Judging South Africa's past:
The sense of shame experienced by first-year History students of the University of the Free State's Bloemfontein campus

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Abstract

Shame as a self-conscious emotion is an important contributing factor controlling and motivating people's thoughts, feelings and behaviour in socially appropriate ways, especially during interactions with one another. Shame in its own capacity causes discomfort when the behaviour of individuals and/or the group violates personal or social standards. The article aims to determine what the perceptions are of undergraduate students registered for first-year History at the University of the Free State's Bloemfontein campus who took History as a school subject up to Grade 12; what enhances a sense of shame in them as South African citizens when judging the country's past. The article contextualises the concept of shame; explains the methodology and approach that was used; and highlights the perceptions of these students and the issues that enhance a sense of shame in them as students studying at the capital of the Free State when judging the country's past. In the process, the article assesses what is the level of the student's historical consciousness, background, insight and in-depth knowledge of South Africa's past, so as to be able to make a judgment on what they are ashamed of in past events in the country and the reasons why.

Keywords: University of the Free State (UFS) Bloemfontein campus; Undergraduate first-year History students; Self-conscious emotions; Shame; Open coding; South Africa's past; Views and perceptions.

Introduction

Shame as a self-conscious emotion can influence an individual's behaviour, as well as influence how social relationships between specific individuals and communities develop. In taking into account the significance of self-conscious emotions in an individual's thoughts and behaviours, intriguing research questions surface. How will a self-conscious emotion, such as shame

influence a person's reflection on the past of his/her country that will induce this emotion? What specific events in history will be regarded as shameful? And why will these events be viewed as shameful? To answer these questions the self-conscious emotion of shame was used to reflect on the past/history of South Africa in a case study using first-year registered History students at the University of the Free State's (UFS) Bloemfontein campus. Thus the objective is twofold: to determine what specific events in history are mentioned as shameful and why these events are viewed as shameful by these university History students.

By making use of the voices of the students their answers/perspectives echoed what they, as the young generation of the country studying at the capital of the Free State, perceive as shameful about the past of South Africa, as well as the reasons behind it. In the process, the researchers assessed what the level is of the student's historical background, insight, in-depth knowledge and consciousness of South Africa's past, so as to be able to make a judgment on what they are ashamed of in past events in the country and the reasons why.

As such, the article highlights shame as a self-conscious emotion as experienced by students taking History as a first-year subject when evaluating South Africa's past. Additionally, the article provides insights into these perceptions from the students, as well as an analytical understanding thereof. This may be a step towards learning from what is revealed and told to us by a younger generation about South Africa's past and what events are perceived as shameful and the reasons why.

Understanding the concept of shame

For the purposes of the article, it is necessary to understand the theoretical outline of the concept of shame. The human self is a biological, as well as social phenomenon where our consciousness arises out of role taking, of seeing things from one's own point of view, as well as from the point of view of the other(s).[1] Basic emotions of the human self include anger, fear, disgust, sadness, happiness and surprise; these have distinct, universally recognised, non-verbal expressions. However, there are also self-conscious emotions which are not *basic*. The so-called 'self-conscious emotions' – shame,

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1   TJ Scheff, "Shame in self and society" (available at http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/faculty/scheff/main.php?id=3.html, as accessed on 30 August 2013).

guilt, embarrassment, hubris and pride – are also central to psychological functioning and are important, taking into account their significant influence on moral judgement, social behaviour and subjective well-being.[2] These self-conscious emotions are: "not unambiguously biological, not shared with other animals, not pan-culturally experienced nor identifiable via discrete, universally recognizable facial expressions".[3]

According to Tracy and Robins the primary function of shame lies in promoting the attainment of survival and reproductive goals, as well as the attainment of social goals more indirectly related to survival. These different goals play an influential role in everyday life and society. Focusing on the attainment of these goals will influence the level of attractive behaviour individuals portray and the general image they have of themselves or think people have of them.[4] Researchers constantly emphasise that shame is one of the most important social emotions a human being can have. The self-focus involved in shame is joined to social status, esteem and inclusion. Feeling ashamed or shameful will elicit responses to perceptions of low social attractiveness and attention, as well as fading social status which will eventually lead to social exclusion which no individual wants.[5]

Broadly speaking, shame is related to the failure of self or of not reaching goals and internalised social standards, including standards of morality or competence. This represents the apparent or feared loss of social status and a failure to live up to certain set standards of excellence. Thus, shame encompasses the whole of ourselves and is an unpleasant emotion which

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2   U Orth *et al*, "Tracking the trajectory of shame, guilt, and pride across the life span", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(6), 2010, p. 1061. Although the so-called 'self-conscious' emotions are central to psychological functioning, the emotion researchers have only recently begun to give serious theoretical and empirical attention to these emotions. See C Kostopoulos, "'People are strange when you're a stranger': Shame, the self and some pathologies of social imagination", *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 31(2), 2012, p. 303; JL Tracy and RW Robins, "Putting the self into self-conscious emotions: A theoretical model", *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(2), 2004, pp. 103-104. Furthermore, shame and collective shame in an historical context has not been comprehensively studied. Although it is not the purpose of this article to make comparisons with other countries regarding research on shame, it is of note that the focus has been on Germany with E Dresler-Hawke and JH Liu (2006) concentrating on collective shame with regard to the positioning of a German national identity. LH Liu and DJ Hilton (2005) deal with the shame Germany encountered after the Second World War and the influence thereof on certain policy decisions in government. Apart from Germany, EM McDonnell & GA Fine, "Pride and shame in Ghana: Collective memory and nationalism among elite students", *African Studies Review*, 54(3), December 2011, pp. 121-142, concentrated on Ghana in their research on self-conscious emotions.
3   C Kostopoulos, "'People are strange when you're a stranger'...", *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 31(2), 2012, p. 303; JL Tracy and RW Robins, "Emerging insights into the nature and functions of pride", *Current directions into Psychological Science*, 16, 2007, p. 147.
4   JL Tracy and RW Robins, "Emerging insights into...", *Current directions into Psychological Science*, 16, 2007, pp. 147-150.
5   C Kostopoulos, "'People are strange when you're a stranger'...", *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 31(2), 2012, p. 307.

