions.

Next, the prevalence of positive and negative emotion episodes were investigated as reported in table 10:

Table 10

The prevalence of positive and negative emotion episodes

effect	beta	std err	z-value	exp(beta)	Wald	df	p
Pos/Neg							
Positive	0.62	0.31	1.97	1.85			
Negative	0.13	0.31	0.43	1.14			
Both	-1.22			0.29	11.80	2	0.00

* $p<0.05$

Results indicate a general effect of positive and negative emotion episodes. Students reported more positive emotion episodes ($\beta=0.62$; $\exp\beta=1.85$; $\text{Wald}=11.80$; $\text{df}=2$; $p<0.05$) than negative ones ($\beta=0.13$; $\exp\beta=1.14$) and episodes with both positive and negative emotions were reported the least with ($\beta=-1.22$; $\exp\beta=0.29$).

Next, the effect of cultural groups, context, intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes were investigated on positive and negative emotion experiences in a sample of university students. The results are reported in table 11:

Table 11

The effect of cultural groups, context, intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes on positive and negative emotion episodes

Effect		Wald	df	p
Group	Pos/Neg	2.39	2	0.67
Context	Pos/Neg	1.12	2	0.57
Intra/Inter	Pos/Neg	17.47	4	*0.00

* $p<0.05$

Results indicate that neither group ($p=0.67$) nor context ($p=0.57$) had a significant effect on positive and negative emotion episodes. Intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes were shown to have a significant effect on positive and negative episodes ($p<0.05$). The effect of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes on positive and negative classified emotion episodes is further investigated in table 12:

Table 12

The effect of intrapersonal and interpersonal episodes on positive and negative classified emotion episodes

effect		beta	std err	z-value	exp(beta)	Wald	df	p
Intra/Inter	Pos/Neg							
Intra	Negative	0.19	0.33	0.58	1.21			
Intra	Positive	0.025	0.34	0.07	1.03			
Intra	Both	-0.10			0.91			
Inter	Negative	-0.19	0.36	-0.54	0.82			
Inter	Positive	0.49	0.35	1.39	1.63			
Inter	Both	-0.32			0.73			
Both	Negative	0.00			1.00			
Both	Positive	-0.51			0.60			
Both	Both	0.55			1.74	17.47	4	*0.00

* $p<0.05$

With regard to the effect of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes and positive and negative emotion episodes, students reporting intrapersonal episodes tend to report more negative emotion episodes ($\beta=0.19$; $\exp\beta=1.21$; $Wald=17.47$; $df=4$; $p<0.05$). When reporting interpersonal episodes, they tend to strongly indicate positive episodes ($\beta=0.49$; $\exp\beta=1.63$). When the episode is both intrapersonal and interpersonal, more mixed episodes are reported ($\beta=0.55$; $\exp\beta=1.74$).

Next, the effect of cultural group and context on positive and negative emotion components was investigated. The results are given in table 13:

Table 13

The effect of group and context on positive and negative emotion components

Component	Effect		Wald	df	p
	interactions				
Appraisal	Group	Positive /Negative emotions	0.22	2	0.90
	Context	Positive /Negative emotions	7.41	1	*0.01
Act Tend	Group	Positive /Negative emotions	0.34	2	0.85
	Context	Positive /Negative emotions	7.85	1	*0.01
Subj Feeling	Group	Positive /Negative emotions	0.22	2	0.85
	Context	Positive /Negative emotions	7.03	1	*0.01

* p<0.05

Results indicate that cultural group had no effect on positive and negative CEA components for appraisals ($p=0.90$), action tendencies ($p=0.85$) or subjective feelings ($p=0.90$). Context was shown to have an effect on positive and negative emotions in the CEA components for appraisals ($p<0.05$), action tendencies ($p<0.05$) and subjective feelings ($p<0.05$). These significant effects of context and positive and negative emotions (for the three emotion components) are investigated further in table 14:

Table 14

The effect of context on positive and negative emotion components

Component	Context	Pos/ Neg	Beta	std err	z-value	exp(beta)	Wald	df	p
Appraisal	Home	Neg	-0.17	0.06	-2.72	0.84			
	Home	Pos	0.17			1.19			
	Uni	Neg	0.17			1.19			
	Uni	Pos	-0.17			0.84	7.41	1	*0.01
Act Tend	Home	Neg	-0.18	0.06	-2.80	0.84			
	Home	Pos	0.18			1.20			
	Uni	Neg	0.18			1.20			
	Uni	Pos	-0.18			0.84	7.85	1	*0.01
Subj Feelings	Home	Neg	-0.17	0.06	-2.65	0.85			
	Home	Pos	0.17			1.18			
	Uni	Neg	0.17			1.18			
	Uni	Pos	-0.17			0.85	7.03	1	*0.01

* p<0.05

Context had an effect on positive and negative emotions at a componential level. Similar results were found in terms of context's effect on positive and negative emotions for all three CEA components. For appraisals, results indicate that more positive emotions ($\beta=0.17$; $\exp\beta=1.19$; Wald=7.41; df=1; $p<0.05$) at home and the opposite equal effect with the university context and negative emotions ($\beta=0.17$; $\exp\beta=1.19$) are experienced. The same opposite relationships emerge for home context and negative emotions, and university context and positive emotions with all three CEA codings. With action tendencies, the effect of home on positive emotions was similar to that of appraisals ($\beta=0.18$; $\exp\beta=1.20$; Wald=7.85; df=1; $p<0.05$), with the same result for negative emotions and university context ($\beta=0.18$; $\exp\beta=1.20$). Results indicate a general effect of positive emotions at home and negative emotions at the university ($\beta=0.17$; $\exp\beta=1.18$; Wald=7.03; df=1; $p<0.05$) for subjective feelings.

Next, the prevalence of engaged and disengaged emotions in emotion components were investigated, which is reported on in table 15:

Table 15

The prevalence of engaged and disengaged emotions in emotion components

Component	Eng/dis	Beta	std err	z-value	exp(beta)	Wald	df	p
Appraisal	Engaged	0.32	0.16	1.97	1.38			
	Disengaged	-0.35			0.70	3.88	1	*0.05
Act Tend	Engaged	0.06	0.09	0.67	1.06			
	Disengaged	-0.06			0.94	0.45	1	0.50
Subj Feelings	Engaged	0.16	0.10	1.59	1.17			
	Disengaged	-0.16			0.85	2.45	1	0.11

* p<0.05

In general, students report more engaged than disengaged emotions. However, at a componential level, this pattern only emerges for appraisals ($p=0.05$). Action tendencies and subjective feelings did not reveal significant differences between engaged and disengaged emotions. Students report more engaged ($\beta=0.16$; $\exp\beta=1.38$; $Wald=3.88$; $df=1$; $p<0.05$) than disengaged appraisals ($\beta=-0.35$; $\exp\beta=0.70$). There was no overall effect between engaged and disengaged emotions and action tendencies ($p=0.50$). Overall about as many engaged ($\beta=0.06$; $Wald=0.45$; $df=1$; $p=0.50$) as disengaged action tendencies are reported ($\exp\beta=0.94$; $Wald=0.45$; $df=1$; $p>0.05$). With respect to engaged and disengaged subjective feelings there was no overall effect ($p=0.11$). Overall about as many engaged ($\beta=0.06$; $\exp\beta=1.17$; $Wald=2.45$; $df=1$; $p=0.11$) as disengaged subjective feelings were reported ($\beta=-0.16$; $Wald=7.85$; $df=1$; $p>0.05$).

