

**SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE WAYS B-TECH
STUDENTS THINK ABOUT REFERENCING AND RELATED CONCEPTS AS A
LITERACY PRACTICE**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The literature shows that many university students, both globally and in South Africa, do not understand what fully constitutes referencing and why referencing is important in their scholarly journey and in academic institutions. As a result students neglect referencing in their academic work. It has been documented that poor referencing practices, or lack of referencing, might contribute to the persistent rise of plagiarism in higher educational institutions all over the world. I have observed similar trends among our B-Tech students at the University of Technology where I lecture. B-tech students seem to battle to understand the importance of referencing and as a result their assignments are not referenced even though students have been at the university for more than three years. These observations spiked an interest in me to explore the reasons behind this persistent issue. Therefore the aim of this study was to investigate the socio-educational and cultural factors that might influence the way students think about referencing and related practices beyond textual issues. The main reason for looking at these socio-educational and cultural factors is related to the South African diverse cultural and educational context. South Africa has eleven official languages, varied cultural beliefs and value systems, wide-ranging schooling systems in spite of the demise of apartheid, and its people have different socio-economic statuses, and political interests. Therefore, I considered that these differences need to be taken into consideration when dealing with issues of unintentional plagiarism and poor referencing skills in universities.

After ethical approval, fifteen third year and B-Tech (fourth year) students from one of the University of Technology (UOT) campuses in South Africa, and with varied cultural value systems, varied educational schooling backgrounds, and varied home language backgrounds were chosen to participate in the study, using a heterogeneous purposeful sampling technique. Data were collected using face-to-face in-depth semi-structured interviews. Transcripts from the interviews were analysed using elements of Grounded theory.

The results show that, despite their different cultural and schooling backgrounds, the majority of the students in the sample had never been exposed to formal instruction on referencing skills in high school. Their first formal referencing training was at the university. The students felt that the training provided at our UOT was not in-depth, practical or extensive enough. Furthermore the students reported that the reading and writing practices in high school were limited to memorising and regurgitating chunks of text from authoritative texts without necessarily being encouraged to acknowledge sources of information. The students were used

to being given all the information considered necessary by teachers in class, and therefore saw no need to search for information themselves. Based on these findings, the following recommendations are suggested: lecturers at our and other higher education institutions need to be cognisant that critical reading and writing, referencing and its related practices might be an unknown concept and practice for new students joining the university. Lecturers therefore need to provide a more detailed and comprehensive training on referencing and its related concepts. In addition, higher educational institutions should provide extensive training for lecturers on referencing, on how to teach referencing, and how to provide informative and developmental feedback to the students.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BEA	Bantu Educational Act
B-Tech	Bachelor of Technology
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
GTC	Grounded theory coding
UCT	University of Cape Town
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
NLS	New Literacy Studies
USA	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom
WC	Western Cape
EC	Eastern Cape

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Public schools

Public schools are those schools that are fully funded by the South Africa government and where there is no fee payment expected from the students that are enrolled at the school.

Model C schools

Model C schools are those schools that are funded by the South Africa government and a fee-paying school parent. They are sometimes referred to as semi-private schools and were previously white only schools.

Private schools

Private schools, also referred to as independent schools, are defined as privately owned schools that are not funded by the South Africa government. They are a fee-paying schools.

Related concepts to referencing

Concepts related to referencing include practices such as a citation, a reference list, bibliography, plagiarism and academic writing skills and practices.

FOREWORD

I would like to share my background educational experiences as these have influenced my interest in conducting this study.

I completed my matric at a rural school in 1994. This means that I completed my primary and secondary education under the Bantu education system just as South Africa transitioned to a democratic state. My school was in one of the rural homelands formerly known as Transkei and established by the apartheid government. My experience while studying in this rural school under the Bantu Education system included being exposed to rural and ‘traditional’ cultural values and norms which dictated the culture of learning and teaching in the school. These values are usually very strict and encourage students to be respectful followers rather than leaders in their daily social interactions. I also observed that the ways to show respect at the rural school I was at included keeping quiet and absorbing all information provided to you by your teachers without interrupting the teacher: the fewer questions from students the better. Listening uncritically to a person who was seen to have more authority than us was considered a sign of respect. Dependency on the authority figure, the teacher, was therefore promoted and no critical thinking or use of own voice was encouraged. Therefore, for us students, words like ‘argue’, ‘debate’, ‘analyse’, and ‘criticise’ were foreign concepts that needed to be learned. Any voicing of your own opinions that might be different from those of your leader or elders was not welcomed. Reading books was not encouraged and there were no available libraries nearby.

‘Theory’ tests were the preferred way of assessment in my school. I do not remember ever doing an assignment where I was required to go and find a variety of different books and write up about a particular concept, using my research and my own voice. In our class we mainly concentrated on learning what was in the textbooks provided in preparation for tests: classroom spot tests or scheduled tests as well as end of term and end of year examinations. As a result, ‘knowing’ the prescribed textbook thoroughly was seen as a sign that you were intelligent. This ability to parrot the textbook guaranteed one’s success. Answering questions in a test using the exact words as they appeared in the textbook was considered the best way of showing your knowledge and intelligence. As a result, I struggled with the concept of referencing, academic writing, including use of ‘own voice’, and plagiarism when I got to university.

I am now a lecturer at one of the Universities of Technology in South Africa. During the time I have been lecturing here I have observed some of the students in my class exhibiting similar behaviours to mine when I first entered university. Students tend to place complete trust in their superiors (lecturers and tutors), and to passively and uncritically accept the information provided to them. Students do not question or engage with the knowledge provided. They passively accept it in the form that it is presented. They battle with academic writing and their work is not referenced, even after a form of ‘training’ in this has ostensibly been provided by the university.

My own experience, and my observations of students in a similar predicament to mine on entering the university, sparked my interest in exploring the question of whether and to what extent socio-cultural values and education background in the South African context influence how students think about and approach referencing and related concepts.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Despite efforts to minimise plagiarism and to improve referencing skills among students, trends of plagiarism are prevalent and continue to influence schools and universities worldwide. International scholars such as Heckler and Forde (2014), Gullifer and Tyson (2010), and McCabe (1999), have all indicated that students are not fully aware of what constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism in South Africa is also a persistent concern. South African scholars, such as Louw (2017), Threart and Smit (2012), and Sentleng and King (2012), conclude that the majority of South African students are not fully aware of what constitutes plagiarism and concepts related to plagiarism, such as referencing, and as a result, they continue to plagiarise. Scholars including Louw (2017), Heckler and Forde (2014), Sentleng and King (2012), Gullifer and Tyson (2010), and Lea and Street (1998) identify reasons why students plagiarise. These reasons, among others, include poor referencing skills, time management, poor writing skill, lack of understanding of what constitutes plagiarism, dissatisfaction with how information on plagiarism and referencing is disseminated to the students, and high workload.

These scholars have not to date considered the socio-cultural and educational background contributing factors that influence how students think about referencing and related concepts as a literacy practice. However, scholars such as Introna et al. (2003), Burnette (2002) and Angelil-Carter (2000), identify some socio-cultural factors that can influence literacy practices. All of these scholars identify poor language proficiency as one of the contributing factors to plagiarism. For example, Angelil-Carter, a South African scholar, states that novice writers, especially those who do not have an adequate understanding of the English language, are usually socially far removed from the academic discourse; as a result, they might have difficulties using their authoritative voice initially in academic discourse. In fact, most South African students who enter university are not proficient English speakers. They usually have one or more home languages, and for them English is an additional language. As a result, they

might struggle with academic discourses initially. Academic discourses, such as academic writing and referencing, constitute a number of interrelated skills. For many students, mastering these skills when English is not your home language is difficult. Consequently English second or third language users might be inclined to unintentionally plagiarise or to resort to what are considered by the academic establishment and/or higher education institution as inappropriate text borrowing practices, as they do not have a sufficient choice of words to be able to summarise, paraphrase and integrate information efficiently and in an acceptable way in English (Angelil-Carter, 2000).

What Angelil-Carter suggests regarding poor language proficiency, and its influence on plagiarism, needs to be considered in a South African context due to the level of language diversity. However, it is also important to remember that South African students do not only battle with English language proficiency; they also come from an unequal education system in terms of level of education, unequal socio-economic statuses and varied cultural value systems. Underprivileged students from rural public schools might need more assistance with academic discourse compared to students from well-resourced urban public or private schools. Therefore, understanding the influences of educational background on students' approach to referencing in the South African context is vital for those in higher education who wish to find a sustainable solution to students' difficulties in mastering academic discourse and to support them in sensitive and holistic ways.

My interest is similar to that of some of the international scholars I have explored, such as Handa and Power (2005), Introna et al. (2003), Currie (1998), and Pennycook (1996) in terms of looking at the cultural factors that influence plagiarism. However, these studies have usually been conducted in an international 'western' university, such as universities in the UK or USA or Australia. These are universities that admit foreign students, such as Chinese, Indian and other students. My study focuses specifically on the factors which influence students' referencing and related concepts. These are factors based on the varied and unequal South African educational background systems grounded in the unequal political history of South Africa, varied unequal language use in terms of which particular language is valued the most in our education system, and varied ethnicity and cultural beliefs systems. . Moving forward, let me start by explaining what referencing, and plagiarism is, and how this integrates with academic writing and the discovery of one's own voice.