will be accompanied by a sense of worthlessness, powerlessness and 'feeling small'. Consequently, shame will, as a rule, induce efforts to deny, hide from, disappear, conceal or escape the experience which caused the shame or even to die because of it. This may result in the disruption of ongoing behaviour and confusion in thought.[6] As a result shame, which is often public, but can just as likely be private, may be a "collective name for a large family of emotions that arise through seeing self negatively, if even only slightly negatively, through the eyes of others, or even for only anticipating such a reaction".[7]

Self-conscious emotions require an intense, high level of self-awareness and self-representation and become triggered by self-reflection and self-evaluation. The negative self-evaluations entailed in shame experiences are seen through the eyes of the other. Our self-consciousness is intimately tied to our ability to imagine both ourselves and others. It is therefore important to note that this ability is both incomplete and imperfect; and the social threats we register via shame can be misunderstood and misinterpreted.[8]

The purpose of shame is to develop sensitivity towards our social bonds with others. This emotion helps us develop social relationships with other individuals or bigger groups and is constitutively tied to the self's sociability. It also functions as a conscience to motivate adjustments made by the individual.[9]

Apart from focusing on individual shame, there are also situations/circumstances wherein more than one person can feel shameful about the same event; this is called collective shame. This collective shame cuts further than just on the individual level and is experienced in a group situation. Thus, negative evaluation is not only a consequence of personal experiences or behaviour but can spill over into the behaviour of a nation, ethnic-group or even a community, thereby making shame part of a collective identity. Consequently, collective shame can also be seen as a negative evaluation of the global self and/or the bigger group.

6   C Kostopoulos, "'People are strange when you're a stranger'...", *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 31(2), 2012, pp. 304-305; U Orth *et al*, "Tracking the trajectory of shame...", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(6), 2010, p. 1061; M Lewis, *Shame. The exposed self* (New York, The Free Press, 1992), pp. 2, 75-76; JP Tangney, "Recent advances in the empirical study of shame and guilt", *American Behavioral Scientist*, 38(8), August 1995, pp. 1134-1135.

7   TJ Scheff, "Shame in self and society" (available at http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/faculty/scheff/main.php?id=3. html, as accessed on 30 August 2013).

8   C Kostopoulos, "'People are strange when you're a stranger'...", *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 31(2), 2012, p. 307; JL Tracy and RW Robins, "Putting the self into self-conscious emotions …", *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(2), 2004, pp. 105-106.

9   C Kostopoulos, "'People are strange when you're a stranger'...", *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 31(2), 2012, pp. 304-305.

The historical past may lead to shame when negatively associated with a variety of indicators of national identity.[10] This identity is situated in the interactions between people and between groups and involves a constant relationship between the past and the present. Collective shame may play a significant role in understanding a national identity, as a nation can evolve in the pursuit of a more positive and/or acceptable identity.[11] The negative aspect of finding your self-concept or self-esteem in the national and/or group identity can lead to an individual feeling shameful, because he/she belongs to a certain national identity and/or group and there can be a negative past that affects that specific group.[12]

According to Liu and Hilton, a central part of a group's representation of its history is their shared experience and culture which are transferred across generations. The positive and negative aspects of a group's history may affect feelings of collective shame.[13] Dresler-Hawke and Liu highlight also an important aspect when a person acknowledges his/her membership of a group. The social identification with a specific group and their actions is an essential factor in feeling shame, as this degree of identification gives the individual a position to be able to evaluate him/herself and the group from this perspective. This may lead to the experience of shame due to the past actions of this specific group, even if the individuals are not personally responsible.[14]

In conclusion, shame helps individuals navigate and also negotiate their place in the social hierarchy. When there is a decrease in social status it will elicit shame, and this self-conscious emotion helps increase social cohesion amongst people. Thus, the functioning of shame on an individual level is also significant for social identification on a collective level.

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10 National identity may be a sense of "political community, history, territory, patria, citizenship, common values and traditions whereby these elements will evolve into common ideas and aspirations that will bind the populations together". A Smith, "Nations and national identity: A critical assessment", *Nations and Nationalism*, 10(1), 2004, p. 133.

11 E Dresler-Hawke and JH Liu, "Collective shame and the positioning of German national identity", *Psicología Política*, 32, 2006, pp.131, 134; D Páez *et al,* "Dealing with collective shame and guilt", *Psicología Política*, 32, 2006, p. 60.

12 D Páez *et al,* "Dealing with collective shame …", *Psicología Política*, 32, 2006, p. 68.

13 JH Liu and DJ Hilton, "How the past weighs on the present: Social representations of history and their role in identity politics", *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 44, 2005, pp. 1-2, 14.

14 E Dresler-Hawke and JH Liu, "Collective shame...", *Psicología Política*, 32, 2006, p. 134.

Research methodology and historical context

The research was conducted with students studying at tertiary level at a university, where they formed part of the minority of the population in the country.[15] The approach used to collect data was through the qualitative method which included an open-ended questionnaire[16] and semi-structured individual interviews[17] to be able to gain more comprehensive and insightful results.

The data were collected at the University of the Free State's Bloemfontein campus during 2013. Access to the students at the university for the purposes of this research was easy and no problems were encountered. A sample of registered undergraduate first-year History students who had History as a school subject up to Grade 12 were randomly selected and asked to voluntarily complete a questionnaire individually during the scheduled time of the undergraduate first-year history class. Furthermore, ten of these students who completed the questionnaire were selected to be voluntarily interviewed on an individual basis and answers/feedback were recorded. Additionally, no student was forced to participate in completing the questionnaire or in the interview that was conducted.

The sampling used for the open-ended questionnaire was purposive[18] and aimed at including only those students at the University of the Free State who were registered for the first-year history module GES 114 during the first

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15 According to the latest statistics of a census conducted in South Africa during 2011, the vast majority of the population aged 20 years and older by highest level of education completed in South Africa, had completed primary school and almost three in ten had completed Grade 12. However, only 12.1% of the population has post Grade 12 qualifications. For more detail, see Statistics South Africa, "Census 2011 in brief" (available at http://www.statssa.gov.za/census2011/Products/Census_2011_Census_in_brief.pdf, as accessed on 4 November 2013).

16 By using open-ended questionnaires it allows the participants to formulate their own thoughts into honest answers, according to their own knowledge and thinking processes without being forced in a specific direction. This provides unlimited freedom of expression to qualify their answers in adequate detail. E Babbie, *Introduction to social research*, 5 (Belmont, Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2011), p. 244.