Finally, the effect of context and cultural groups on engaged and disengaged emotion components were investigated. Once again no cultural group or interaction effect between context and cultural group was identified. The reported effects are displayed in table 16:

Table 16

The effect of cultural groups and context and positive and negative emotion episodes on engaged and disengaged emotion components

Eng and diseng Component	Effect interactions	Wald	df	p
Appraisal	Group	0.45	2	0.80
	Context	3.45	1	0.06
	Pos/Neg	17.10	1	*0.00
Act Tend	Group	0.8	2	0.70
	Context	5.15	1	*0.02
	Pos/Neg	83.82	1	*0.00
Subj Feeling	Group	1.08	2	0.58
	Context	14.43	1	*0.02
	Pos/Neg	87.79	1	*0.00

* p<0.05

As reflected in table 16, cultural groups were shown to be non-significant for appraisals ($p=0.80$), for action tendencies ($p=0.70$) and for subjective feelings ($p=0.58$). Context was found to play a significant role with the engaged and disengaged CEA Components. For appraisals, the researcher recognises that the commonly acceptable cut-off point for the p -value is 0.05, however it was decided to interpret this result of ($p=0.06$) as marginally significant. The other components were significantly influenced with action tendencies ($p=0.02$) and subjective feelings ($p=0.02$) being below the cut-off point. Furthermore, positive and negative emotions was found to play a significant role with the engaged and disengaged CEA Components ($p=0.00$). These significant findings are investigated in depth and displayed in table 17 below:

Table 17

The interaction between context and engaged and disengaged emotion components

CEA comp	Context or Pos/Neg	Social salience	beta	std err	z-value	exp(beta)	Wald	df	p
Appraisals	Home	Engaged	0.27	0.14	1.86	1.31			
	Home	Disengaged	-0.31			0.74			
	University	Engaged	-0.27			0.77			
	University	Disengaged	0.26			1.29	3.45	1	*0.06
	Neg/both	Engaged	-0.68	0.17	-4.14	0.51			
	Neg/both	Disengaged	0.70			2.01			
	Positive	Engaged	0.68			1.98			
	Positive	Disengaged	-0.84			0.43	17.10	1	*0.00
Action tend	Home	Engaged	0.21	0.09	2.27	1.23			
	Home	Disengaged	-0.21			0.82			
	University	Engaged	-0.21			0.82			
	University	Disengaged	0.21			1.23	5.15	1	*0.02
	Neg/both	Engaged	-0.83	0.09	-9.16	0.41			
	Neg/both	Disengaged	0.83			2.29			
	Positive	Engaged	0.83			2.29			
	Positive	Disengaged	-0.83			0.44	83.82	1	*0.00
Subj Feelings	Home	Engaged	0.38	0.10	3.80	1.46			
	Home	Disengaged	-0.38			0.69			
	University	Engaged	-0.38			0.69			
	University	Disengaged	0.38			1.46	14.43	1	*0.00
	Neg/both	Engaged	-0.94	0.10	-9.37	0.39			
	Neg/both	Disengaged	0.94			2.55			
	Positive	Engaged	0.94			2.55			
	Positive	Disengaged	-0.94			0.39	87.79	1	*0.00

* p<0.05

Results indicate a marginally significant effect of context on engaged and disengaged appraisals, and a significant effect of positive and negative emotions on engaged and disengaged appraisals. At home students report more engaged appraisals ($\beta=0.27$; $\exp\beta=1.31$; Wald=3.45; df=1; $p=0.06$), and more disengaged appraisals when at university ($\exp\beta=1.29$). In negative episodes, students report more disengaged appraisals ($\beta=0.70$; $\exp\beta=2.01$; Wald=17.10; df=1; $p=0.00$) and in positive episodes, students report more engaged appraisals ($\beta=0.68$; $\exp\beta=1.98$; Wald=17.10; df=1; $p=0.00$).

Students report more engaged action tendencies ($\beta=0.21$; $\exp\beta=1.23$; Wald=5.15; df=1; $p=0.02$) at home, and at university more disengaged action tendencies. In negative episodes, students report more disengaged action tendencies and in positive episodes, students report more engaged action tendencies ($\beta=0.83$; $\exp\beta=2.29$; Wald=83.82; df=1; $p=0.00$). With subjective feelings, the same pattern emerged.

Results indicated a significant effect of context on subjective feelings. At home students report more engaged subjective feelings, and at university more disengaged subjective feelings ($\beta=-0.38$; $\exp\beta=0.68$; Wald=14.43; df=1; $p=0.00$). In negative episodes, students report more disengaged feelings and in positive episodes, students report more engaged feelings ($\beta=0.94$; $\exp\beta=2.55$; Wald=87.79; df=1; $p=0.00$). None of the effects involving group was significant.

Next, a discussion of the research objectives will be presented, limitations will be addressed recommendations for future research will be made and conclusions will be drawn.

DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to investigate the engaged and disengaged emotions of black and white South African students. This will be discussed in light of the objectives of the study. Lastly, limitation, recommendations, and a conclusion will be presented.

Markus and Kitayama (1991) emphasise that self-construals influence the emotional, motivational and cognitive processes of individuals. Independent self-construal views the self as a bounded entity while interdependent self-construal sees the self as one in relation to others. Furthermore, socially aligned or engaged emotions (such as love) is exhibited more from individuals with an interdependent self-construal, while disengaged emotions (emotions that create social distance between people's self-construals) such as anger is exhibited more by individuals with an independent self-construal.

In order to adequately investigate engaged and disengaged emotions, the CEA was utilised to gain the global meaning of emotion episodes from individuals from different cultural backgrounds in order to investigate the applicability of self-construal and emotional differences between groups. From the analytic framework developed to investigate the emotion episodes, seven research objectives were constructed to investigate engaged and disengaged emotions at both a global and componential level. Next, each research objective will be discussed.

The *first research objective* was to determine the prevalence of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes in a sample of university students. Students report nearly twice as many socially directed emotions as inwardly directed emotions. Although not a direct measure of engaged and disengaged emotions, it is a strong indicator of the salience of engaged and disengaged emotions in the South African context, especially in this study's construal of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions.

No previous studies have been conducted on intrapersonal vs. interpersonal emotions directly. Interpersonal emotions were theorised to indicate social engagement after realising that emotions can be internally engaged towards the situation, but not socially engaged. For example, feeling anger engages the individual's emotions into social disengagement. Engaged emotions are necessarily interpersonal. However, disengaged emotions can be either

intrapersonally or interpersonally disengaged. Furthermore, engaged and disengaged emotions are by definition bonding or creating distance from others (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000).