According to Neville (2007:1), referencing is “a practice of acknowledging in your own writing the intellectual property of others’ work”. It is a given that referencing is essential in academic writing. Irvin (2010:10) offers a comprehensive definition of academic writing: “Academic writing includes conducting a research enquiry on an unknown subject, identifying meaningful parts of the subject, and then, based on the interpretations, arguing how these parts fit or do not fit together”. He continues to explain that this process of evaluating information includes gathering, analysing, interpreting and synthesising data from different sources with the audience or reader in mind. This suggests the importance of precisely recording the origin (source) of the information used in the argument (the reference), as this allows the reader to validate an argument. There are many other benefits attributed to referencing; these include giving other scholars an opportunity to evaluate the available literature for themselves and, in the process, develop their critical reading skills. Moreover, referencing distinguishes academic texts such as the journal article from other forms of writing. In addition, most scholars will have more confidence in a referenced academic text than in an unreferenced text as it is assumed that other scholars in the field have critically reviewed the referenced text (Mertens & Baethge, 2011). Referencing is one of the important factors which serve to prevent plagiarism.

“Plagiarism involves stealing someone else’s idea, language and creativity and its negative consequence is strongly emphasised in higher education institutions” (Williams, 2002: n.p). What I understand from this definition is that in the academic world the use of language in writing, creating new arguments, and creating new ideas and new knowledge is important, and that one needs to learn all possible strategies for the correct ways to avoid plagiarism. Heckler and Forde (2014:61) concur with William’s definition, when they say plagiarism essentially involves copying other individuals’ work without attribution. These authors see plagiarism as occurring in a number of areas, such as technology, art, lab work and textual work, and plagiarism as being from journal articles, books and lecture notes. This implies that plagiarism can occur across all disciplines. The definitions above do not include comment on intentional and unintentional plagiarism. However, Leask (2006) does mention intentional or deliberate plagiarism. Leask defines plagiarism in terms of deliberately taking others’ words and ideas and using them as your own. This implies that a person who deliberately plagiarises knows exactly what they are doing and is in fact making a choice to steal someone’s work without referencing this, hoping not to get caught out. Mertens and Baethge (2011:550) also clearly differentiate between intentional/deliberate and non-intentional/non-deliberate plagiarism.

They indicate that “plagiarism is a referencing error where the source of information is intentionally omitted by the author”. However, if someone is intentionally removing the referencing then it cannot be referred to as an error, unless they have no clear understanding of the role and importance of in-text referencing within the referencing process. Based on my own and others’ experience, it is my view that students may omit sources of information or unintentionally plagiarise if they lack referencing skills and lack understanding of the significance and importance of referencing. This suggests that proper acquisition and valuing of referencing practices is one of the necessary components students need to develop to help minimise their tendency to plagiarise.

Developing in students proper referencing skills can equip them with a number of essential academic literacy skills and practices: appropriate citing of information, awareness of different styles of referencing, and the ability to find information, to analyse it, and to interpret it. Furthermore, Hutchings (2013:1) mentions that “in referring certain ideas to certain sources the writer is equipped with the ability to distinguish voices of others, and therefore allow for the establishment of their own individual voice”. Thus, when reading vast amounts of information in preparation for academic writing, one needs to be able to create an argument using other’s voices as well as your own voice. This can be achieved through referring to others’ texts and through practice. Using your own voice is one of the crucial skills needed in academic discourse, and referencing is a crucial part of this process.

One expects that, by the time students reach their third year of study, they would be equipped with substantial academic literacy skills such as referencing. However, from my observations as a lecturer, B-Tech students at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) continue to battle with understanding the importance of referencing. Although these students have been at the university for three or more years, they continue to ignore all exhortation and encouragement to reference their work. Although referencing skill is intricate and requires time, effort and attention to acquire, one expects that, by the time they reach fourth year level, students will have acquired the skill/practice. Given that referencing is crucial for students’ success, both while at university and in their future academic pursuits, there is a need to explore the reasons behind their failure both to see its importance and to acquire this skill.

1.2 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

My observations have been that B-Tech students at the Wellness Sciences department at CPUT tend to pay little or no attention to referencing and to the consequences of failing to do so, such as plagiarism. The majority of the B-Tech students' assignments are plagiarised. Although to my knowledge students attend six two hour academic literacy classes during their first year orientation, classes which encompass referencing, by the time they reach B-Tech, which is a fourth year level course, they still seem to lack understanding of the value of referencing and why referencing is important as a literacy practice in higher education. Students show a very relaxed, cavalier attitude and lack interest and motivation with regards to referencing and related concepts. This is in spite of the fact that students are given a marking rubric for each project which outlines how referencing is to be marked/assessed and are made aware of the preferred referencing style for all their assignment projects. While this process is intended to serve as the reminder about the importance of referencing throughout their three-year diploma, there seems to be no improvement in their referencing practices, not even by their fourth-year level of study.

When I have had discussions with lecturers in the department of Wellness Sciences, they complain constantly about students' inability and unwillingness to take the concept of referencing seriously. Lack of strategies, such as inclusive pedagogical methods, making referencing mandatory, together with unclear guidelines within the department concerning ways of dealing with referencing, has led to a vicious cycle of frustration and blame, with yet more students being accused of plagiarising. There is also no concrete direction or support system on how referencing should be taught or developed in an ongoing way, or whose responsibility it is to teach referencing, and how to keep students motivated to keep using the referencing practice after they have learnt it. Lastly, there are no guidelines on how to equip the lecturers themselves with adequate skills to teach accurate referencing to the students. This huge task is in the end left solely in the hands of the lecturers. Each subject lecturer then deals, or attempts to deal, with the issues differently in terms of how they teach it, and how they enforce it. One of my concerns is that, since there are no clear guidelines provided to lecturers on how to develop students' referencing skills, there might be inconsistencies in the way the lecturers themselves think about referencing and that these different variations could further confuse students.

I also observed that most of the documents given to the students, such as study guides, programme guides, and project guidelines seem to focus on two issues: Firstly, students are told to reference using a certain style of referencing and it is taken for granted that this is their responsibility. Usually, there is a small booklet in the library that students can buy or can access on the website. Secondly, they are warned about the consequences of plagiarising. There is no explanation concerning the origins of referencing, how referencing came to be so important in higher education, its benefits to the student, and its value in academia. Furthermore, there is no in-depth discussion or conversations between students and academics about how the student will benefit from honing her referencing practices. Students are usually told to read these documents by themselves at home, and it is taken for granted that they will do so and will absorb the information. Reference to the documents is only made if a student has committed a transgression. Unfortunately, the use of the documents in this manner does not consider the students who come from different backgrounds, and who might have different levels of understanding with regards to referencing practices.

I am of the view that literacy practices, such as referencing, besides being a language issue, are also linked to the graduate attributes that the higher education institutions of learning want our students to have when they qualify, as mentioned in the CPUT teachings and learning report (2016-2017:63). For example, ethics and academic integrity are some of the stated valued attributes in higher education. Ethics and academic integrity are often linked to accurate acknowledgement of used information and therefore avoidance of plagiarism. Plagiarism is often categorised as an unethical way of behaving in higher education institutions. This is especially important in academia, as writing and publication of research papers, presentation of research information at conferences, and completing a dissertation and thesis are among the most important measures of achievement for academic staff. Students should therefore be made aware of these facts and criteria and take on the responsibility to learn and acquire these practices, and lecturers should be prepared to support them in this process.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of my research is to explore and develop an understanding of how background socio-educational and cultural factors influence how B-Tech students think about referencing and related concepts as a literacy practice. The main purpose of this study was sub-divided into the following objectives:

- To explore the socio-educational background factors that influence how B-Tech students think about referencing and related concepts.
- To explore socio-cultural factors that influence how B-Tech students think about referencing and related concepts.
- To investigate when and how the B-Tech students were initially formally introduced to referencing and related concepts.
- To investigate how this affected the way they think about referencing.
- To investigate the B-Tech students' views and perceptions about the importance of referencing.
- To explore students' understanding of what constitutes referencing.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question is: what background socio-educational and cultural factors influence how B-tech students think about referencing and related concepts?

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 2 provides a detailed literature review about referencing and related concepts.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed description of the research design and the methodology procedures utilised in this study. The chapter discusses how the Grounded theory research design was applied within the interpretative paradigm. The qualitative approach used in the study is discussed in detail in this chapter. Also described and discussed are the sampling technique, data collection technique, and data management and storage as statistical analysis. Ethical considerations arising from the study are also discussed here.

Chapter 4 outlines the presentation of the results and includes a discussion of these results based on the existing reviewed literature.

Chapter 5 provides conclusions and recommendations based on the results and interpretation of the results.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an in-depth literature review on referencing and related concepts, and how these relate to students from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds, taking into consideration the objectives of the study. Firstly, based on the literature I have reviewed, I present a detailed explanation and survey of the range of concepts related to referencing, including plagiarism, and citation. Secondly, I discuss studies done that look at students' understanding and perception of referencing and its conventions, both before they enter university, and when they are students studying and writing in higher education institutions. Thirdly, I discuss certain textual and socio-cultural and educational factors that contribute to both plagiarism and poor referencing skills amongst students, with specific reference to those entering a higher education institution.