17 Semi-structured interviews aim to understand the social reality through the eyes of the participant and understand his/her construction of knowledge, thus producing valuable descriptive data. This type of interview wants to gain the participants' own views, ideas, attitudes and beliefs about specific themes/topics. The semi-structured interview also allows flexibility as the researcher can probe when more detail is needed from the participant and can use it to clarify certain aspects which may be unclear. M Greef, "Information collection: Interviewing", AS de Vos *et al, Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions* 3rd edition (Pretoria, Van Schaik Publishers, 2005), pp. 296-297; KF Punch, *Introduction to social research. Quantitative and qualitative approaches,* 2 (Singapore, SAGE, 2005)*,* pp. 169-170; E Babbie, *Introduction to social research...,* pp. 311-313.

18 Purposive sampling (also called judgmental sampling) allows the researcher to choose a case in a deliberate way because it illustrates some process in which the researcher is interested in and serve a specific purpose. See D Silverman, *Doing qualitative research. A practical handbook* (London, SAGE, 2000), pp. 104-105; E Babbie, *Introduction to social research*, p. 179; KF Punch, *Introduction to social research...*, pp. 187-189.

semester. Another distinction was made by focusing only on those individuals who had had history as a subject up to Grade 12 prior to coming to the University of the Free State.

As in all questionnaire-based research the questionnaire did not ask for any personal details that would lead to people being directly identified as giving a certain answer. Thus, all responses to the questionnaires were based on anonymous responses. It was mentioned in the questionnaire, but it was also repeated to the students before commencing with the questionnaire that their participation was voluntary and therefore, there was no need for a person to sign the questionnaire or to identify him/herself in any way. Furthermore, answering the questionnaire would not affect his/her grade either positively or negatively. It was also explained to the students that there are no right or wrong, good or bad answers as it is not a test of what they know. The researchers were interested only in their opinions about what they think and feel.

Questionnaires were distributed amongst registered undergraduate first-year history students while attending the scheduled history class. The questionnaires were completed by the participants at the same time, thus making the response rate optimal. Therefore, the researchers could immediately assist the students if they encountered possible unclear issues while completing the questionnaires. It should be mentioned that the researchers did not provide any definition or explanation of what should be understood by the concept of 'shame'. The purpose was to identify how the student perceived this concept and how their understanding thereof would elicit shame when judging the history of South Africa.

The questionnaire consisted of one open-ended, opinionated question that read: "Name three events that make you ashamed to be a South African, and give you a sense of dishonour, disgrace and/or remorse." The questionnaire was also available in Afrikaans. The students could complete the three events and answer it in the format of a sentence or paragraph. The anonymous participants to the questionnaires had sufficient time (50 minutes) to complete the questionnaires in an unhindered manner in either English or Afrikaans (the two official languages in use at the time at the UFS). It was important to the researchers that the students had ample time to ponder their answers so as to gain more detailed information in the process. The number of students who completed the questionnaire was 60. The open-ended questionnaires allowed the participants to come up with their own responses which the researchers

documented. The information gained from every single questionnaire was analysed by using open coding.[19]

To supplement these data, a second data collection method was used, namely semi-structured interviews. Answers from the survey guided the type of questions to be asked during the interviews which were structured in such a way as to gain data to be qualitative in nature. Thus, they were explanatory orientated, giving the researchers in-depth and broad information to the answers gained from the questionnaire. The sampling used for this method was also purposive. Multiple respondents from the undergraduate first-year history class were interviewed individually, as the topic of shame is of a more sensitive nature. The students who participated in this research method were once again chosen on a voluntary basis and ten volunteers were used to conduct the semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted in either English or Afrikaans (as preferred by the interviewee), and lasted between 40 minutes to an hour per interview. No follow-up interviews were conducted with the ten interviewees and these interviews were recorded and transcribed.

The interviews gave a deeper meaning to what students mentioned in their open-ended questionnaires and were used as a holistic approach to gain knowledge in a complementary way with the questionnaire. This created a more multifaceted understanding of the students' knowledge and views on the topic under research. The information gained was analysed by using open coding yet again.

The results were analysed by asking questions about the data and by reading the responses of the students in both methods that were used in order to compile a profile of the data. With both methods the voices, perceptions and perspectives of the participants were incorporated. In the process the data were examined, interpreted and compared and systematically, categories emerged into specific, identified patterns and themes that could be grouped together. These analysed data were then captured into existing knowledge to

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19 By using open coding, the focus is on the data themselves that were captured. The process of open coding (also known as *in vivo* coding) entails a close examination of the data by carefully reading through the data and dividing it into meaningful units/themes. A code is assigned to each particular unit/theme. Open coding is guided by two main activities; namely, making comparisons and asking questions. This coding process enables the researchers to retrieve, collect and identify all the data that may be associated with the broader theme or core category. The outcome of open coding is a set of conceptual categories generated from the data so that the sorted units/themes can systematically be examined separately, but also together to identify the connections and relationships between the categories and subcategories of data. K Maree (ed.), *First steps in research* (Pretoria, Van Schaik Publishers, 2007), pp. 105-117; KF Punch, *Introduction to social research…*, pp. 199-201, 205-209.

reveal how it corroborated current knowledge and/or contributed to a new understanding of events/factors that may play a role and influence registered undergraduate first-year history students about being ashamed of being a South African citizen when judging South Africa's past.

It should be noted for the purposes of this research that shame entails negative self-evaluation as 'seen' through the eyes of the other which makes the abilities thereof both incomplete and imperfect. Therefore, it is important to realise that the social consciousness we register via shame can be misjudged. The results obtained from the research are essentially the participants' voices of their perspectives and opinions on events that incite shame in them as South African citizens when judging the past and are information connected to their own specific points of view.

In addition, it is important to note that this research focuses only on students at the University of the Free State's Bloemfontein campus who were registered for the first-year History module. No second or third year registered History students, post-graduate students and other students at the campus or any other campuses and/or universities were taken into account. As a result, the findings of this research cannot be generalised and are specific to a fixed milieu, as well as to the data collection method. Moreover, there clearly exists a gap on Indian students' perceptions and opinions towards this research, as none of the Indian students was part of this research. Against this background, this research does not aim to generalise the answers received from these students who participated in the research, or to provide all the answers and perspectives on this issue. This research aims rather to stimulate further research and debate into these related topics.