Emotions play a critical role in maintaining the social distances between people (Levenson, 1999). The prevalence of interpersonal emotions points to gravity of social interaction for student groups. An explanation for this is probably that students use social capital and social support to help cope with stress (Young, 2009), especially with family relationships (Pillay & Ngcobo, 2010; Siyengo, 2015). The prevalence of interpersonal emotion is therefore expected with normal-functioning student groups.

The *second research objective* was to determine the effect of cultural groups and context on intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes in a sample of university students. Contrary to expectations, cultural groups influenced neither intrapersonal nor interpersonal emotions, which stands in contrast with the self-construal theory of Markus and Kitayama (1991). Literature provides conflicting results. Some literature points to cultural differentiation towards intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions (Breugelmans, Zeelenberg, Gilovich, Huang, & Shani, 2014). Comparatively, Liu (2009) found that with anger and negotiation strategies, cultural group does not influence the experience of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions.

Some research has construed intrapersonal emotions to be the components which are experienced internally (i.e. appraisals, bodily sensations, subjective feelings), while interpersonal emotions are those that are expressive (Levenson, 1999). In these terms, higher expression of emotions has been shown to lead to less depressive symptoms, while less expression of emotions has been shown to promote depressive symptoms (Burgin *et al.*, 2012). The similar expression of emotions between cultural groups further implies the similarity of emotion experiences among students, which in turn has practical implications for intervention strategies, and emotion regulation strategies.

On the other hand, context was shown to influence intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions. Intrapersonal emotions are more prevalent in the university context, while interpersonal emotions are more prevalent in the home context. Previous research by Kgantsi *et al.* (2015) shares the importance of context on engaged and disengaged emotions in South Africa. Their study included an “in general category” in which the difference between engaged and disengaged emotions were clearer than between the university and home. In their study there

was only one group that did show a difference in context, and that group was not included in this study.

This result can be interpreted in the sense that the stress of the university forces individuals to find creative solutions to problems, especially if the problems are appraised to be of personal importance and internally directed. Self-directed or intrapersonal emotions are thus expected to be more prevalent than externally guided emotions at university. The home context lends itself to more interpersonal emotions and is the source of the emotional buffer of family support (Siyengo, 2015).

The *third research objective* was to determine the prevalence of positive and negative emotion episodes in a sample of university students. Students generally reported more positive than negative emotion episodes. Literature reports that engaged positive emotions and disengaged negative emotions are experienced more prevalently than the opposing combinations (as was found in objective two) (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006; Kgantsi *et al.*, 2015). The opposing combinations of engaged negative emotions and disengaged positive emotions are generally reported less. Furthermore, the strength of the interpersonal and positive emotions outweighs negative and intrapersonal emotions in this study.

The congruent findings of positive and negative emotions and intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions with previous literature (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006) only bolster the salience of engaged and disengaged emotions in South Africa. Furthermore, students are generally more positive than negative, which suggests the general attitude of students. Negative emotional spillage from emotional pressure from families, especially for first-generation students did not emerge from the data (Pillay & Ngcobo, 2010). It is quite possible that the positive home experiences may spill over into the university setting (Olwage, 2012).

The *fourth research objective* was to determine the effect of cultural groups, context, intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes on positive and negative emotion episodes in a sample of university students. The results indicate that cultural groups and context did not have an effect on positive and negative emotions. However, intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions do have an effect on emotion valence. Generally, intrapersonal emotions align with disengaged emotions, while interpersonal emotions align with engaged emotions (Akutsu, Yamaguchi, Kim, & Oshio, 2016; Kitayama *et al.*, 2000). Valence similarly aligns with

engaged and disengaged emotions (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006; Tsai, Sun, Wang, & Lou, 2016). Thus, to have interpersonal and positive emotions emerge alongside intrapersonal and negative emotions falls exactly within literature's conception of engaged and disengaged emotions.

Results do not indicate an effect of cultural group on positive and negative emotions (as shown by objectives two and four), nor of cultural group on intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions. Similar results of the non-influence of cultural groups and positive and negative emotions (Tsai *et al.*, 2016; Verduyn *et al.*, 2013) have been found in other contexts. These related findings have implications for the wellbeing of South African students. The well-established Broaden and Build Theory (Fredrickson, 2001) shows that positive emotions advance the individual's personal resources ranging from personal, social, intellectual and psychological resources.

Results by Kitayama *et al.* (2000) indicate that the prevalence of positive and negative emotion episodes were entirely due to the American independent cultural group, while there was virtually no valence difference with the Japanese interdependent cultural group. Similarly, the intensity of positive and negative emotions, as well as the expression thereof has been found to be related to independent groups (Lim, 2016; Miyamoto & Ryff, 2011). South African students express emotions closer to independent groups than to interdependent groups indicated by previous literature. Further corroboration lies with the prevalence of positive emotions over negative emotions among all three groups. Literature points to Eastern cultural groups expressing more negative emotions than positive emotions (Heine & Hamamura, 2007; Uchida & Kitayama, 2009), while the opposite is true for western cultural groups (Park, Uchida, & Kitayama, 2016) with which these findings are more in line.

Vignoles *et al.* (2016) changed the investigation of self-construal from "how much" a group is independent or interdependent to "in which ways" a group is independent or interdependent. Since different factors can combine into unique independent and interdependent self-construals, different cultural groups in South Africa may need to be investigated to determine their cultural compositions.

When considering the results of objectives one to four as a whole, an overall tendency can be noticed at two levels. At a global level, context affects interpersonal and intrapersonal emotions, which can then have an effect on positive and negative emotions (Figure 1). This

probably indicates that the level of stress of a context influences the amount of social or self-guided interaction, influencing engaged and disengaged emotions in students.

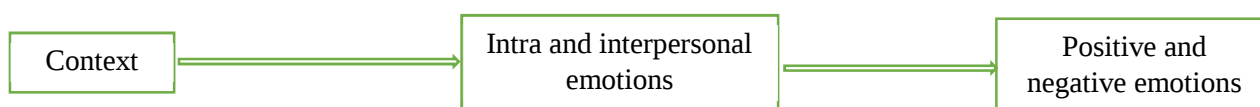


Fig 1: Conceptual model of context on interpersonal and intrapersonal emotions, and its effect on positive and negative emotions

The *fifth research objective* was to determine the effect of cultural group and context on positive and negative emotions components in a sample of university students. Once again, cultural groups did not have an effect on positive and negative emotion episodes, even at a componential level. Context did not appear to effect positive and negative emotions in the general episodes, but did affect CEA components. Positive and negative appraisals, action tendencies, and subjective feelings were all influenced by context.