I discuss the key theories underpinning the study. These include Gee's (1990) theory of discourse, Street's (1993) ideological theory, and McKenna's more recent (2010) bridging the gap theory. Gee's (1990) discourse theory is of particular importance to the context of the current study. His definition of Discourse with a capital 'D' as being a socially acceptable association between and amongst ways of using language, thinking, believing and valuing that identify oneself as a member of a social group has important application to the context of this study as the B-Tech students who constitute the population of the study come from different social and educational background associations. From the time they enrol at the university, they attempt to adapt to a new and unfamiliar social association in terms of referencing and other literacy practices, where the ways of thinking, believing and valuing are different to those with which they have been familiar, or which are for them entirely new and unfamiliar. These students, in attempting to identify themselves as part of the new association, find that they need to think and act in ways that are acceptable to the new social group. Street's (1993) ideological model supports and builds on that of Gee (1990). Street argues that literacy cannot be perceived as located in the individual, but is inseparably linked to cultural and power structures in the

society, and that this must be taken into consideration when dealing with students from diverse cultural and educational contexts. McKenna (2010) suggests that sometimes students bring into the education institution literacy practices that are unacceptable in the particular context. These students continue to struggle in the new context if they fail to figure out the ways of doing that are socially acceptable to the particular context. As my research objectives indicate (Chapter 1), my interest in this research was to investigate those socio-cultural and education factors that influence the ways these students perceive and think about referencing. The previous chapter mentioned several authors, such as Chien (2014), Introna, et al. (2003), Angelil-Carter (2000) and Pennycook (1996) who have written about the possible existence of certain underlying contextual factors that might contribute to reasons why students do not value referencing and related concepts. I unpack some of these authors' approaches to understanding the reasons behind poor referencing and plagiarism among many university students.

2.2 REFERENCING

Neville (2010:1) defines referencing as “a practice of acknowledging in your own writing the intellectual property of other’s work that has been presented in some way into the public domain”. He points out that it takes enormous amounts of time, hard work and effort for a researcher to prepare and present their work in the public domain. In this process, researchers have to find, critically analyse, interpret, and synthesise information in order to create a new idea or argument. Therefore, it is imperative for scholars to reference others’ work. This referencing of other researchers’ work demonstrates recognition, respect and honour for others’ efforts and hard work that may have taken them years to compile and complete.

Some of the great benefits of referencing mentioned by Neville (2010) are not apparent to students when they first join the academic world. These benefits include: sharing of evidence based information with other scholars, the improvement of academic writing skills, the development of an ability to handle vast amounts of information and to distinguish your own and other’s voices in an argument, the ability to use the technical referencing skill accurately, and lastly, a chance to identify yourself as a member of a social group that shares similar values in terms of academic literacy Discourse. These benefits are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

As mentioned earlier, referencing is a skill that allows students and academics to accurately share information with each other in a manner that encourages knowledge building in the academic community. Neville (2012:2) makes this point clear when he says referencing is important as it helps “to facilitate collective development and transmission of academic knowledge”. This knowledge is not subject to one individual’s opinion, and does not simply involve gathering information from one or two textbooks. Wallace and Wray (2011:9) say that “knowledge building and development encapsulate interpretation, using existing information to inform the future or make predictions about the future”. This knowledge building is essentially supported by evidence and is critically reviewed by other scholars. Referencing in academic writing is therefore not only essential, but also beneficial to both the writer and the academic community as it allows scholars to critically evaluate and share information that has been rigorously reviewed by other scholars. Mertens and Baethge (2011) point out that a referenced academic article distinguishes it from other forms of writing, such as journalism, and gives its content a particular authority, as it has undergone laborious review by other scholars and is supported by literature. They also state that in academic writing referencing is the usual and acceptable way of showing that one has interrogated the literature and is giving other scholars an opportunity to test the rigour of the new argument. Pearl and Shields (2008) agree that referencing is beneficial to academic writers as it shows that they have read widely on the subject and analysed others’ writings. These views on the benefits of referencing in academic writing present a robust reason why referencing is a significant feature in academic writing.

Another benefit of referencing emerging from the literature and from practice, is that it exposes students to vast amounts of text, and to a vast range of ideas, theories, hypotheses both within and outside of their fields. Thus, as Neville (2010; 2012) points out, students and practitioners need to use the knowledge selectively, creatively and critically to create a new argument, idea or theory. Collating, integrating and synthesizing vast amounts of text and ideas is an intimidating process and difficult for novice writers, as it requires of them the ability to both use their own voice and recognise others’ voices in their own argument. The concept of critically evaluating knowledge and creating a new argument is a foreign one for many novice students. Hutchings (2013) states that the concept of argument is dominant in the academy and that new ideas and arguments need to be supported by authoritative evidence and multi-voiced argument. She maintains that the practice of referencing contributes greatly to the emergence of voice in students’ academic writing. By referring certain ideas to certain sources, students

learn and put into practice the skill of using others' voices and learn to identify and use their own voices in their arguments.

Additionally, the practice of referencing equips the student with the technical skill to reference precisely and according to agreed-upon rules in the academy, allowing other scholars an opportunity to find information easily. It is thus crucial for the writer of the article to ensure that the references in the article are formulated precisely and accurately (Mertens & Baethge, 2011). Pears and Shields (2008) also emphasise the importance of precision and detail of all sources that are used in a piece of academic writing. This will make it easy and quick for other scholars in the field to access the information. The technical referencing skills therefore need to be learned and practised by students on a continuous basis in order for them to learn and fully acquire the skill.

However, Neville (2007) claims that, although referencing is an expected academic practice in higher educational institutions and has huge benefits, some students find this practice to be laborious and uninteresting for various reasons. Firstly, when students come to the university for the first time, some of them have never been exposed to referencing. Therefore, assuming and expecting that students know about referencing and its importance in the academic Discourse is a mistake. Secondly, Neville (2007) says that students have to cope with different and unfamiliar styles of referencing while also dealing with different varieties of interpretation and application by teaching staff, and these need explicit training and more clarity on implementation of the academic integrity policies. Lastly, as Srikumar, (2010) says, research, which often begins with a holistic review of the literature, and often requires advanced citing practices, is difficult for new students to comprehend initially when they come to the university. Based on the above information, while it is clear that referencing is an important factor in all academic writing activities, in my experience, convincing students that referencing is important is a momentarily difficult task that needs to be addressed daily.

Therefore, to address the students' reluctance and lack of interest in referencing, various scholars have made different suggestions. Neville (2010) made the following suggestions. Firstly, the practice of referencing needs to be mandatory for students; these practices need not be enforced in a legalistic manner but made mandatory in an environment that promotes and encourages learning. Secondly, students need to be encouraged and convinced to see referencing from different perspectives rather than just acknowledging others' work. Realizing

the many ways in which they personally benefit from learning how to reference might convince them to learn how to do it. Secondly, other scholars, such as Lea and Street (1998), were concerned that students do not understand the relationship between plagiarism and accurate referencing and that this should be made clear to students. They also felt that the emphasis of a lot of the feedback on students' writing was placed on plagiarism in a legalistic Discourse rather than in an educational Discourse. This trend of focusing on legalistic discourse is evident in most of the CPUT documents that address plagiarism. For example, the assignment marking rubrics, as well as the plagiarism declarations, are often written in an ultra-formal and threatening manner, including the threat of losing marks or facing other unknown consequences. Other documents, such as the programme guides and learner guides that are given to students, are limited to defining what plagiarism is to explaining the consequences of plagiarism. The CPUT policy defines plagiarism and warns students about the consequences of plagiarism as follows: "Committing plagiarism is not acceptable to CPUT, and there are serious consequences for any person who is found guilty of plagiarism" (CPUT policy, 2015). While these warnings might be necessary, what these documents lack is the emphasis on the benefits and the importance of referencing and of avoiding plagiarism in the students' academic writing. They also lack any sense of promoting a learning environment for students. Therefore, the benefits to students of referencing which I discussed earlier, as well as the suggestions listed above, need to be considered in the quest to win students' interest in, and enthusiasm towards, referencing and all related academic literacy practices. Looking at the history of referencing and its origins might enlighten the students about the background culture and context of referencing and in this way make it easier to convince them of the importance of the new unfamiliar and difficult practices for the benefit to their studies as a whole.

2.3 HISTORY OF REFERENCING

Grafton, (1997:72) traces the history of referencing from long before the 19th century, when some historians of the Jews, Eusebius and early Christian churches used footnotes to cite official documents, such as treaties. Footnotes were later used in textbooks as a form of referencing, where original authors of documents could showcase their credentials in their own work (Neville, 2007). However, footnotes could not perform all the functions that most writers and readers expected in terms of standardisation and accessibility. Nevertheless, they gave the document authority, as they gave an impression that the writer had done his best to find the out truth about an event. Later, the invention of printing in the fifteenth century perpetuated and

reinforced the need to cite text, as the information was readily available, and anyone could simply say they were the originators of the information. Individuals who were earning a living from their writing skill and talent became more concerned about others stealing their ideas and using them as their own. They were proud of their work and there was considerable value attached to it for them. As a result, the issues of respect, honour, honesty, integrity in the world of writing became significant (Neville, 2007). Consequently, on the 10 of April 1710, the “State of Anne”, the first copyright Act in the world was formulated. Its role was to offer protection against piracy of published work. Additionally, to make it easy to locate text, the standardisation of referencing using styles of western origin, such as the well-known Harvard style (Chernin, 1988), Vancouver style (Clever, 1997) and other styles of referencing were adapted from the footnotes (Neville, 2007:3). The importance of valuing individuals’ efforts and hard work is therefore an old western custom and practice that is still practised to date in academic institutions in South Africa, and worldwide, through recognised referencing practices.