Historical context: South Africa, 2013

To comprehend the historical framework of South Africa during 2013, when the research was conducted, the *SA Reconciliation Barometer Survey: 2013 Report* outlined the following issues that were of significance for the South African citizen. According to this Report key findings pointed to a substantial decline in citizen confidence and trust in governance institutions and in leadership by the ruling African National Congress (ANC). Results showed a "drop in citizen's confidence in governance institutions, especially national government (10.8% decrease since 2012), as well as a 13% increase

in the percentage of citizens who felt that government does not care about people like them".[20] These declines occurred in the wake of the ANC National Conference that was held in Mangaung in December 2012, and in the run-up to the 2014 general elections. Regarding issues of human security, the results showed that economic exclusion in the form of class inequality, unemployment and poverty posed a threat to the sense of economic security of South Africans. In this case issues of economic justice needed to be addressed. In general the majority of South Africans described themselves as "poor" or "struggling but getting by".[21] In terms of religion, South Africans expressed high levels of human security in this area. Furthermore, results on levels of interracial contact demonstrated that "material exclusion obstructs interracial reconciliation and it appeared that low levels of interracial reconciliation between poor black and middle/upper class white South Africans may in turn impact on differing levels of agreement with the need for economic redress and victim support".

According to the 2013 Amnesty International Report on South Africa the use of excessive force against protesters by the South African Police force, which also led to national concern, was highlighted. According to this Report discrimination and targeted violence against refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as difficulties in accessing the asylum system has increased. Additionally, steps towards addressing systematic hate-motivated violence based on victims' sexual orientation or gender identity remained slow; while HIV-related infections continue to be the main cause of maternal deaths. The Report also pointed out that human rights defenders remained at risk of harassment and violence.[22]

Profile of the University of the Free State's student population

It is necessary to contextualise the research in connection with the milieu of a university student (Kovsie) studying at the University of the Free State (UFS). The UFS is one of the oldest South African institutions of higher learning and consists of three campuses. The Bloemfontein campus is situated in the city of Bloemfontein, with a smaller South Campus also in Bloemfontein and the

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20 The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), *SA Reconciliation Barometer Survey: 2013 Report* (Cape Town, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, 2013), pp. 1-44.

21 The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), *SA Reconciliation Barometer Survey: 2013 Report*, pp. 1-44.

22 Amnesty International, "Annual Report: South Africa 2013" (available at http://www.amnestyusa.org/research/reports/annual-report-south-africa-2013, as accessed on 20 November 2016).

Qwaqwa campus in the Eastern Free State. The University is a multicultural, parallel-medium (English and Afrikaans) institution where a full range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and diplomas are offered in seven faculties and in 121 departments. Courses are offered to more than 31 000 students with most students located on the Bloemfontein campus – a total of 28 186 students. Although the demographics differ by campus, it is important to note that from 2012 the UFS had the largest portion of black students of the historically Afrikaans universities. Over all campuses 70% of the student population is black. By contrast, the ratio of women to men is between 58% and 61% for all three campuses.[23]

Profile of the participants in the research

From the 60 students who participated in the questionnaire, the following personal information was revealed: More than half of the participants were first-year university students (33 out of 60); 12 indicated they were second-year students and 15 were already third years registered for a first-year module. All of the students had had History as a school subject up to Grade 12.

Twenty-one participants were between the ages of 17-19 years; with the largest group of 32 between 20-24 years; four were between the ages of 25-30 years and three were 30+ years. Therefore, it is significant, for the sake of the outcome on shamefulness, to note that 88% of the participants were between 17-24 years, thus born in the post-Apartheid era and exposed to a school (History) curriculum post-1994.[24] Pertaining to gender, 32 men completed the questionnaire compared to 28 women. As there was no noteworthy gender differences to the answers gained from the research, this aspect will not be given further attention in the article.

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23 University of the Free State, "About the UFS" (available at http://www.ufs.ac.za/about-the-ufs/ufs-in-focus/ufs-in-figures, as accessed 31 May 2016); Directorate for Institutional Research and Planning (DIRAP), *University of the Free State Strategic Plan 2015-2020* (Bloemfontein, University of the Free State, 2014), pp. 3-4.

24 See J Wasserman, "Learning about controversial issues in school History: The experiences of learners in KwaZulu-Natal schools", *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, 29, 2011, pp. 131-157 for more information on how the educational experiences of learners born after apartheid, the so-called 'born frees', point to the absence of a collective meta-narrative on certain issues in the History curricula. See also ES van Eeden, "Transcontinental reflections in the revised South African History Curriculum on globalism and national narratives (and its reflection in Grade 12 textbooks)", *Yesterday&Today*, 3, October 2008, pp. 11-39 for more information on the changes in History teaching through the means of several revised History curricula in the further education and training (FET) phase (high schools) and the developments of textbooks as a result of this.

The History classes consist of diverse ethnic groups. With reference to the ethnicity of the students who engaged in completing the questionnaire, the majority of students marked the African option (27 out of 60 students) and black (16 out of 60). Coloured students who participated amounted to five and whites to four. Eight students indicated themselves as South African. There were no indications made for the options of Asian/Indian and Other. These numbers have broad similarities with the profile of the registered student population at the UFS's, Bloemfontein campus.

The interviews that were conducted with the ten interviewees consisted of eight men and two women. Of this group of interviewees, six were African, three white and one coloured.

Results of the data

What emerged from the responses from the students was a distinct sense of shame with regard to several issues. Interestingly, these issues are also addressed in media discourses. What also surfaced from the methodological processes was that the categories contain, for the most part, contemporary issues. The themes/categories identified by the participants were primarily everyday issues that affect these students in a direct or indirect way, as they are exposed to certain experiences and events. Especially prevalent were issues portrayed on the television news and/or on radio and/or via newspapers and various electronic media. Seldom were issues from the distant past identified. Nonetheless, certain themes/categories were identified that were frequently mentioned by the students. The results were divided into six main categories, with each category being divided into further sub-categories.