Positive and negative emotions play a significant role in the composition of emotion components (Scherer & Fontaine, 2013a). Therefore, the prominence of positive and negative emotion components in the results is congruent with literature. Once again the degree of stressfulness of a setting (in this case, the university setting) should to a large degree determine the prevalence of positive or negative emotion episodes. Similar findings have been discovered in the workplace, and have been coupled to counter-productive work behaviour (Fida *et al.*, 2015).

Generally, more positive emotion episodes were reported by students than negative episodes (refer to objective 3). However, the majority of negative emotion episodes were in the university environment. This seems to confirm studies that the university is a psychologically stressful environment (Malinga-Masumba, 2014; Nel, Govender, & Tom, 2016) filled with adjustments, and broad challenges for students (Munro & Samuel, 2015), especially for first generation students (Siyengo, 2015). This is further confirmed by the high levels of tertiary South African student's languishing (van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012) and has negative implications for the physical health of the students (Dich, Doan, & Evans, 2014; Doan, Dich, & Evans, 2016). At least emotionally, the university experience seems to be comparable between white and black students.

On the other hand, it seems that the home context seems to play an emotional buffering role for the emotion components. The home is usually seen as a place of safety and social support, which echoes Olwage's (2012) results on the role of the home for student's resilience. Similarly, family relationships have been shown to be the main source of meaning for South African students (Delle Fave *et al.*, 2013; Nell, 2014; Siyengo, 2015).

This has implications for the creation of interventions for students. If the emotional stressors are similar, and the emotional experience is similar, it follows that coping interventions can be designed for culturally diverse students, especially since students' coping strategies have been shown to be emotionally driven rather than towards problem solving strategies (Brougham *et al.*, 2009). Considering that context is the main drive behind positive and negative emotion component differences, it can be maintained that these results could be extrapolated to emotionally stressful environments similar to the university, such as the workplace. However, this deduction cannot be made towards culturally dictated stressful situations such as the death of a family member, as culturally appropriate interventions will be needed for such situations.

The *sixth research objective* was to determine the prevalence of engaged and disengaged emotion components in a sample of university students. At a componential level, engaged and disengaged emotions were only shown to be salient with appraisals. Both action tendencies and subjective feelings did not show any meaningful differences for engaged and disengaged emotions. Contrary to the general findings where a clear distinction can be made between engaged and disengaged emotions, no such distinction emerges at a lower level.

The distinctness of engaged and disengaged appraisals over the other components may be explained by the centrality of appraisals in the emotion process. According to the Componential Process Model (Scherer, 1984) on which the CEA is based, the appraisal is the beginning point of an emotion that leads to an action tendency, followed by expressions. During the data coding process, emotion episodes are often interpersonal and even positive, but then the three components have divergent codings of engaged, disengaged or unclear. Emotion episodes are rarely unanimous at a componential level. However, the point of engagement or disengagement lies with the appraisal component which flows towards an action tendency and expression or regulation. The experience of coding the dataset is also confirmed through CEA research.

Scherer and Fontaine (2013d) showed that meaning cannot be made through individual components alone. Components were shown to function between two expected theoretical functions of components. These are either duplicating the structures of other components (the duplication model) or unique componential subsystems helping the regulation of emotions through independent contribution (additive contribution model). Due to the global meaning of emotion working through the components (Scherer & Fontaine, 2013d), it is unexpected that engaged or disengaged emotions are universally elicited in all the components. Furthermore, it affirms the findings of appraisals affecting engaged and disengaged emotions, and appraisals and subjective feelings not aligning with engaged and disengaged emotions.

In terms of student emotion experiences, it can be gained that help should be focused on components that help directly with engaged and disengaged emotions, namely, appraisals. Lazarus' (1984) seminal model for coping focuses exactly on appraisal and reappraisals guiding coping processes. The emphasis on reappraisals' role toward depression has also been established through other cognitive therapy models such as CBT (Chen, Jordan, & Thompson, 2006), behavioural models, (Regehr *et al.*, 2013) as well mindfulness models such as MCBT (Troy, Shallcross, Davis, & Mauss, 2013) and MBSR (Dundas, Thorsheim, Hjeltnes, & Binder, 2016).

Future student interventions will have to focus on teaching students better problem-focused coping strategies, especially those that promote cognitive flexibility (Johnson, 2016). The negation of depressive symptoms that are most associated with stressful environments are best mitigated through these coping methods above (Cheng, Kogan, & Chio, 2012; Craig & Austin, 2016; Hundt, Mignogna, Underhill, & Cully, 2013; Morris, Evans, Rao, & Garber, 2015).

The *seventh research objective* was to determine the effect of context and cultural groups and positive and negative emotion episodes on engaged and disengaged emotion components in a sample of university students. Cultural groups did not affect any engaged and disengaged emotion components. These results are in strong contrast to the expectations of literature (Eaton & Louw, 2000; Kaplan, 2014; Valchev *et al.*, 2013), namely that white South Africans should experience more disengaged emotions and black South African groups should experience more engaged emotions. It further puts into question the applicability of Markus and Kitayama's self-construal in South Africa.

One post-hoc explanation may be social class similarities between students of different cultural groups. The largest growing groups in South Africa are the Black middle- and upper-classes (Visagie & Posel, 2013). It is possible that with similar access to resources, the lives of the students are quite comparable. Studies on social class indicate that individuals from upper-classes tend to exhibit more pride, envy, contempt and anger while individuals from lower-classes less to display more shame, envy, and depression (Ashton-James, & Tracy, 2012; Shariff, Tracy, & Markusoff, 2012; Steckler, & Tracy, 2014). Thus, high social classes tend to exhibit independent self-construals, and lower social classes tend to exhibit interdependent self-construals. Students tend to be from a higher-class background, which may contribute to the similar emotional experience.

Alternatively, acculturation may be at work. In the light of more than 20 years of integration and democracy, South African groups could have become neither strictly individualistic nor strictly collectivistic. The process of acculturation implies a change in the sense of the self (Ryder, Alden, Paulhus, & Dere, 2013) which is central to self-construals. It is quite possible that Afrikaners are more collectivistic than expected and with the creep of westernisation, black South Africans are becoming more individualistic. In previous research (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006), subjective feelings were culturally influenced. Mesquita, Boiger, and de Leersnyder (2016) indicate that emotions are cultural-normative to achieve tasks with maximum wellbeing. These findings are confirmed through people's emotional adaptation by a process of acculturation (Consedine, Chentsova-Dutton, & Krivoshekova, 2014; de Leersnyder, Mesquita, & Kim, 2011). The cultural non-effect brings into question the strength of culture over that of context, especially in terms of student wellbeing in South Africa.