It is also essential for students to be aware that different countries view referencing and related concepts differently. Students would then be able to reflect on their background education and cultures and how these might be affecting their perception of referencing, and how these need to be addressed in order for students to qualify as acceptable members of the dominant academic Discourse (referencing and related concepts) at the university. There are countries and cultures characterised by individualism, which takes the form of competition, self-reliance and personal achievements. Prime examples of such countries would be the United States of America (USA) and the UK, where respect for copyright is usually strong (Hampden-Turner & Trompnaars, 2000). Neville (2007:4) points out that “In some other countries, however, people tend to be more willing to sublimate their individuality for the benefit of the community as a whole”. In South Africa, apart perhaps from those of European descent, the cultural values of all ethnic groups tend not to be characterised by individualism, and as a result, those students who are not ‘white’, or mother-tongue English speakers, might need to be aware of the differences between cultures in order to accept the new ways of doing at the university. This point is further discussed under the philosophy of “Ubuntu”, which is of crucial importance in South Africa concerning cultural values.

2.4 REFERENCING AND RELATED CONCEPTS

In order to fully understand the process of referencing and what gives it value in academic writing, the following concepts related to referencing processes are clarified: reference list, bibliography, and citation. A 'reference list' is the list of references at the end of a document that the writer has read and cited in the publication or any academic writing. A 'bibliography' is the list of all cited and uncited references at the end of the document that the author has read in preparation for a project or any academic writing. Neville (2010) points out that a bibliography can be important as it can alert the reader towards those scholars who influenced the arguments even when they are not specifically cited in the body of the text. Before compiling a bibliography or a reference list one has to consider citation as well, which is a vital part of referencing. Eaton (2013) and Koshal (2011) define citation, or in-text referencing, as source/s that are mentioned by the researcher in the body of the paper or project. Citation includes the name of the author and the year of publication and, if the researcher quotes directly from the source, they need to include page numbers as well as quotation marks.

In referencing, all these concepts mentioned above play an important role. In my observations have shown that students seem to think including a reference list only is sufficient as a way of referencing, while others think that citing the document itself, or in-text referencing, is enough and that the reference list is not necessary. This is, however, untrue according to the accepted practice and function of both citation and listing of references; citation or in-text referencing, for example, “help position the students’ current research within the existing state of knowledge as well as support claims made in their own research writing including findings, interpretations and recommendations” (Mansourizadeh & Ahmad, 2011:152). Students fail to understand that, without the citation, the reader would not be able to tell the difference between the students’ argument and those of other scholars. Samraj (2013) suggests that this intertextual interlinking of the student’s own voice with those of others’ in academic writing is the hardest part, and that making a critical and credible connection between what a student did and what is already done is not an easy task; it requires an ability to be able to look at the bigger picture. This is a difficult skill to master, and if students disregard the citation part of referencing they miss an opportunity to learn how to cite and how to use others’ texts effectively. Furthermore, Mansourizadeh and Ahmad (2011) propose that novice writers need to be trained on how to effectively and strategically utilize various citation types and functions to write persuasively. The literature suggests that in-depth understanding of the role and purpose of each step in the referencing process (Citation, bibliography and reference list), and how all these contribute to

the academic writing Discourse, is important to students' confidence in referencing correctly. In-depth understanding might improve a student's confidence, and she/he might begin to identify herself/himself as a member of a social group (academic social group) that was not familiar to him/her before. Furthermore, another concept essential in academic writing, and related to referencing, is plagiarism which is discussed in detail below.

2.5 PLAGIARISM

The literature reveals that plagiarism is difficult to define in simple terms. Most scholars attempt to provide a simple definition of plagiarism. Lathrop and Foss, (2000), for example, provide a simplified working version of plagiarism. They say if one did not think of an idea, did not write it on one's own, and did not cite the sources where one found the ideas or words it is probably plagiarism. Neville (2007) acknowledges the difficulty of defining plagiarism as the elements of unintentional plagiarism are contextually complex. He however attempts to define plagiarism in simpler terms when he says that plagiarism is knowingly taking and using other's work and claiming it directly or indirectly as your own work. Hu and Lei (2015:234) state that plagiarism is often associated with such judgmental labels as deception, cheating, academic crime, intellectual dishonesty, and moral failure. These terms suggest that plagiarism is a simple issue that has a clear-cut boundary and situates students within the "binary of honest or dishonest" and "ethical or unethical". However, these simplified definitions do not address the issue of unintentional plagiarism based on context or cultural variation among students.

The literature suggests that there are other socio-cultural, educational issues that can lead a student to plagiarise beyond just intentionally or knowingly plagiarising. Other scholars acknowledge that plagiarism is an intricate concept to define. For example, Angelil-Carter (2000) indicates that plagiarism is a difficult and complex concept to define; the notion of intentional and unintentional plagiarism makes it subjective and even more difficult to explain. She states, however, that the etymology of the word plagiarism is gives a clearer idea of the concept than the definition. Providing the etymology of the word plagiarism, Barnhart (1988:801), cited by Anglil-Carter (2000), "says the word plagiarism was derived from the Latin word *plagarius* which means (Kidnapper, seducer, plunderer, literacy theft), from the word *plagium* (kidnapping) and from *plaga* (snare, net)". The original meaning thus suggests that, when students plagiarise, they are committing a crime, they are thieves and are unethical. However, as Angelil-Carter (2000) argues, there is more to plagiarism than identifying all

students as thieves. This is especially true in South Africa where students who register at the university come from varied socio-economic and socio-educational statuses. This points to the need for plagiarism to be evaluated more carefully and sensitively, taking into consideration a range of different contextual factors.

Other scholars, such as Vance (2009), Valentine (2006), Handa and Power (2005), Currie (1998), Pennycook (1996) and Scollon (1995) share comparable views to those of Angelil-Carter (2000), as they also disagree with the simplistic notion of plagiarism and suggest that plagiarism is a more complex, multidimensional phenomenon affected by a variety of issues such as culture, politics, context, historical, social, ideological, and language conditions. For example, based on studies conducted in China and Hong Kong, Pennycook (1996) points out that second language educational issues, the concept of author and authority in academic writing, and cross-cultural relations that emerge in educational context need to be taken into consideration when dealing with plagiarism cases.

Although Chinese culture might be different from South African culture concerning values, beliefs systems, and educational system, it is possible to argue that some characteristics identified as possible influential factors on students' tendency towards plagiarism in Pennycook's (1996) study are similar to those affecting South African students. For example, South African home languages are different from the traditional language of instruction – English - in most South African universities. This may lead to students' lack of language proficiency in understanding what is taught and in their academic writing. As a result, students might be scared to paraphrase or summarise a text for fear of changing its meaning. Their word vocabulary might be limited. Also memorisation, a common pedagogical tool in many South African schools, is sometimes used as a language learning tool when students do not understand the language and its context. In this case a student would then write the memorised text without referencing it, without realising that this is unacceptable. Pennycook (1996) argued that, although we need to consider criticising unacceptable text borrowing practices, gratuitous accusations are unnecessary and egotistical. In my understanding, Pennycook is not suggesting that second language speakers should not face the consequences of such actions concerning plagiarism, but that, rather than adopting the pedagogical and penalty approach to plagiarism, lecturers should accommodate the cultural differences among students.

Scollon (1995:23), one of the scholars who advocates for the consideration of culture in literacy practices, also argues that the “concept of plagiarism is fully embedded within a social, political and cultural matrix that cannot be meaningfully separated from its interpretation”. Valentine (2006:89) supports Scollon when he says, “plagiarism is a literacy practice that involves social relations, attitudes and values as much as it involves text and rules of citation”. What is clear from this discussion is that we can better prepare students for writing in a variety of situations if we teach plagiarism as a form of negotiation. The work of negotiating plagiarism is also the work of negotiating the identity of the study, says Scollon (1995). For example, when students come to university and are introduced to referencing and related concepts for the first time, they do not yet identify themselves as part of the academic group. However, as they are gradually accepted as part of this group, and given explicit knowledge in a learning-promoting environment, they might start to identify themselves differently: as academic writers. Understanding the political, cultural, historical and educational backgrounds of South Africans is therefore essential in order to identify and understand possible contributing factors to poor referencing skills and plagiarism among South African students.

2.6 THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

To fully comprehend the effects background education might have on the literacy practices of students in South Africa, I briefly discuss the political history of South African education. McKeever (2017) indicates that South Africa is continuously classified as one of the most unequal countries in the world in terms of education, arguing that it represents both a developed and a developing country within one country (McKeever, 2017). The observation and categorization made by McKeever could be attributed to the history of apartheid and racial segregation in South Africa.

McKeever (2017) dates the inequality in the South African educational system from the colonial era. Philips (1999) reported that in the early 19th century, public schools that were government authorized allowed people of all ethnicities to attend these schools. He described how, later in 1822, government established schools that excluded non-white students. At the time the prevailing theory of government was that White people needed to be educated to be able to manage employed labour, while Blacks needed minimal education, so they could fulfil the role of dominated labour (Philip, 1999). As a result, the apartheid government later created and entrenched an educational system and policies that segregated racial groups. The racial

groups were divided into Whites (which included Afrikaners and English speaking South Africans), Indian, Coloured (South Africans with mixed ancestry, usually Dutch, Malay, African and Khoisan heritage) and a Black education system (Rakometsi, 2008). In apartheid ideological terms the education system offered to the Black, Coloured and Indian child needed to be inferior to that of the White child. The Black education system was further divided into ten ethnic groups/departments that corresponded to the ten Bantustans or homelands (Ciskei, Transkei, Bophuthatswana, KwaNdebele, Gazankulu, KaNgwane, KwaZulu, Qwaqwa, Lebowa and Venda) (The Homelands, 2018) that were established by the apartheid government. The Xhosa lived in Ciskei and Transkei, the Zulu in KwaZulu, the Basotho in Qwaqwa, the Pedi and the Ndebele in Lebowa, the Tswana in Bophuthatswana, the Venda people in Venda and the Shangaan and Tsonga in Gazankulu (The Homelands, 2018). The rationalisation for this was that the division created and respected cultural and social integrity.