"Oppressed, judged, abused and deprived of their humanity": Apartheid, racism and inequality

"Unbearable, inhuman and completely inappropriate" were only a few of the words used by the participants to describe the period of racial segregation in South Africa that lasted officially from 1948 to 1994. The memories of the period of apartheid were still part of the consciousness of individuals as seen from the research where, for the most part, the answers for shameful events from the past pointed to apartheid and its effects on race relations, racism,

discrimination and inequality among different races. Feelings of shame and remorse were the general response among the students towards the apartheid system because of the segregation imposed by the government in power at the time, as well as the use of violence on such a large scale in order to uphold the system. Among the participants all population groups indicated it as a shameful event from the past.[25]

It became obvious from the answers that an in-depth awareness of specific historical events connected to the apartheid era was part of the students' historical knowledge base. The Sharpeville massacre (1960), the 1976 Soweto Uprising, and the killings at Boipatong (1992) were cited several times by the participants as examples of what occurred during the apartheid period. The killing of specific individuals, such as Steve Biko and Chris Hani were also highlighted by the participants.

Apart from focusing on historical events that occurred during the apartheid period, the students also stressed that the influence and legacy of apartheid are far-reaching with regard to inequality between races. Thus, according to the students, the dream of equality amongst all citizens in South Africa is still, to this day, not accomplished.[26]

These statements indicated that judgement based on a person's skin colour continues to form part of the South African society with students still experiencing it in their everyday lives.[27] Thus, dealing with the past and forgetting the legacy thereof is much more complex and not always that easy. A participant so clearly depicted the situation: "The apartheid regime as a whole – it affected South Africans mentally, which becomes difficult to forget or deal with the past."

Some students claimed that certain individuals still hold grudges against other people concerning what happened during apartheid and/or bear grudges toward certain individuals because they see a lack of change in them. All of

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25 It seems as if apartheid led to some form of collective shame within the country amongst most South Africans. By a series of scientific testing, James L Gibson came to the conclusion that, at least to some degree, a common understanding of the country's past has emerged through the activities of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (TRC). Furthermore, the empirical evidence indicated that most South Africans of every race believe that apartheid was a crime against humanity. See JL Gibson, *Overcoming apartheid. Can truth reconcile a divided nation?* (Cape Town, HSRC Press, 2004), pp. 70, 115.

26 These lines of arguments were also stressed during the interviews that were conducted.

27 According to Respondents 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 10 they were still experiencing forms of racism, either directly or indirectly. These forms of racism were experienced by all population groups. M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 10, October 2013.

these attitudes hinder the much needed connections between different racial groups which do not help the process of reconciliation and equality across the country.[28] The following statements underlined this: "Although there has been a great transformation after the apartheid era, it has not been easy for some people to connect with others in terms of race which then makes a delay in terms of total transformation of South Africa". Against this background, the participants anticipated that the legacy of apartheid would still affect the future of the country and its race relations: "The key element of segregation in our country still exists and that is a shameful situation to us because even our children will acquire this tendency and we will never move on".

There were a few participants and interviewees who indicated that South Africans have "to forget about the past, get over it, put it behind them, move forward and work together to make sure it does not ever happen again". A participant indicated that "when something is wrong we blame it on apartheid which is a lame excuse. We should empower ourselves and find a way forward".[29]

"We do not have money to study to be able to live a good life": Poverty, unemployment and the education system

The participants indicated that one of the results of apartheid's legacy is poverty amongst specific population groups. This was furthermore linked to the unemployment rate, as well as the quality of education. These aspects are connected and interwoven, having a bearing on one another.[30] The lack of job creation and the availability of jobs further increase poverty levels in the country and the gap between rich and poor is rising exponentially. With a lack of funds, people are also not able to educate themselves and improve their living conditions. "We all need education to help us gain knowledge. Without education we won't be able to get work and poverty increases." Owing to the

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28 M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10, October 2013.

29 M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 3 & 4, October 2013.

30 These linked issues of poverty, unemployment and the quality of, as well as access to the education system are not exclusive to South Africa as many other countries in the world are also faced with these matters. However, with regard to South Africa, statistics in June 2013 showed that unemployment amongst young graduates increased to 52.9%, while only 5 000 out of 25 000 schools in the country were functional. This situation led to *Newsweek* rating South Africa's school system as the fourth weakest out of 100 countries. See Department of Labour, *Job opportunities and unemployment in the South African labour market 2012-2013* (Pretoria, Department of Labour, 2013); L Peyper, "SA onderwys vierde swakste wys peiling", *Volksblad*, 26 August 2010, p. 6; A Rademeyer, "SA onderwys 'niks om op trots te wees'", *Volksblad*, 3 September 2013, p. 7.

poverty rate in the country "we have few graduates" as people cannot access institutions of higher education because they "do not have money to study and pay the fees to be able to live a good life". However, for the few who were able to further their studies and who were working towards obtaining a qualification to improve their circumstances, the increase in unemployment levels have dampened the mood amongst students. This was a shameful and disturbing state of affairs for the students where "graduates don't find jobs and stay at home with their qualifications".[31]

For the students the "unbearable and disgraceful levels of poverty, inequality and unemployment" were connected to the downward spiral of the quality of South Africa's educational system. Support for this point of view was overwhelming from the interviewees. They viewed the educational system in South Africa as "shameful" and were "shocked" at how bad it was functioning as it was "not on the level where it is supposed to be" and should be "blamed for the high unemployment levels".[32] Coupled with the lack of "producing good learners or enough qualified people" was the shortage of qualified teachers in key subject fields at school. For a participant and an interviewee this resulted in low standards with "poor matric pass rates which I am ashamed of and is nothing to rejoice about".[33]

The poor educational system has a ripple effect, influencing other sectors of the community and affecting the economic stance of the country as a whole. "The more our education is poor, the more we lose our country and the wealth of our country." Consequently, this will endanger the future of the country: "If the leaders are not investing in the young, they are killing the future of our country".[34]

"The world can see that South Africans are not in unity and that the country is unsafe": Lack of safety and security

The third main category focused on the lack of safety and security, with the sub-categories being: the role of the South African Police; xenophobia; crime, which includes murder, rape, sexual offences, and robbery; as well as violent strikes and riots. All of the above-mentioned aspects have been given

31   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 5 & 7, October 2013.
32   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9, October 2013.
33   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 6, October 2013.
34   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1 & 7, October 2013.

media and public attention during the course of the past few years. Numerous participants indicated these sub-categories were making them ashamed to be a South African, giving them a sense of dishonour, disgrace, and remorse.