These results regarding subjective feelings are in line with literature in terms of the non-effect of cultural groups (Liu, 2009). In terms of action tendencies, these findings contradict previous research. Action tendencies (or action readiness) is theorised to generate a range of possible action states and creates the motivation to move from the current state to the desired emotional state (Frijda, Ridderinkhof, & Rietveld, 2014). However, very little cross-cultural differences have been found with regards to action tendencies (Frijda, Markam, Sato, & Wiers, 1995) and research has only been conducted in terms of differences of emotion words (Mesquita & Leu, 2007). In terms of appraisals, the results also contradict previous literature, as it is expected

that the appraisals of different groups should differ, especially in terms of primary appraisals where personal wellbeing is goal (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Since students in this sample showed no effect of culture on intrapersonal and interpersonal, and positive and negative emotions on engaged and disengaged emotions, it can impact the understanding of the emotion functioning across students. It can be understood that student interventions related to emotion constructs can be tailored similarly for different cultural groups. This is because culture does not influence the experience of different emotions among students in the university context. Although no effect of culture is observed, it is naive to assume that the cultures at play are similar. Their role in the emotion episodes of students seems to be both similar and important. Markus and Kitayama's (1991) theory allows for deep-rooted cultural differences, However, in the day-to-day experience of emotions, the different groups show similar experiences.

On the other hand, context did significantly affect engaged and disengaged emotions for action tendencies and subjective feelings and only marginally for appraisals. As described in the Componential Process Model, appraisals lead action tendencies which trigger expressions such as subjective feelings. The process is under constant reappraisal (Scherer, 1984; 2005). These results are the inverse of results relating to objective six. The components which form the expression are deeply influenced by context while appraisals act simply as an evaluative function of the situation, which only allows for context having marginal influence on appraisals.

In all objectives investigated in this study, context guiding the prevalence of engaged or disengaged emotion has been the central significant factor at play. However, considering that only appraisals meaningfully displayed engaged and disengaged emotions, and that context had only a marginal effect on appraisals, context does not have the primary effect on appraisals. This result may be explained by the unconscious nature of appraisals. Appraisals are goal-driven, and happen at both an unconscious and conscious level (Scherer, 2005). It could mean that not all appraisals would be influenced by the context it finds itself in. Much like seeing something scary can automatically cause a fright, regardless of context.

Positive and negative emotion episodes significantly affected all three emotion component's social salience. This reveals that the understanding and structure of positive and negative

emotion episodes remain constant on a holistic and, at least to the degree of investigation in this present research, componential level. In terms of student interventions and wellbeing, this provides insight into how to address stressful situations. Although addressing positive and negative emotion episodes above the context should be more meaningful in the promotion of emotional wellbeing of black and white South African students, context influences the prevalence of positive and negative emotions. Therefore, both context and positive and negative emotions should be considered when directly addressing disengaged emotions and the effects thereof (Volet & Mansfield, 2006). As described in objective three and five, the university setting is associated with more negative emotion episodes, while the home context is associated with more positive emotion episodes.

In engaged and disengaged literature, wellbeing is postulated to be the driver of emotions (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006). Independent social placement provides the optimal happiness for independent self-construal, while interdependent social placement leads to the optimal happiness for interdependent self-construal (Kitayama *et al.*, 2006). Thus the emotions experienced attached to independent and interdependent self-construals that promote wellbeing for the respective self-construals are disengaged positive emotions and engaged positive emotions. However, the findings point to engaged positive emotions being relatively equally important for all groups granting further insight into the creation of interventions or student retention programmes.

When considering the results of objective five to seven, a conceptual model can be postulated. Context can have an effect on positive and negative emotions, and both context and positive and negative emotions can have an effect on engaged and disengaged emotion components. It may be helpful to note that only engaged and disengaged appraisals emerged from the results. Subjective feelings and action tendencies did not clearly indicate the social salience of the episode. The following model (Figure 2) can be presented to illustrate this process at a componential level:

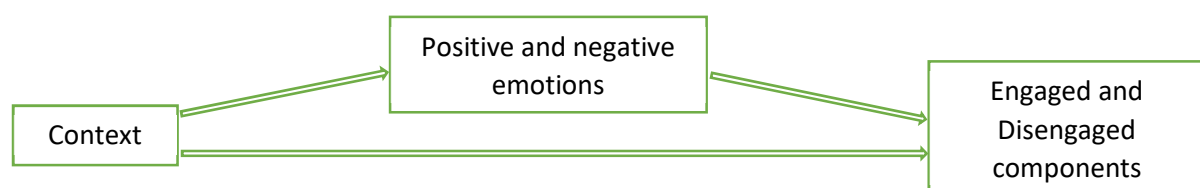


Fig 2: The effect of context and positive and negative emotions on engaged and disengaged emotions

Limitations and Recommendations

Limitations

Although clear results surrounding engaged and disengaged emotions emerged, several limitations are observed with the current study. *Firstly*, a black Setswana group was not included, which would have perfectly mirrored the study by Kgantsi *et al.* (2015). To a degree, this may have affected the data, since the group expressing themselves in Setswana would have most probably reflected themselves within their true cultural form. *Secondly*, engaged and disengaged emotions were inferred from the framework of the data. Engaged and disengaged emotions as well as independence and interdependence were not asked directly, they were inferred through the analytic framework. Due to this fact and the data type, dimensions such as emotion intensity could not be investigated in the population group. Future research could gain a lot of ground by directly measuring the type of independence or interdependence of the groups alongside motivation, or engaged and disengaged emotions.

Thirdly, as with the previous research, the population was that of students, and not a representation of all white and black groups. Previous cross-cultural research has shown that psychological traits are not as among student populations as with other populations. Furthermore, the black group is also not representative of all black groups in South Africa. For an in depth analysis, a population of at least isiZulu, isiXhosa and Setswana speaking individuals would be needed along the traditionally European African groups of South African Afrikaans and English. *Finally*, a possible shortcoming was that gender was not accounted for as some research has pointed to gender differences in terms of values, emotions and coping (e.g. Brougham *et al.*, 2009).

Recommendations

From these results, recommendations can be made for practice and future research. For practice, recommendations include utilising the findings in this present study to augment current student retention strategies, and to integrate the findings into further student wellbeing, emotion and retentions strategies. Nuanced emotions were elicited in different contexts, revealing quite a number of practical implications for universities, and counsellors alike.

Implications to student wellbeing include the strong effect of context, specifically a stressful context (such as the university) over other factors, such as cultural groups, have on emotions. Furthermore, a focus on the buffering effect of social support, particularly that of the home is to be emphasised to student wellbeing. Interventions need not be as focused to being culturally sensitive in order to be successful. In terms of looking at engaged and disengaged emotion components, the importance of appraisals over other components for counselling and coping strategies may be key to successful interventions.