In the quest to achieve segregation, in 1953, under the leadership of the National Party, the Bantu Education Act (BEA) was passed. The aim of the BEA was to ensure that White people dominated Black people and designated the Black person as an inferior human being (Gool, 1996). Black schools were under-privileged, under-resourced, and rigidly controlled (Rakometsi, 2008). Blacks had no say in the planning and implementation of the BEA.

Rakometsi (2008), Jessop and Motala (2004) and Gool (1966) describe the pedagogical practices and hierarchies of power relations promoted by the Bantu education apartheid system. These practices included “rote learning framed under the authoritarian ethic of obedience and control”, a key pedagogical practice in all Black classrooms (Jessop & Motala, 2004:24). Children were required to be obedient and to accept the authority of the teacher without question, and teachers in turn needed to be obedient to their masters, the apartheid government, without question. Moreover, educational resources, such as books, desks, and infrastructure were unequally distributed. Children in black schools/ Bantu schools/ tribal schools were deprived of the right to own their own books and were not allowed to take books home. They had to share one book with four or five other classmates within a limited time period. The apartheid system provided a well-resourced system for the White child and a poorly-resourced system for the black child. Additionally, distribution of teachers was unequal. White schools had a significantly lower learner-educator ratio than did black schools as well as coloured and Indian schools. Also, under apartheid, home language/ mother-tongue instruction was associated with inferiority and racial ghettoization (Alexander, 2000:17 cited in Jessop &

Motala 2004). The government enforced mother-tongue instruction up to standard 6 (Grade 8) in line with Christian National Education (CNE) (Rakometsi, 2008); however Blacks wanted to learn English and become part of Western civilization and obtain similar opportunities as the White learners. Later, from Grade 9, learners were forced to learn in English or Afrikaans as the Language of learning and teaching (LoLT). This meant that a Black child needed to learn three languages by the time she/he matriculated. Lastly, teachers under the Bantu education system were firmly under the control of the government. They were poorly trained and underpaid, and many required no more than a standard 6 (grade 8) to enter a training course to become a primary school teacher. They were constantly overburdened with large classes, and were subjected to spontaneous visits by government inspectors who ridiculed them in front of their learners. Gool, (1966:1) – prophetically - reported at the time that “The bitter price that the African child has to pay and is paying today will be felt for generations after”. There is no doubt that these factors came at a price, as they did not prepare the Black child or a teacher under Bantu Education for the future, or for competing on an equal footing in the labour market, or for real world problems, and therefore the damage done was to affect generations of black people.

After the establishment of the first democratic government in 1994, it was hoped that education transformation, redress and redistribution of resources would be achieved quickly. Unfortunately, dealing with the damage caused has proved a daunting task for the 1994 democratic government. Jessop and Motala (2004) looked at the transformation and redress progress ten years after democracy and identified the many challenges: after ten years of democracy the process of transformation of teacher-training sectors to prepare teachers for a different and more democratic understanding of pedagogy remained incomplete. This has meant that teachers who were trained under the Bantu Education system continue to use the teaching methods of the past, producing similar students to those produced during the apartheid system. Democracy did not offer a quick or equitable distribution of resources. The government came to realize that educating an underprivileged child with multiple socio-economic challenges needed more resources than initially thought. Although there was some progress in terms of resource distribution, after ten years of democracy the process remained far from achieving redress. For example, the problem of unfair personnel distribution was unsolved after ten years of democracy. The government did not offer more educators to service learners with greater socio-economic challenges. Redress posts that had been created were left open and had not been filled by 2004. The more experienced and well-trained educators

remained in more privileged schools. Furthermore, although the South African Schools Act (SASA, 1996) and the DoE's Language in Education policy (1997) all supported promotion of the equal use of all eleven South African official languages as languages of learning and teaching (LoLTs), and promoted multilingualism in schools, the implementation of language policies was left to individual school governing bodies (SASA, 1996). In 1999, five years after democracy, some schools had not developed a language policy, even when there was a change in the language profile of the learner. This meant that a Black student would still need to learn and be taught through Afrikaans and English as dominant languages and would often not have an opportunity to learn or be taught through their own mother-tongue at school, even in the Foundation Phase. Educator language proficiency and parent preference for "higher status" languages (English and Afrikaans) influenced schools' decisions about what language to use as the LoLT. The vast majority of schools opted for English as a main language of instruction. In South Africa, English is the main language of instruction even though English is a home language for only 8.2% of South African (StatsSA, 2003:14).

Unfortunately, as Jessop and Motala (2004) reported ten years after the implementation of the new measures, transformation was far from being achieved as planned, as the depth of problem inherited by the democratic government was too huge. Jansen (2005:10) identifies glitches in the transformation process when he says, "that former Model Cs continue to use language policy, admission policy or teacher appointment processes to retain the dominant culture and clientele at the school and that the governing body of these schools thwarted the transformation process". Bloch (2009) says that the apartheid legacy in education lives on in South Africa. The poor continue to get poorer education. Bloch (2009) reports that, after 22 years of democracy, Black and Coloured schools are still left under resourced. In his book "The Toxic Mix" Bloch (2009) argues that South Africa continues to promote unequal and poor quality education, with the poor and unemployed experiencing the worst of this. He classifies the South African education into two systems. One system he calls the "second economy" schooling system. This system includes poor township and rural under-resourced schools. Poor and unemployed citizens send their children to these schools, and as a result, the production and reproduction of underprepared students who cannot compete with their fellow South Africans is perpetuated. The second system is that of the privileged former mostly white model C schools who uniformly produce better results than the rural or township marginalised schools. This second system currently produces the vast majority of university graduates. This shows that, despite democracy and the hope it represented, a vast education inequality

continues to prevail in South Africa. This is one of the reasons I wished to explore those socio-educational factors that might influence how students coming from Bloch's first system perceive and think about referencing.

2.7 THE SOUTH AFRICAN DIVERSE CULTURE AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF "UBUNTU"

South Africa is a very diverse country in terms of culture, socio-economic status, educational differences, and cultural norms and behaviour. Students who come to register at CPUT come from different home language backgrounds, a range of different social beliefs and value systems, and from different educational systems. I have touched on the complexity of language and education already. However, I also think understanding the cultural value and belief systems of students entering university is important in this study. For example, in South Africa the concept of "Ubuntu" is highly valued among many of the country's cultures. "Ubuntu" is derived from the Nguni (isiZulu) aphorism "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" which means a person is a person through other people (Lefa, 2015). The "Ubuntu" philosophy is community-based and socialist in nature, unlike the individualistic nature of western culture, and is applied by most cultures in South Africa and other parts of Africa (Khomba & Kangaude-Ulaya, 2013). This means that whatever is done must benefit everyone in the community not just one individual. "In African culture authority flows from the old person to the young person and respect is the guiding principle" (Khomba & Kangaude-Ulaya, 2013:680). This means that younger people are automatically expected to treat an older person as superior regardless of rank and education. With this information about African culture in mind, I am interested in understanding how these various cultural values and beliefs, which are markedly different from those of individualised western culture - the culture that holds sway over higher educational institutions - influence how many South African students think about referencing in the context of respect for authority, for example. I continue to discuss studies done on socio-cultural factors that may influence plagiarism and related practices.

2.8 SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE PLAGIARISM AND POOR REFERENCING

The focus of this study is to explore the socio-cultural and educational factors that influence how South African students think about referencing and about the concepts related to referencing. As has been mentioned, South Africa is a highly diverse country in terms of

culture, ethnicity, language, socio-economic status and its political and education systems. As a result, students come from home and school environments that offer different levels of academic support and different attitudes towards academic literacy practices. This is in fact a global issue. For example, Pecorari and Petric (2014) and Vance (2009) conclude that cultures around the world have varied views regarding the attribution of other people's work in one's own scholarly work. It has therefore been interesting for me to review the existing literature on these views, and to explore the findings of other scholars (nationally and internationally) who have evaluated specific socio-cultural and educational influences on literacy practices such as plagiarism, academic integrity, and referencing.

Scholars from international universities which admit foreign students have extensively investigated the role of socio-cultural differences on how students view plagiarism. For example, a study done by Handa and Power (2005) investigated and compared the understanding of plagiarism of both postgraduate Indian students who were currently studying in Australia (and had Indian university undergraduate degrees) with postgraduate students currently studying at the Indian university (with Indian university undergraduate degrees). Handa and Powers' study aimed to explore possible cultural and educational factors that might contribute to differences in understandings of the notion of academic integrity and plagiarism among these students. Other studies, such as that of Hu and Lei (2015), Chien (2014), Gu and Brooks (2007), Introna et al. (2003), Currie (1998) and Pennycook (1996), have a similar focus to that of Handa and Power (2005). However, these scholars investigated the various influences of cultural background education on Chinese students' perceptions and understandings of plagiarism. Introna et al. (2003) also look at the cultural background of Greek, Mauritian, Chinese, UK and Indian students and the cultural influences on the instances of plagiarism and related concepts amongst these respective groups of students. While all these studies were done in international universities, my study is looking at investigating if, and to what extent, socio-cultural factors and the history of inequitable educational backgrounds has an influence on how South Africa students think about and perceive referencing and related practices. Some South African scholars before me have also investigated the socio-cultural factors influencing academic literacy practices among university students. These scholars include Lumula (2017), Hutchings (2013), McKenna (2010), Verstrate (2006), and Angelil-Carter (2000).