The code of conduct of the South African Police force reads as follows: 'I commit myself to creating a safe and secure environment for all people in South Africa'.[35] As this vow clearly illustrates, the police system is established to protect the public and ensure a safe and secure environment for all citizens. Unfortunately, in South Africa there is a clear indication that members of the public find this statement by the Police Service lacking in veracity and it seems that the public has lost faith in the police. According to a survey done by 'Futurefact' on the opinion of the public towards the Police Service in South Africa during 2012, 35% of the South African participants admitted to being fearful of the police within their respective communities. This percentage increases up to 40% among groups on a lower socio-economic level.[36] In 2013 statistics revealed that 1 323 police officers were accused of misconduct which includes criminal activities in South Africa.[37] A contributing reason for this adverse situation and for the occurrence of crime in the police force may also be the result of criminals being employed into the very system designed to protect the community and prohibit crime development. Apparently, more than 300 police officers in the service of the South African Police force have a history and record of crime.[38]

In line with these results, the students reflected their distrust in the Police Service in their feedback. They indicated that they were unable to trust and to feel safe around police officers and they were not always sure if the police will be able to help. The system was, furthermore, inefficient and fails to ensure the safety of citizens as the police were either "slow to react in danger or they were overreacting by killing people unnecessarily". The interviewees were unanimous on this issue and elaborated on these statements by adding the following strong descriptions about the police and the services they render: "The police provide very poor and ineffective service; they are not doing

35 South African Police Service, "Code of Conduct" (available at http://www.saps.gov.za/saps_profile/code_of_conduct/code_of_conduct.htm, as assessed on 1 September 2013).

36 Futurefact, "I am scared of the Police" (available at http://www.futurefact.co.za/futurefact-finds/235-i-am-scared-of-the-police, as accessed on 21 August 2013).

37 Africa Check, "South Africa's criminal cops: Is the rot far worse than we have been told?" (available at https://africacheck.org/reports/south-africas-criminal-cops-is-the-rot-far-worse-than-we-have-been-told/, as accessed on 15 August 2013).

38 P Essop, "Feite oor polisie skok", *Volksblad,* 15 August 2013, p. 1.

what they are supposed to do; they take advantage of the law which they are supposed to protect and create no trust within the community".[39]

   Another issue that students highlighted as a matter of concern in South Africa and shameful to them was the occurrence of xenophobic attacks. Since 2008 when the first attacks were reported in the country that led to 62 people dying at the hands of South Africans, over the years more cases have erupted in various communities around the country where foreigners have established businesses, financially supporting themselves, as well as their families back home.[40] The students felt ashamed to be associated with a country wherein a peaceful lifestyle was difficult and association with people from other African countries, as well as other parts of the world was under siege. Participants described the behaviour of South Africans involved in xenophobic attacks as "selfish, intolerant, ignorant, barbaric, morally wrong and not right to do this".[41]

   Crime in its general context and outside the police system was undoubtedly indicated as a serious concern among the students and made them shameful to be associated with South Africa. The crime statistics that were revealed by the Minister of Police during September 2013 for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 were described as the worst in ten years.[42] With reference to crime, it was noticeable that the students conveyed information gained from the media where they were "daily reading" and every day "seeing and hearing stories on television", as well as from their own individual experiences where "my sister got robbed at knife point on Sunday night coming from church". Without giving definite statistics, the students used words such as the "highest in the world"; "highest rate"; "criminals are all over the place"; and "becoming increasingly problematic", to describe their views on the situation of and the increase in crime in South Africa. The crime rate in the country was, for the participants and interviewees, a "disgrace" as they "feel unsafe and have to hide". The unsafe situation in the country was portrayed as "very poor" where "criminals have more rights than the citizens" causing people to be "concerned about their life".[43]

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39   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10, October 2013.
40   K Patel, "Analysis: The ugly truth behind SA's xenophobic violence" (available at http://www.dailymaverick.co.za /article/2013-05-28-analysis-the-ugly-truth-behind-sas-xenophobic-violence/#.WDGoW_l97IU, as accessed on 11 August 2013).
41   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 3, 7, 9 & 10, October 2013.
42   A Damons, "Gevreesde misdaad neem toe", *Volksblad*, 20 September 2013, pp. 10-11.
43   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 2, 3 & 7, October 2013.

Accordingly, this appalling situation in South Africa rendered the participants and interviewees shameful about their country's negative image as it "makes us, as a country, look as if we are uneducated people". This "enormously negative image" harms the country and gives it a "bad reputation", with South Africa being viewed as a "violent country". In the process "we are losing inventors in the economy and this situation is taking our country down the drain". The results of crime in the country cause widespread embarrassment and bring the country's image into disrepute as it "attracts the wrong people to South Africa".[44] One of the participants considered it to be to the detriment of the country as murdering people leads to "losing citizens where the whole country could rather benefit from their lives and their contributions if their lives were spared". This unfortunate situation has a domino effect, causing many South Africans to "move to other countries".[45]

The understanding among the participants and interviewees was that it is morally wrong that this country has such a high rate of sexual abuse, violence and rape against women and children, while many South African citizens call themselves educated and developed. The following words were used to express their shame against these acts: "gruesome, disrespectful, embarrassing, and dishonouring women". One student captured her shame as follows: "We have the highest rate of rape meaning we have the highest rate of men who abuse women." It is furthermore a "disgrace because the men who do this don't even serve out their lives in jail".[46]

Lastly, the participants and interviewees highlighted the wave of unruly strikes, riots and protests that encumber a peaceful South Africa and caused students to experience feelings of shame.[47] For the interviewees it was "unacceptable that the Government does not take better charge" of these protests and riots. They further stated their view on this by indicating that the strikers are "misusing the situation, as they do not strike anymore for the right purposes; how can you burn something down that you actually need?" The negative image that these strikes and protests project about South Africa

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44   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 & 8, October 2013.
45   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interview, Respondent 4, October 2013.
46   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 4 & 8, October 2013.
47   Take note that this research was conducted before the wave of student protests would hit South Africa and specifically South African institutions of higher education from 2015 onwards. It may be noteworthy if the students would still highlight the waves of riots and protests as inciting shame if this research would be conducted at present.

was stressed by the fact that "the world can see that South Africans are not united, cannot live together and that the country is unsafe". This view was also reflected by another student: "We South Africans tend to think that for our voices to be heard we have to be violent. This creates a negative perspective from other countries that the people in our country are not civilised and not good at solving problems".[48]

"South Africans are led by leaders who are corrupt, selfish, greedy and enrich themselves": South Africa's government, leaders and officials

Numerous participants reflected on the Government which included leadership in the country and specifically, President Jacob Zuma; government officials; as well as government systems, as shameful and a disgrace and connected the Government with corruption and nepotism.