The results that stand against the well-established self-construal theory of Markus and Kitayama (1991) has practical implications for our understanding of the cultural composition of different groups in South Africa. These groups' motivations, wellbeing, and emotions are not as clearly differentiated as is expected from theory. South African cultural groups may have unique independent or interdependent factors combining their cultural compositions. The non-effect of groups over emotion episodes, as well as the prevalence of positive emotions over negative emotions sheds some light on this topic. Future research may have to investigate emotion episodes in light of larger samples, as well as to directly investigate independent and interdependent self-construals in South Africa.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the salience of engaged and disengaged emotions emerged in the target population. The framework methodology along with the EEQ produced sufficient information on emotion episodes to determine not only the salience of engaged and disengaged emotions, but also of positive and negative emotion episodes. The last question in the questionnaire was generally left open by respondents, namely: *'Did your answers to the previous questions fully describe your personal experience during that situation? If they did not, what would you like to add?'*

Importantly, no cultural effect was found for engaged and disengaged emotions between black and white South African students in this sample. These results confirm the findings of Kgantsi *et al.* (2015). According to literature, white South African students were expected to express more disengaged emotions, and less engaged emotions than black South African students. Post-hoc explanations were provided, including acculturation, social class similarities, and the general westernisation of black groups. A general positive emotion preference and

differentiation indicated that the similarity of South African black and white groups nudge towards the findings of previous literature of traditionally independent Western cultural groups.

Context was shown to be the main driver of engaged and disengaged emotions, while independent and interdependent emotions were found to influence positive and negative emotions. The stressfulness of different contexts were postulated to explain these differences, as negative intrapersonal emotions were associated with the university context, while positive interpersonal emotions were associated with the home context. The home was found to be an emotionally protective environment, while the university was found to be an emotionally draining environment for all three cultural groups. These findings were consistent with previous literature on stressors as well as resources for students (Olwage, 2012; Pillay & Ncgobo, 2010).

Furthermore, some componential differences emerged from the data. Unanimity among the components regarding engaged and disengaged emotions were not found. Results emphasised the importance of appraisals in the emotion process, as it was the only component that clearly displayed engaged and disengaged emotions. It was also the only component that was only partially affected by positive and negative emotions. Action tendencies and subjective feelings were found to be affected by context and positive and negative emotions. Implications for further student interventions include focusing on components that are of primary importance in the emotion process, namely appraisals instead of secondary or end-results of the emotion process, such as with subjective feelings. Providing practical interventions to students on how to effectively deal with difficult emotional situations both from a socially supportive and cognitive, problem-solving approach would provide effective coping strategies for students in the South African context.

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CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides conclusions regarding the findings of the research article in chapter two. Conclusions are drawn with regard to the research objectives as set out in chapter one. Furthermore, the limitations of this research study are discussed. Furthermore, this chapter will conclude with recommendations for the organisation as well as for research opportunities that emerged from this research.

3.1 Conclusion

The general objective of this study was to investigate the prevalence of engaged and disengaged emotions among black and white students in South Africa. To conduct this study, the researcher employed a sequential mixed method approach, with an analytic framework methodology to investigate emotion episodes of students from three ethno-linguistic groups. The EEQ was employed to investigate each component of emotions according to the CEA. Students reported the last significant emotion episode they had experienced at home as well as at university. The students generally reported their emotions adequately in their own words, meaning the EEQ adequately encapsulates emotion episodes. The last question in the questionnaire was generally left open by respondents, namely: *‘Did your answers to the previous questions fully describe your personal experience during that situation? If they did not, what would you like to add?’*. Furthermore, the analytical framework provided insights into the composition of engaged and disengaged emotion episodes. Thus, a few results were found relating to the engaged and disengaged emotions of the student groups.

Concluding on the general objective: *Firstly*, engaged and disengaged emotions clearly appear in the emotion episodes of black and white students. This is evidenced by the prevalence of interpersonal and positive emotions reported by students. *Secondly*, no cultural group differences were found regarding engaged and disengaged, be it at a global emotion episode level or at a componential level, placing into question the validity of Markus and Kitayama’s (1991) self-construal theory in the South African context. *Thirdly*, context was the most significant influence the experience of engaged and disengaged, positive and negative as well as intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions. *Fourthly*, both black and white students experienced more positive than negative emotions. *Fifthly*, appraisals were the only component to saliently exhibit engaged and disengaged emotion. *Lastly*, context as well as positive and negative emotions showed an influence on emotion components.

Concluding on objective one as stated in chapter one:

Objective 1: *To conceptualise self-construals, emotions, engaged and disengaged emotions, positive and negative emotions and students in South Africa according to literature.*

Self-construals

According to Markus and Kitayama's (1991) seminal theory, the self-construal, or perception of the self directly influences an individual's cognition, motivation and emotion processes. Spending time among independent groups (such as western cultures) would lead one to establish an independent self-construal, which sees the self as an autonomous entity with the self as the primary motivator. On the other hand, spending time in interdependent groups (such as eastern cultures) should foster an interdependent view of the self, so that the self is not seen as a bounded entity, but as one in relation to others (Cross, Gercek-Swing, & Hardin, 2011).

The self-construal theory is one of the most established cross-cultural theories and has been validated in multiple disciplines. Recently, Vignoles *et al.* (2016) demonstrated that different factors can combine that bring a unique element to each cultural groups' composition of independence or interdependence. Furthermore, South African groups have been shown to fall on the independent side for Afrikaners and English groups and on the interdependent side for black South African groups (Valchev, van de Vijver, Nel, Rothmann, & Meiring 2013).

Emotions

Emotions were conceptualised in accordance with the Componential Emotion Approach, which is based on the Componential Process Model by Scherer (1984; 2005; 2009). According to the CEA, emotions are interrelated, multi-componential processes that work within a person that dynamically act as a survival mechanism for that person. These components are appraisals, action tendencies, motor, vocal and facial expressions, bodily sensations and subjective feelings. The CPM explains that an emotion episode occurs as follows: an antecedent event triggers an appraisal that is interpreted in light of an individual's goals. The appraisal then triggers an action tendency or action readiness state, which provides the impetus for the person to act out appropriately through the necessary expressions, feelings or bodily sensations. Once the expression has regulated the emotion, the episode is over. During this time, the individual can reappraise the situation in terms of his goals (Scherer, 2009).

Engaged and Disengaged Emotions

Engaged and disengaged emotions were conceptualised by Kitayama *et al.* (2000) as being emotions that are socially aligned. Engaged emotions (such as love) are emotions that bring about connectedness with others, while disengaged emotions (such as pride) bring about social distance between people. Engaged and disengaged emotions are also aligned with self-construals (Kitayama *et al.*, 2006). Engaged emotions are expressed more often by people with an interdependent self-construal. Disengaged emotions are expressed more often by individuals with an independent self-construal (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000).

Positive and Negative Emotions

Positive and negative emotions are also known as the emotion valence. Positive and negative emotions have always been studied alongside engaged and disengaged emotions (Tsai, Sun, Wang, & Lau, 2016). Positive emotions have been shown to generally be experienced alongside engaged emotions, while negative emotions are generally experienced alongside disengaged emotions (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006). Exceptions to this norm also occur, but to a far lesser degree. Positive disengaged emotion (such as bliss) and negative engaged emotions (such as shame and guilt) are also reported by different groups. Literature was inconclusive of the effect of cultures on positive and negative emotions. The expectation of the self-construal theory (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) is that cultures should influence the experience of positive and negative emotions. However, some studies have not confirmed this expectation (Verduyn, van Mechelen, Tuerlinckx, & Scherer, 2013; Tsai *et al.*, 2016).