Mckenna (2010), for example, in her article 'Cracking the Code of Academic Literacy', shows concern for the poor literacy practices that many students bring to the university. She says that

those students who bring unacceptable academic literacy practices to the university are likely to struggle or even to drop out. This is a concern, especially considering the long history of unequal education in South Africa, with some students bringing with them the advantage of a privileged background education and some students coming from a poor educational background. McKenna (2010) is of the view that in South Africa we should celebrate when students make it to university. She goes on to say that we should celebrate even more if the student is black. She says this because of the low participation rate of students accessing university (McKenna, 2010). According to Scott, Yeld and Henry (2007), despite the widening of access to university post 1994, major discrepancies between students of different ethnic groups are still evident in South Africa. For example, the gross participation rate for Black and Coloured students in 2005 (ten years after democracy) was as low as 12%, while the participation rate for White people was 60% and for Indians was 50% (Scott, Yeld & Henry, 2007:10). Additionally, McKenna identifies some background educational and social factors that might contribute to students' unacceptable literacy practices and their subsequent failure to complete their qualification. These factors include a schooling system that produces underprepared students. This is especially so in the South African context where, as has been described, other contributing factors, such as the history of Bantu education, an unequal schooling system, and unequal distribution of resources, are strong influences. McKenna also points out that some students are exposed to a world full of crime and violence as well as HIV and Aids, and that these factors may also hinder progress and affect students, and their academic performance, negatively. As a result universities continue to produce a relatively small number of graduate students, with the graduation rate for black student even lower (Scott, Yeld & Henry, 2007).

Hutchings (2013:1) identified possible educational and social factors that might influence adults students' "authorial identity" in their academic writing, their ability to use voice in their academic writing, and their understanding of the reasons behind the importance of referencing. These influential factors include students having gone through the apartheid and colonial system of education, a system that was transmissive rather than constructive, with little focus on academic literacy skill development (Hutchings, 2013:3). Most of these students had not done much academic writing by the time they reached postgraduate level of study. These factors would obviously have a negative impact on the progress of these students in terms of new and unfamiliar academic literacy practices and the potential for them to drop out of their courses would be high.

Furthermore, Angelil-Carter (2000) states that usually the socialisation novice writers receive in terms of their cultural or educational backgrounds has not included academic discourse, especially for those students who do not have a good understanding of the language (English), and, as a result, they might have difficulties using their authoritative voice initially in academic discourse. This might be especially true if one considers the South African history of segregation and unequal educational opportunities. She uses the phrase “alien words” to express the difficulty and unfamiliarity students experience when using academic writing for the first time. She argues that, when students finally decide to try using their own voice, they might continue to use a lot of the authoritative voices of others in their own writing. South Africans especially might struggle with using their own authoritative voice or recognizing others’ voices in their own writing, as they may have grown up in homes where they have to speak a different language to that required at school and in a higher education institution. South African students start learning English at different levels, depending which school system they have been exposed to. For example, some students only start school at age five or six, especially in rural areas. They only start to learn English, which is the main LoLT, when they start school. Furthermore, depending on the choice of school, some students go to schools where the content is explained through their mother tongue if the teacher understands the mother tongue. This might delay the development of the needed language (English) and might lead to difficulty using their own voice in their academic writing. The same would apply to using memorization as a dominant form of learning for theory tests. Angelil-Carter (2000) goes into detail regarding language issues when she talks about the role of formulaic language in second language acquisition. She says that when a person is learning a new language (English and academic Discourse), the person does not have a sufficient choice of words and therefore summarising, paraphrasing, or detection of different voices when reading an article is difficult.

One international scholar who shared similar views to those of Angelil-Carter regarding second language acquisition is Currie (1998). Currie (1998) did a case study on a second language student writer in Canada. Currie (1998) observed that the student’s lack of English language proficiency affected her understanding of the content and made application of knowledge and textual borrowing difficult. Even after teaching assistant guidance and teaching assistant feedback there were still signs of plagiarism in the writing of the student. While the student did eventually pass her studies, Currie observed some unacceptable textual borrowing practices in the student’s writing that she got away with. Language proficiency evidently plays a crucial

role in academic writing. Therefore, one needs to be careful not to hastily and haphazardly accuse students of plagiarism without looking at the contextual factors, as suggested by Pennycook (1996).

Another international study that established that lack of language proficiency could have undesired effects on academic discourse is that of Chien (2014). Teachers who were interviewed in a study by Chien (2014) indicated that Chinese students battled with writing in English. Consequently, they used rote learning and memorization of large texts as an important way of showing intellectual superiority and for language development. Chinese students in Chien's study regarded reciting texts as a main contributing factor to students' success in language learning. In contrast to the beliefs of these Chinese students about the benefits of reciting texts, the teachers who were interviewed in the Chien (2014) study saw this Chinese learning style of memorization and repetition as a reason why students plagiarise.

Chien's 2014 study revealed that language proficiency among second language students is not the only socio-cultural issue Chinese students in the study needed to address. For instance, some text sharing practices that are acceptable among the Chinese community, might be seen as unacceptable in western culture that mostly governs higher educational conventions globally. These Chinese conventions include, firstly, sharing of questions and answers with fellow students. The practice of sharing in this manner is due to the collectivist nature of the Chinese culture but is unacceptable in western dominated academia. Secondly, writing a project collectively or getting help from others without giving credit where it is due is also unacceptable practice in academia. Thirdly, Chinese students favour taking exams in a multiple choice format and/ or blank filling and therefore miss the opportunity to learn about referencing. Chien saw these learning styles as being another possible contributing factor to plagiarism amongst Chinese students. Lastly, the use of textbooks to provide recited answers to questions in examinations is accepted in the Chinese education system, and this could be limiting in terms of academic writing as the students are not encouraged to access other sources (Chien, 2014:131). Reflecting on the Chinese students' cultural background, and how it influences their learning styles and academic literacy, has made me reflect back to similar practices that I experienced and participated in in my own background education. Based on my experiences as a student in rural schools, I see some similarities to these Chinese students with regards to the style of learning, language difficulty, struggles with using my own voice, and examination preference. Although the African culture is in many respects different from

Chinese culture as mentioned earlier, there are similarities in terms of a collective and socialist culture between the two cultures. Therefore, the main aim of this study is to explore those socio-cultural factors that might influence South African UOT B-Tech students' way of thinking about referencing and related concepts.

2.9 UNDERSTANDING AND PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS REGARDING PLAGIARISM AND REFERENCING

There seems to be a common trend among many students at various different South African universities, and universities in different countries, concerning their understanding and perceptions of plagiarism and referencing. Students seem to know how to define the term plagiarism but have a problem explaining the concept at a deeper level, or have a problem understanding how plagiarism relates to academic writing and referencing. In addition, many students feel that there are no clear guidelines and clear structures within higher educational institutions concerning the teaching of plagiarism and the consequences of plagiarism, and making plagiarism policies mandatory. Consequently, many students are worried that they might plagiarise unintentionally because of their poor understanding of the concept.

In relation to understanding what constitutes referencing and plagiarism, for example, many scholars, such as Heckler and Forde (2014), Gullifer and Tyson (2010), Neville (2009), Lea and Street (1998), and Ashworth et al. (1997) show that, except for verbatim parroting and simple definitions of plagiarism and referencing, students lack clarity concerning what fully constitutes plagiarism. Students in a study done by Lea and Street (1998) were found to lack clarity with regard to the relationship between plagiarism and correct referencing. This trend is concerning as students need to understand the relationship between referencing, plagiarism, and academic writing in order to succeed in university. Other issues, such as appropriate text borrowing and use of voice, have been identified as a serious concern in academic writing. Moreover Neville (2009) reports that panic, and an emphasis on plagiarism in UK education, have created a situation where emphasis on when and how aspects of referencing are mostly valued has been at the expense of principles underpinning referencing, particularly in the development of authoritative identity in academic writing.

While textual borrowing is a necessary skill at university level, it is very difficult to master. In the studies done by Gullifer and Tyson (2010), Lea and Street (1998), and Ashworth et al. (1997) students mentioned that they battled with the issue of ownership of text and text

borrowing or intertextuality. Students in the Lea and Street (1998) study did not feel that they were ready or capable to use their own voice in an authoritative text. Another example of this is demonstrated in the Gullifer and Tyson (2010:470) study when one student asked, “If I think it is my brilliant idea, do I have to actually go somewhere and check whether I have stolen it from someone else?” This question clearly illustrates the confusion with regards to identification of the student’s own voice and of others’ voices in a text. As a result of all these confusions students are concerned that they might plagiarise unintentionally or accidentally because they lack the skill of borrowing others’ texts appropriately. Therefore, how students are taught and introduced to referencing, plagiarism, and academic writing needs to be approached with accurate and precise training and guidelines.