It seems that the participants have formed negative images of Jacob Zuma as the current president of the country, describing him as "pathetic, uneducated, an embarrassment, shameful, not somebody to be proud of, and not honourable". Support for this point of view regarding the current president was overwhelming from the interviewees. Expressions against the shameful persona of Jacob Zuma, such as the following were uttered: "He is not the right person to be a president, as he is in the limelight for all the wrong reasons; he does not create an effective image but rather creates a shameful image of South Africa and puts us in the hot spot; he wasted money and is not delivering what he is supposed to".[49]

Two incidents were especially highlighted by the students that brought shame to them pertaining to Jacob Zuma. Firstly, the rape charges against Zuma were seen by the participants as a serious indictment. The second incident was the upgrading of his expensive, personal Nkandla homestead.[50] It was inappropriate as the students felt that the president was using tax payers' money to build his own home and it was even more reprehensible, taking into account that the areas surrounding the homestead are poverty stricken.[51]

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48 M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 3, 5 & 6, October 2013.
49 M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9, October 2013.
50 The Nkandla debate refers to the R248 million renovations and upgrade that Jacob Zuma planned on his homestead. See A Basson, "R6m to R248m in two years", *City Press*, 25 November 2012, p. 4.
51 M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 5 & 8, October 2013.

The students indicated that the shameful behaviour of the president also resulted in a bigger problem which was the lack of effective leadership in the country.[52] "It is shameful because our country is run by leaders who lack leadership and this causes problems in our country" and "the leadership is failing society". The conclusion reached by the participants concerning this issue was that South Africans are led by people who are "corrupt and selfish; the masses are living in poor conditions, but our leaders are enriching themselves".[53]

This shameful image of the president and his government was further exacerbated by their extravagant lifestyles and the way they were overspending to the detriment of the country and its citizens. These statements were strongly reinforced during the interviews. All the interviewees revealed that they were ashamed of the politicians as their "priorities are not in line; they take power into their own hands; are corrupt when it comes to tenders; waste the taxpayers' money driving their expensive cars; and are all in it for their own interests and for the position and power - not as leaders to the people".[54]

According to the participants and interviewees the Government and ruling party portray an image of corruption and poor service delivery which casts a huge cloud of doubt on the priorities of the Government. "Corruption is a cancer that is breaking our country apart and this results in poor service delivery to the folks of our country, which is a dishonour to me." Students suspected that the fraud, corruption and abuse of funds by officials will continue as long as the people guilty of this are allowed to be leaders. Moreover, they are also making use of contributory forms of nepotism: "People who are unskilled, unqualified but by virtue of the fact that they are relatives of those in power are the ones obtaining jobs and leaving those that are qualified without jobs". [55]

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52 These arguments of the students were in line with research by leading political analysts in the country. Accordingly there was a huge gap between the standard of behaviour that South Africans expect from their leaders and the behaviour they deliver. A 2013 survey showed that only 11% of South Africans think politicians were effective leaders. This indicated that there seems to be a crisis in leadership. One problem is that leaders emerge from the communities in which they are raised, so they reflect the values – or lack thereof – in their particular milieu. L Stones, "How to get the leadership that we desire", *Business Day*, 20 May 2013, p. 7; M Lamprecht, "Groot fout met SA én leiers", *Volksblad*, 26 May 2013, p. 9.

53 M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 & 10, October 2013.

54 M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10, October 2013.

55 M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 & 10, October 2013.

"Just rude, disrespectful, undisciplined and a disgrace": Shameful behaviour and attitudes of South Africans

The participants highlighted a number of additional behaviours and attitudes of their fellow South Africans which induce feelings of shame. According to an interviewee the difference between right and wrong was something that has left the consciousness of South African citizens causing them to be "undisciplined" as "people in South Africa have no sense of discipline and have strayed away from what is right".[56]

The behaviour of the youth of country with regard to alcohol abuse and teenage pregnancy was also portrayed as shameful. "Teenage pregnancies are common in South Africa and are a disgrace. Teenagers drop out of school because of these pregnancies and it further leads to poverty, a high rate of crime and alcohol abuse." Connected to this were the influence socio-economic standards have on alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancies and poverty. During the interviews a number of interviewees stressed the "ridiculous set-up" where the Government pays out a certain grant for pregnancies, consequently creating the wrong perception, "as this is actually a drain on State funds and the economy".[57]

Another attitude of South Africans that was remarked upon was the fact that they do not know and embrace their culture. Specifically, was the way in which people no longer acknowledge their Africanism as "they are adapting to modern attitudes to the extent that they are forgetting their roots, which in the long run, contributes to being clueless about their culture and heritage".

South Africa's climate, culture, and nature reserves, specifically the 'Big Five',[58] have always been the focal point of tourism in the country. However, rhino poaching has increased exponentially in the last few years.[59] For the participants this was a shameful and sad situation as "South Africans do not honour the animals that make South Africa what it is". Rhino poaching was particularly prevalent with people "just going around killing the rhinos to make a quick buck". To some of the interviewees this "disappointing and sad situation" was damaging the economy, wild life and tourism and the country

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56   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interview, Respondent 1, October 2013.
57   M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 2, 3 & 10, October 2013.
58   The term "Big Five" refers to the five of Africa's greatest wild animals – lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo and rhino.
59   M Appel, "Rhino slaughter climbs to 249", *The New Age*, 30 April 2013, p. 3.

"cannot afford to lose the Big Five".[60] These statements and interviews illustrated the disappointment in the behaviour of people that were contributing to the eventual extinction of the diverse animal life in the country.