South African Students

Students are faced with numerous challenges in South Africa. Apart from the standard pressures students worldwide face, such as high levels of anxiety (Regehr, Glancy, & Pitts, 2013), South African students exhibit high levels of languishing (van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012) as well as high levels of suicide ideation (Bantjes, Kagee, McGowan, & Steel, 2016). Up to as much as 70% of South African students also face traumatic events (Hoffman, 2002). Furthermore, black and coloured South African students also report significantly higher dropout rates and anxiety than white students (Young & Campbell, 2014). Due to socio-economic difficulties, financing studies or even simply getting money for food is a challenge for many students (Letseka & Breier, 2008; Pillay & Ngcobo, 2010; Young, 2009).

Students experience a large amount of academic-related emotions known as achievement emotions (Pekrun, 2016). These emotions, such as hope, pride, anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness or boredom are critical to students' motivation, learning, performance and health (Schutz & Pekrun, 2008). Managing these emotions is a good predictor of academic success. This is because students have been shown to employ emotionally focused rather than problem-focused coping strategies (Brougham, Zail, Mendoza, & Miller, 2009). Emotional commitment to studying is more important than ever, as the Higher Education sector has been characterised by unrest and physical and emotional violence with the #MustFall Movement (Karodia, Soni, & Soni, 2016; Luescher, 2016)

Concluding on the specific objectives in chapter 2:

Objective 1: *To determine the prevalence of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes in a sample of university students.*

According to literature, engaged and disengaged emotions are by nature interpersonal, or socially aligned (Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000). Engaged emotions bind people together while disengaged emotions bring about social distance from people. This study construed intrapersonal emotions as those directed towards the self, while interpersonal emotions are those directed towards others. In contrast to some studies (e.g. that of Levenson, 1999) that construe intrapersonal emotions as the components that are experienced internally, while interpersonal emotions are encompassed by the components that are expressive in nature. Students across all three cultural groups reported expressing nearly twice as many interpersonal emotions as intrapersonal emotions. Through this study's construal of intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions, the prevalence of engaged and disengaged emotions are quite clear among students in South Africa in this sample which is very much in line with findings by Kgantsi, Fontaine, and Temane (2015).

Objective 2: *To determine the effect of cultural groups and context on intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes.*

The construal of engaged and disengaged emotions is not identical to intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions. However, the framework methodology was designed to point directly to engaged and disengaged emotions. Results showed that cultural groups did not have an effect

on intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions. These findings diverge from previous literature on engaged and disengaged emotions (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama, Mesquita, & Karasawa, 2006; Rothman & Magee, 2016) and on self-construals (Cross *et al.*, 2011; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Context was shown to significantly influence intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions. Intrapersonal emotions are very prevalent in the university context. The university setting is known to be a stressful environment (Shamsuddin *et al.*, 2016) and that anxiety is experienced by many students (Regehr, *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, disengaged and intrapersonal emotions are usually negative (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006).

The home context was shown to imbue interpersonal emotions, which means that for both white and black students, the home setting plays an emotionally buffering role. One can conclude from objective four that students report more positive emotion episodes at home. This type of social support has been shown to be a significant positive emotional resource for students in South Africa (Delle Fave, Brdar, Wissing, & Vella-Brodrick, 2013; Olwage, 2012).

Hence these results are incongruent with regard to cultural differences, but congruent with regard to the role of context with previous literature of intrapersonal and interpersonal and engaged and disengaged emotions.

Objective 3: *To determine the prevalence of positive and negative emotion episodes in a sample of university students.*

Literature indicates that dialectic (positive and negative) emotional variation is almost exclusive to western cultural groups. Eastern cultures tend to display practically no positive or negative preference (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000). Furthermore, emotion valence is strongly aligned with engaged and disengaged emotions. Positive engaged emotions (e.g. love) as well as negative disengaged emotions (e.g. anger) are by far more common (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006). Positive disengaged emotions (e.g. bliss) and negative engaged emotions (e.g. shame) occur far less in all population groups.

The present study showed that positive emotion episodes were reported significantly more than negative emotion episodes, further solidifying the salience of engaged and disengaged

emotions. In terms of previous literature (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000), this is a feature of western, independent groups, not of interdependent groups, possibly pointing to the cultural composition of the groups.

Objective 4: *To determine the effect of cultural groups, context, intrapersonal and interpersonal emotion episodes on positive and negative emotion episodes in a sample of university students.*

Cultural groups are theorised to affect positive and negative emotion episodes among South African students (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Valchev *et al.*, 2013). However, no cultural effect was found regarding positive and negative emotions. This puts into question (along with the findings of the three previous objectives) the applicability of Markus and Kitayama's self-construal theory, to South Africa. This finding is not entirely incongruent with literature, as some studies (e.g. Tsai *et al.*, 2016) have found similar results in terms of cultural groups and dialectic emotions.

Results showed that context did not affect positive and negative emotion episodes. This finding stands against the self-construal theory of Markus and Kitayama (1991), but has been corroborated in different recent studies (Verduyn *et al.*, 2013; Tsai *et al.*, 2016) in differing contexts. The self-construal theory directly influences cognition, motivation, and emotion. Positive and negative emotions are only associated with emotion differences in self-construal; thus these results are not unexpected.

Objective 5: *To determine the effect of cultural group and context on positive and negative emotion components in a sample of university students.*

Previous literature emphasised the importance of positive and negative emotions for emotion components (Scherer & Fontaine, 2013a). According to Scherer and Fontaine (2013), positive and negative emotion valence describes the second most variance of emotion components. To date, no studies have been conducted to directly measure positive and negative emotion components in terms of cultural groups or context.

However, according to the self-construal theory, it was expected that cultural groups and context should influence the experience of positive and negative emotion components. Black students were expected to experience more positive and less negative emotion components than white students. Furthermore, cultural groups played no significant role with to positive and negative emotion components. Results show that context did affect positive and negative emotion components. Therefore, in the university context, more negative emotions were reported and at home more positive emotions were reported. These results are in line with previous literature (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006).

Objective 6: *To determine the prevalence of engaged and disengaged emotion components in a sample of university students.*

Engaged and disengaged emotions have only been studied at a holistic level (Kgantsi *et al.*, 2015; Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006; Rothman & Magee, 2016). Previous literature consistently indicates the prevalence of engaged and disengaged emotions in different groups. However, engaged and disengaged emotion episodes have not been investigated in terms of the CEA as this study has done, and in different contexts. Only three emotion components that most soundly indicate social salience according to literature were investigated in accordance with to the framework. These components were appraisals, action tendency and subjective feelings.