However, many studies seem to indicate that there is a gap in terms of how these literacy concepts are taught and implemented at higher education institutions. Lea and Street (1998) suggested that tutor authoritative behaviour towards students when trying to reinforce or enforce plagiarism does not yield the desired results. Their study showed that this authoritative behavior, mainly used without proper guidelines, took away from the teaching and learning aspect between tutor and students. This suggests that the students were not happy with the unclear and intimidating ways of enforcing plagiarism, and required explicit teaching of exactly what constitutes plagiarism, a finding which agrees with the suggestion made by McKenna (2010). Furthermore Lea and Street (1998) noticed that the institutional documents, such as assessment regulations and notices on the notice board, were used to caution students against plagiarism itself and focused mainly on the legal consequences and disciplinary actions and were couched in “legalistic discourse” (Lea & Street, 1998:168). The delivery of plagiarism information is not unique to the Lea and Street (1998) study. Other studies, such as those of Sentleng and King (2012), Gullifer and Tyson (2010), McCabe (1999), and Ashworth et al. (1997), show that merely providing access to a plagiarism policy document is not helpful in combatting plagiarism. The information is often vague and difficult to process for some students. Gullifer and Tyson (2010) report that the students in their study felt that when they come to the university at the beginning of the year they were usually bombarded with a lot of information on plagiarism and related academic concepts and were given no time to learn and absorb the information properly. Gullifer and Tyson (2010), similarly to McKenna (2010), suggest that information on plagiarism and other literacy practices needs to be made explicit in an environment that promotes learning, and that the common sense assumption on the part of lecturers that students will access the information on plagiarism on their own is

unfounded. Students in the Gullifer and Tyson study felt that providing online access to the plagiarism documents was not enough, as it did not promote in-depth understanding of the academic writing and plagiarism concepts nor how to apply these in practice. Exposing students to documents that merely warn them about the consequences of plagiarism might not be beneficial for novice students who have not yet begun to understand why referencing is important for them personally. Furthermore, according to Manathunga and Goozee (2007), there is an unspoken assumption amongst lecturers and tutors that undergraduate graduates are able to, and bear the responsibility to, transform themselves magically into independent critical thinkers and academic writers with minimal pedagogical input or support. This is however, untrue as the above mentioned studies have found that students need to be introduced to any new Discourse gradually, and to be fully supported. The alternative is that unsupported students will not have a full grasp and a uniform in-depth understanding of, or ability to apply in their own writing, the concepts of academic writing and critical thinking.

Sometimes contradicting views about the seriousness and unfairness of plagiarism have been noticed among students. In the study conducted by Ashworth et al. (1997), students felt that plagiarism was unfair, wrong and a bad practice. However, some of these students thought it was unfair only if it impacted their peers' work, but then again, they felt that if plagiarising was from a book it was not bad as plagiarising done by individuals who wrote the book were not on the same academic level or status as the student (Ashworth et al., 1997). This sentiment, expressed by a group of student participants, in itself is an indication of the extent to which students are not aware of the benefits of grasping the referencing concept and being able to use this skill in their academic writing and critical thinking for their own benefit. One can therefore argue that, in general, many students do not see the bigger picture; they only value the immediate gratification of receiving good marks. Another study done in South Africa by Sentleng and King (2012) to investigate plagiarism among 139 undergraduates found that 41% of the students felt that plagiarism was to be taken seriously. However, plagiarism was still evident within the department under study. Some students in the Gullifer and Tyson (2010) study felt that the penalties for unintentional plagiarism were too severe. These students in this study were aware that plagiarism is a serious offence and that it is unfair and unethical as a practice in terms of acknowledging other scholars' work, however they still chose to plagiarise anyway. One has to wonder what reasons drive students to plagiarise even when they are aware that the practice is unacceptable.

The reasons for plagiarism are sometimes intentional and in other instances unintentional on the part of the plagiariser. The following reasons, based on a study done by Sentleng and King (2012), for students' unintentional plagiarising might be considered: poor writing skills, lack of referencing skills, and never having been taught how to reference properly. These reasons, as mentioned above, seem to suggest that, if the students in the study had been afforded an opportunity to learn and acquire the skill they would not plagiarise. Students in the study conducted in the USA by Heckler and Forde (2014) blamed their faculty. They reported that the faculty did not explain the assignments clearly enough, that faculty's expectations were too high, the classes were too big and therefore monitoring systems were difficult or non-existent; some students felt that the professors did not care about this issue, thus providing the freedom for students to continue plagiarising. The students in this study were blaming the lack of proper strategies on the part of lecturers in faculty when dealing with plagiarism within departments.

However, the students in the South African study conducted by Sentleng and King (2012) also suggested reasons for intentional plagiarism, such as losing track of where the information came from. Students in Heckler and Forde's (2014) study also acknowledged that they sometimes plagiarised intentionally on the occasions when they had a problem with poor time management skills. In the Heckler and Forde study, and of relevance to the current study, the reasons for intentional plagiarism were also attributed to cultural value systems in the USA. Students identified the two most highly contributing values to plagiarism: individualism and freedom. The notion of individualism was made clear when one student said: "Our culture tells us to do whatever it takes to be successful even if it means cheating" (Heckler & Forde, 2014:68). Another student in this study mentioned the culture of intense competitiveness to achieve individual success at all costs, a culture which influences the criteria by which one's academic performance is judged:

There is a stronger emphasis on making sure that you are one step ahead of everyone else; hard work and self-knowledge has taken a back burner. Instead of valuing the process by which an education is obtained, and information learned through the process, our culture value of individual achievements means that rewards are based only on grades. (Heckler and Forde, 2014: 68).

The notion of freedom was also reported by students in this study to be valued. These students felt that now that they were no longer under the control of their parents they could do whatever they liked. It is however surprising to see that the same values that contribute to cheating and

plagiarism for some students were seen as counter-productive values by other students. For example, in the same study, some students felt that freedom to make one morally responsible choice was valued by some students. Individualism was also seen as a negative and harmful value by some students who observed those students who emphasised and valued individual merit. Based on the students' views Heckler and Forde suggested that:

... current emphasis on faculty grantsmanship, research and publication should be balanced with teaching function responsibilities that include faculty vigilance on academic dishonesty issues. The challenge of doing this is significant as institutions opt for larger classes, more online instructions and use of non-tenure track contract instructors to carry heavy enrolment loads" (Heckler and Forde, 2014:70).

What I gather from what Heckler and Forde are saying is that the allocation of roles and responsibilities to lecturers and tutors needs to be considered by faculty, as overloaded and overworked staff might battle to perform some duties essential to the development of students' academic literacy skills, including referencing, such as giving proper and useful/developmental feedback.

The way individuals act is sometimes influenced by the contextual and socio-cultural factors within which they live and act. It is therefore my goal to explore and to understand the nature of the socio-educational and cultural factors that might influence the ways in which students think about referencing. The theoretical framework that underpins my study and view of academic literacy practices in relation to context, and that I have deemed to be suitable for this study, is discussed extensively in the following section and is underpinned by the literature reviewed.

2.10 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Gee (1998:1) talks about "the social turn", a concept or process which identifies that there is a shift in research from focussing only on "individual behaviour" and "individual mind" to studying these behaviours and cognitive skills in relation to social and cultural contexts. Gee (1998) described how, in the 1990s, New Literacy Studies (NLS) represented this social turn. The views expressed in NLS were that individual behaviour and cognition in relation to literacy is best studied by taking into consideration the social and cultural practices of which they are a part (Gee, 1998). To try to understand the sociocultural factors that influence how the B-tech

students, who are the focus of the current study, think about referencing I use the following theories as a guideline: Street's ideological model (Street, 1993), Gee's theory of discourse (Gee, 1996), as well as McKenna's (2010) ideas on how to bridge the gap between acceptable and unacceptable literacy practices. The diversity of South Africa in terms of culture, politics, history, language, ethnicity, socio-economic status and educational systems has been described, together with the urgent necessity to look at the Discourse of referencing and related concepts among students. It would be both ignorant and irresponsible to assume that all students from such varied social structures and cultural backgrounds would have similar literacy skills and practices when they enter university. Some of these students might come in with literacy practices that are similar to those the university expects, and some might not. The theoretical approaches mentioned above all advocate for looking at literacy practices not only in terms of language but also in terms of contextual factors.

2.10.1 GEE'S THEORY OF DISCOURSE

When Gee (1990) defines discourse, he separates it into two concepts. Discourse with the little "d" and Discourse with the capital "D". Gee (1990:142) defines discourse with the little "d" "as language in use, connected by stretches of language that make sense, such as conversations, stories, reports, arguments and essays". This definition suggests that discourse with the little "d" mainly focuses on the language itself, as spoken by an individual, in terms of grammatical correctness or textual correctness or understanding of referencing and related concepts in technical terms. To explore and define Discourse with the capital "D", and relate it to my study, I use three illustrations used by Gee. Firstly Gee describes what he means by Discourse:

Discourse with the capital 'D' is not just about language or grammar it is about a combination of saying (writing) the right thing, in the right way, while playing the right social role and appearing to hold the right values, beliefs and attitude. (Gee, 1990:142).

Students in higher education institutions are, for example, expected to write their academic essays in a certain way, while following certain literacy practices, for these essays to be considered 'good' academic essays. However, as has been mentioned, most students when they come to university do not know or understand the required literacy practices.

Secondly, Gee (1990:142) describes Discourse as “a sort of identity kit which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instruments on how to act, talk, write, so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognise”. What is apparent in both these definitions is that, to fit into a particular Discourse, you need to embody a particular social identity and social role that identifies you as a member. An identity kit of “academic literacy Discourse” at the university for example, with specific reference to students’ referencing knowledge and skill, would involve accurate knowledge of referencing, believing and valuing the significance of referencing skill in academic writing, and having a positive attitude towards referencing and its role in the academic society and among other academic literacies. Thirdly, Gee (1990:143) suggested that another way of looking at Discourse is, as a “club” with “tacit rules” about how members ought to behave to be accepted as a member of the group. In order to be considered an acceptable member of the academy literacy club you need to read, write, behave, and think about academic literacies in a way that is acceptable and easily recognizable by other members of this club.