"First country to get knocked out": Shame towards South Africa's national soccer team

Sport, particularly in South Africa, was envisaged to play a major role after 1994 in uniting the different population groups and would also act as a significant reconciliatory role. This was emphasised specifically during the 1995 Rugby World Cup that was hosted in South Africa.[61] The hosting of the soccer World Cup event in 2010 in South Africa again played an enormous role of bringing unity among South Africans. However, the disappointing performance and end results of the South African soccer team have evoked disappointing emotions within the broader public.

For the students this was a disenchanting outcome where South Africa was the first country to get knocked out in the first round of the group stages. Statements such as "disappointment and embarrassment", as well as "a disgrace" were uttered. The participants stated their disillusionment by mentioning that promises have been made that have not been fulfilled, since the national soccer team has not been able to win any major event since hosting the 2010 World Cup.[62]

Concluding remarks

It became evident from the research that shame is indeed related to failure in not reaching goals and internalised social standards, including standards of morality and competence and in not living up to a certain set of standards of excellence. In evaluating shame as a South African citizen connected to past events, the students used a social standard of morality and/or competence perceived and/or imagined by themselves to weigh up not only themselves as

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60 M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1, 4, 7, 8 & 9, October 2013.

61 Take for example the opening speech of former President Nelson Mandela at this World Cup series where he used the rugby match as a political platform to invoke national pride amongst South Africans. H Dickow and V Møller, "South Africa's 'rainbow people', national pride and optimism: a trend study", *Social Indicators Research*, 59, 2002, pp. 198-199; South Africa.info, "Rugby in South Africa" (available at http://www.southafrica.info/about/sport/rugby.htm#.Ul5h7x03uE4, as accessed on 16 October 2013).

62 M Oelofse and E Vries (Private Collection), interviews, Respondent 1 & 10, October 2013.

citizens, but even more so for South Africa as a country and how they and the other(s) perceive the country regarding its history that may cause shame. In the process, shame as a self-conscious emotion forms a mirror that reflects the contrast between set standards and what is, in reality, experienced. Negativity, even if only slightly experienced, is a debilitating emotion when judging the past and the present situation in the country.

The sample of university students at the UFS Bloemfontein campus does reveal that as South Africans they share some collective memories and collective shame in their national identity when judging the past. Collective shame is shared among all ethnic groups regarding the far-reaching legacy of apartheid, the poor educational system, the inefficient Police Service and the lack of leadership in governance, accompanied by the shameful behaviour of the current president of the country.

The fact that the past of the country is, to a great extent, connected with present-day South Africa makes this research extremely valuable as there is barely an aspect of life that is not still influenced by past occurrences. From the results of the research it became evident that the events that increase shame within the students are a very real issue in the South African context today as experienced by themselves and/or portrayed in different media forms and publications. Thus, shame here is visibly based, which corroborates the fact that shame is more strongly connected with vision. From a contemporary perspective, the negative legacy of apartheid with its influence on inequalities, the current leadership in the country, to a deep concern about safety and security; the participants expressed their shame as experienced visibly in the country. In all of this, one cannot then ignore the influence and importance the different media forms and publications have on shaping the self-conscious emotion of shame within the students.

Another important aspect of the research is that the students, who were predominantly born in post-apartheid South Africa, throughout highlighted mainly contemporary historical events that have occurred in South Africa, thus emphasising both personal and collective shame. Their historical consciousness and memory is limited to current past events and they are not really portraying an in-depth knowledge of distant past historical events. Apart from a superficial knowledge of the history of apartheid; of specific historical events that happened during the apartheid period; and of two historical role-players in the liberation struggle; their discussions were dominantly focused on the present affairs in the country that were judged as inducing shame.

It is also questionable how exact and in how much detail their in-depth knowledge is about the history of apartheid. Consequently, the historical consciousness and memory of these students embodied more recent events that have occurred and had relevance to and a bearing on the country. Thus, the historical consciousness and memory of the students were more closely focused on the present than on the distant past as they are still historicising the present and do not necessarily think in terms of historical consciousness, i.e. how the past informs the present. This is a serious matter to be taken note of by History lecturers at tertiary institutions.

Even though these students did have a historical background as obtained during their school years up to Grade 12, their historical consciousness seems limited and in a certain sense absent. It is also important to bear in mind that many of the learners who studied history at school after 1994 were exposed to perspectives of a non-white viewpoint of the past which may have an influence on their inclination of remorse/shamefulness in certain situations. These matters will definitely have an influence on how they perceive historical events taught to them, as well as how they will engage in the future in discussions of a historical nature. Moreover, some of these students will be future teachers of History and their shame, or absence thereof, may have an impact on the way in which they teach the subject.

The domination of these contemporary issues that were highlighted reflects a partial historical consciousness from the students. However, it may also portray the importance of these contemporary issues on the country. The contemporary issues emphasised by the participants illustrate the challenges the country faces, and the negative effect they may have on the overall attitude and behaviour of its citizens. The issues stressed showed a profound insight into the state of affairs in the country at present. The historical consciousness of the students is limited to a few historical events which clearly highlight the lack of knowledge students possess about the history of the country. Nevertheless, it also portrays the urgency of the contemporary challenges in the country that manifest shameful emotions in the students as citizens of the country.

It was confirmed by the results that the experience of collective shame is unmitigated when placed in the social context of an out-group audience. The person feeling shame feels exposed; he/she experiences shame as seen through the eyes of another. In this case, it was the international community's views on the country and the previously mentioned shameful events which harm

the image of South Africa in the outside world. The participants were very conscious of the country's international reputation which evoked intense feelings of shame.

Regarding the link that exists between shame and the tendency to blame others, the participants focused on the issue of 'who should be blamed' for the shameful emotions mainly on, among other things, the previous apartheid government, as well as the current government and corrupt politicians; the inefficient Police Service responsible for the lack of safety and security; the weak educational system; poor economic opportunities accompanied by inequalities and unemployment.

The history of South Africa has undoubtedly a bearing on the present-day political and social culture of its citizens' identity. This historical legacy influences their identity position in the social context as either shameful, or not. It is self-evident that this will have a major influence on how future narratives of the country's history mirror feelings of collective self-esteem that will result in the self-conscious emotion of shame, as well as other self-conscious emotions. Thus, feelings of shame and collective shame connected to identity positioning will continue as an immutable process among the citizens of the country.

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None for this supplementary issue due to the bulky contribution by researchers on the Free State Province history. The December 2016 issue will include book reviews.