Results showed that, of the three emotion components, only appraisals clearly indicated engaged and disengaged emotions. Neither action tendencies nor subjective feelings clearly indicate engaged and disengaged emotions. These findings may be explained by applying the Componential Process Model on which the CEA is based (Scherer, 2009). According to the CPM, appraisals are central to activating the emotion process. An antecedent is appraised to be for or against the individuals' goals. The appraisal leads to an action-readiness state, which then is expressed by the face, motor, and vocal expression. The centrality of appraisals should more clearly indicate the engaged or disengaged state of the rest of the process. Previous investigation by Fontaine and Scherer (2013) found similar results regarding engaged and disengaged emotions and other expressions through psycholinguistics. Although subjective feelings and action tendencies can meaningfully identify engaged and disengaged states, students did not report any meaningful differences in the expression of engaged and disengaged emotions.

Objective 7: *To determine the effect of context and cultural groups and positive and negative emotion episodes on engaged and disengaged emotion components in a sample of university students.*

As the results referred to in all previous objectives, cultural groups once again produced no effect. Literature supports the alignment of cultural groups and socially directed emotions. Thus these findings once again stand in contrast to the expectations of literature (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006; Valchev *et al.*, 2013), even if only at a componential level. Other studies have found similar results for the three emotion components (Liu, 2009; Frijda, Markam, Sato, & Wiers, 1995). For action tendencies and appraisals, however, findings stand in contrast to previous literature surrounding subjective feelings (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Kitayama *et al.*, 2006).

Results did indicate that context played a significant role with regard to engaged and disengaged action tendencies and subjective feelings, but only marginally for appraisals. Bearing in mind that objective six found appraisals to be the only component that meaningfully displayed engaged and disengaged emotions, context only marginally allows for real interaction at a componential level.

Positive and negative emotions were shown to affect all three emotion components. Previous literature of dialectic emotions showed similar results surrounding emotion components (Fontaine, Scherer, & Soranio, 2013). These findings demonstrate that positive and negative emotions strongly indicate that engaged and disengaged emotions are influenced at both a holistic level (objectives one to four), as well as at a componential level (objectives five to seven).

3.2 Limitations

This current research contributed with regard to engaged and disengaged emotions in black and white students as well as to the cultural composition of the three cultural groups. However, a few limitations in the scope of this article were present. *Firstly*, future studies should also investigate black Setswana groups to gain more accurate data on black South African groups. Setswana-speaking students should be requested to respond in their own language for more reliable and rich data.

Secondly, the engaged and disengaged emotions and the groups' self-construals were inferred through the methodology – not investigated directly. *Thirdly*, in order to get a better representative South African sample, at least isiZulu, isiXhosa and Setswana individuals need to be investigated alongside the Afrikaans and English groups. *Fourthly*, a non-student sample could provide clearer results than that those of a student sample. *Fifthly*, gender differences were not accounted for as the majority of participants were female, which may have influenced the findings.

Finally, not all five emotion components were investigated for this study. Although grounds were provided for this decision, future studies could investigate the social alignment of expressions, bodily sensations and emotion regulation. Including these components in research would bring the comprehensive emotion experience into context with emotion episodes.

3.3 Recommendations

In order to conclude on recommendations (object two as stated in chapter 1 the following):

Recommendations for the organisation:

This research study investigated engaged and disengaged emotions in black and white South African students. Recommendations can be made from this research. For universities as well as for organisations with new student intakes, the results in this research study can be used for student support programs, for student counselling, and for improving student retention strategies.

Firstly, South African students do experience engaged and disengaged emotions. The results indicate that, irrespective of the cultural group, different contexts have similar emotional effects on students. Black and white South African students do not experience noteworthy differences in their experiences of engaged and disengaged emotions. Context influenced the experience of engaged and disengaged emotions more than any other factor such as cultural group. These results on influence can also be extended to the experience of positive and negative and intrapersonal and interpersonal emotions. This indicates that the stressfulness situations have a more significant negative effect on students than do other factors. The university context was associated with more disengaged emotions, while the opposite was

experienced in the home context. The home context, which is associated with less pressure and stress than university, was shown to be very helpful to the emotional wellbeing of students.

Future counselling and student support programs should emphasise the utilisation of social support as a resource for buffering emotions in the future as results show that emotionally, the university and home experience is comparable between groups, regardless of cultural differences. Stated differently, student counselling and support programs should be more geared to the situational influence on the student than the cultural sensitivity usually expected.

Furthermore, appraisals were shown to be central to the experience of engaged and disengaged emotions at a componential level, unlike subjective feelings and action tendencies. These results indicate that teaching students cognitive-based coping strategies should achieve more significant results than other forms of coping strategies. Students have been shown to elicit emotionally focused coping strategies rather than problem-focused coping strategies (Brougham *et al.*, 2009).

Recommendations for future research at a theoretical level:

For future research, this research confirmed the findings of Kgantsi *et al.* (2015) and found no supporting evidence of self-construal differences among students in South Africa. Engaged and disengaged emotions did emerge from the data, but no cultural differences were observed. This is directly in contrast with the expectation of literature (Cross *et al.*, 2011; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). These results have implications for our understanding of different cultural groups in South Africa.

Although results point to both black and white South African groups exhibiting traits usually ascribed to western, independent groups (through the prevalence of positive emotions over negative emotions), research directly investigating the cultural composition of South African groups needs to be conducted, especially in light of the cultural changes South Africa has undergone in the past 10 years. It is quite possible that through acculturation or westernisation, black and white South African groups have their own unique factors that combine to make it independent or interdependent (Vignoles *et al.*, 2016). Furthermore, directly investigating self-construals among non-Setswana South African black groups would be very beneficial for a bigger picture on different cultures in South Africa.

It is noteworthy that motivations, values and emotional expression are inexorably linked to self-construals (Cross *et al.*, 2011). Research into cultural differences in motivations, values, cognitions and emotional expression would provide valuable insight into the state of South African cultural groups.

The results indicate that engaged and disengaged emotions are mostly influenced by context. Conducting research on engaged and disengaged emotions in contexts differing in degrees of stressfulness would provide clarity as to whether it is the emotion supportiveness of a context or the stressfulness of a context that influences the experience of engaged and disengaged and positive and negative emotions.

No previous research has been conducted on emotion components in relation to engaged and disengaged emotions. This current study could only focus on three of those components, namely appraisals, action tendencies and subjective feelings. Future research could investigate all the different emotion components in terms of engaged and disengaged emotions. In order to do so, the episodic approach to studying emotions is well-suited, as the global meaning of an emotion episode is required to analyse different emotion components.

At a componential level, this research found that only appraisals displayed engaged and disengaged emotions, while subjective feelings and action tendencies did not saliently indicate engaged and disengaged emotions. The role of appraisals in engaged and disengaged emotions should be investigated further.

Finally, from the objectives, different conceptual models were postulated from the results. At a global level, context affected interpersonal and intrapersonal emotions, which then had an effect on positive and negative emotions, while at a componential level, context had an effect on positive and negative emotions, and both context and positive and negative emotions had an effect on engaged and disengaged emotion components (although these findings were applicable to appraisals only). These results indicate different emotion processes for the same emotions at different levels, and may indicate a doorway to future research.

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