Furthermore, Gee (1996:131) amalgamated these three illustrations and came up with the following definition: “Discourse is a socially acceptable association among ways of using language, thinking, feeling, believing, valuing and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or social network”. This implies that, when looking at how students view literacy practice in higher education institutions, we should not look only at proper textual usage of language, but also at what other socio-cultural factors influence their behaviour/thinking and also what needs to be done for them to be accepted into the new Discourse. Thus a new student at the university has to follow certain ways of doing, in other words needs to be able to master certain literacy practices to fit in and to be successful (Gee, 2000). If the literacy practices that the student brings in are unacceptable to the university, the student faces considerable difficulty trying to understand and acquire these new practices (Gee, 1996). The question then is, how does one learn or acquire these new ways of doing? In order to answer this question Gee (1990) initially made a distinction between primary and secondary Discourses.

Primary Discourses are those discourses that are acquired in early life in a family socio-cultural context. They are usually acquired through trial and error and not in a classroom-teaching environment. Secondary Discourses are acquired as part of socialization outside the family context, in contexts such as in local churches, national groups, and institutions (Gee, 1990).

One individual can be a member of a number of different social groups that value different secondary Discourses and that form part of that individual's identity. These would include, for example, teachers, counsellors, and political activists. For example, literacy practices (secondary Discourse) that are valued and that identify a student as an acceptable member in high school might be different to literacy practices that are valued and identify a person as an acceptable member at the university. To acquire what we come by in life after initial enculturation, or after acquiring our primary discourse, requires a mixture of learning and acquisition, much like learning to drive a car. When learning to drive a car for the first time you learn the theory of driving a car; however, part of mastering the skill of driving is acquired as the individual continues to practise driving, and eventually they drive without even thinking about the theory. Similarly with referencing skill, a student needs formal training to learn about referencing; however mastering the skill of referencing comes when the student continues to practise and integrate this referencing skill with other valued academic literacy practices in the university. Hutchings (2013) deliberates that much practice and discussion might be needed before students see referencing skills as constituting a significant asset in their own writing.

Gee (1990) states that one does not get told about rules of the group in order to fit into certain social groups. Instead one gets apprenticed and accepted into a group of those who read and write in a certain way. Therefore, when students come into the academic institution for the first time, bombarding them with a set of rules about plagiarism and referencing might not yield the results we hope for. Instead, explaining these concepts, and showing the students how to use them in a certain way that is valued in the university, might help them acquire the skills. Some researchers, such as Street (1993), have shown themselves to be in agreement with Gee (1990). These are those researchers who have found dissatisfaction with, or have realized the limitations of, the autonomous model of literacy, which "conceptualises literacy in technical terms" (Street, 1993:5), and have begun to consider using the Ideological theory (described below) of Street (1993), which views literacy practices as linked to socio-cultural contexts.

2.10.2 STREET'S IDEOLOGICAL MODEL

Street (1993:1), in his introduction to *New Literacy Studies (NLS)*, describes the shift from the narrow individualist cognitive focus to a wider socio-cultural focus in literacy studies: "Anthropological and cross-cultural frameworks have been developed to replace literacies of the previous era in which psychologistic and culturally narrow approaches predominated".

These 'new approaches' are collectively referred to as the New Literacy Studies (NLS) (Street, 1993). As has been mentioned (2.10.1), previously psychologists and educationalists in their research and practice concentrated mainly on an individual child's acquisition of literacy skills and the cognitive process involved, while anthropologists and sociologists concentrated on literacy as a social practice (Street, 1993). In the 1990s the ideological model began to be seriously considered by those literacy researchers who saw the limitations of the autonomous model of literacy which "conceptualises literacy in technical terms" and treats it as independent of social context (Street, 1993:5). These researchers came to "view literacy practices as inextricably linked to cultural and power structures in a society, and to recognise the variety of cultural practices associated with reading and writing in different contexts" (Street, 1993:7; Gee, 1998). They then came to focus on studying these social practices rather than literacy itself (Street, 1993).

The ideological model does not completely deny the importance of acquiring a literacy skill and the cognitive aspects of literacy but looks at understanding the "cultural whole and within power and position" (Street, 1993:9). In the case of this study the power structures may be related to power structures in the students' primary Discourse, and power structures in the new higher education context to which the student is introduced, and how these two merge and how this in turn affects the student's ability to assimilate into this primary Discourse. The previous ways of teaching, learning, assessing, acquiring knowledge, and demonstrating understanding that some students bring to the university might be different to the new ways of teaching, assessing, acquiring knowledge, and demonstrating understanding in the new context. In addition, power struggles, or unequal power relations, can exist when students from marginalised societies who were not exposed to resources similar to those present in the new context find themselves at a disadvantage and having to catch up with and enter the primary Discourse of their more advantaged fellow students. These 'disadvantaged' students usually have to try to fit into the new ways of doing without proper guidance, and face intolerance and 'deficit' labelling by the institution for their lack of the required (assumed) skills. The term 'ideological' signals quite "explicitly that literacy practices are aspects not only of culture but also of power struggles" (Street, 1993:7). Street (1993) saw that literacy could no longer be addressed as a neutral technology, but is already a social and ideological practice, and includes major aspects of epistemology, power and politics.

2.10.3 BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE DISCOURSES

As has been mentioned, when students come to a university classroom, they bring with them literacy practices that are considered by the institution and academia to be acceptable or unacceptable for the particular context (McKenna, 2010). McKenna (2010) sees the success or failure of the student as being determined by the literacy practices she brings from school, her social and cultural background, and her previous qualification compared to the new qualification and the extent to which these have commonalities with the chosen discipline. McKenna (2010) goes on to argue that the probability is high that this student will never figure out the ways of doing of the discipline or higher qualification and will drop out. In my view, this student might struggle throughout the discipline for a very long time trying to figure out what academic literacy really means, constitutes, and why it is important in the new context.

Many students might be resistant to these new ways of doing and need much more persuading and convincing of the reasons for referencing being important and beneficial. Thus disadvantaged students might struggle to adapt to a context that does not tolerate errors made by these students (Leask, 2006). Therefore, as academics, we cannot assume that all students understand, or are convinced of the value of, the ways of doing in the academic institution in terms of academic literacy. It is my view that different accommodative strategies therefore need to be employed to assist and encourage these students to eventually fit into the new social context.

Currently the way referencing is taught, assessed, and enforced, particularly in my department, seems to follow the autonomous model of literacy practices and fails to take into consideration the students' background education, together with the cultural and political factors that might influence the way they think, behave, or value - or not - literacy practices. As has been described, students are given documents to read by themselves about referencing and other academic literacy practices. If, in the first place, the student does not understand the value of the practice, they might not read the document. This crucial factor influencing students' failure to reference properly therefore needs to be seriously considered.

What also needs to be considered is that the ways in which academics themselves think about and value referencing might be different to the way students think about and value referencing simply because the benefits and importance are clearer to, or taken for granted by, the academic

staff compared to the understanding of a fourth year level student who has never written an academic paper. As a member of the academic staff one is expected to have completed a masters and PhD, and to publish papers frequently. B-tech students on the other hand might not yet value this type of knowledge sharing. Thus students need to be sufficiently trained to come to grasp the fact that good literacy practices are beneficial to them as well as to academic staff and to the academic community. McKenna (2010:9) advocates for the importance of bringing these students into this Discourse community when she argues that our desire as academics in higher education is, or should be, to stand in the periphery (where these students are relegated by the institution) with these students who do not understand the value of referencing and make explicit to them the value of the academic literacy skill.

McKenna (2010) identifies other obstacles to helping ‘disadvantaged’ students to adapt to and master new ways of doing in the university. These stumbling blocks include, firstly, ensuring that educators have a clear understanding of academic literacy as a concept; secondly, academics may not be able to pinpoint the norms and practices associated with the academic literacies of their discipline that are essential for students’ qualification; these literacy practices are taken for granted, are so “encultured, they are considered as normal practices or common sense” (McKenna, 2010:10). Referencing in higher education is one of the literacy practices that is ‘encultured’ and considered easy and ‘common sense’ by many lecturers in higher education institutions. However, ‘disadvantaged’ students coming from a different socio-educational and cultural background to those, for example, from ex C Model schools, and who all too often struggle to understand why referencing is needed and therefore tend to plagiarise, will either be left without assistance or be viewed as dishonest.

Thus I would argue that the factors mentioned above might be contributing to B-tech students’ struggles concerning valuing referencing practices. The possibility exists that they are simply not able to recognise the value of this concept in their own discipline, which values practical work over theoretical work. What a fourth year B-tech level student expected on entering the university was a series of industry related theoretical and practical training (for example manual lymph drainage techniques) and did not anticipate that academic writing, using own voice, and compiling a research project using accurate referencing would in fact be the main component of the qualification.

2.11 CONCLUSION

Chapter 2 discussed the existing literature on referencing and related concepts such as plagiarism and academic writing. Research done by other scholars on the understanding and perception of students about referencing and related concepts was explored and discussed. The chapter reviewed research studies done on the various socio-cultural factors that have been found to influence students' understanding of referencing and related concepts. The main theoretical framework that underpins the study was discussed in detail. The next chapter describes and discusses the research design and methodology employed in the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research methodology used in this research study. I discuss the context of the research enquiry, the qualitative research approach, and the rationale for using this approach. The philosophical assumption, epistemology, and research paradigm underpinning the study are explained and discussed, together with the sampling technique, data collection techniques, development of the interview questions, data handling process and data analysis. Finally, I include a report and discussion of the ethical considerations for the study.

3.2 CONTEXT OF THE ENQUIRY

3.2.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

This study uses a qualitative research approach. A qualitative research approach seeks to understand a phenomenon by collecting subjective data based on the research participants' own opinions, views, and experiences of the situation under study. Savin-Baden and Major (2013) define qualitative research as social research which is purposed at exploring the ways in which individuals make sense of their ideas and experiences. This means that qualitative research is concerned with individuals' perceptions and how their unique social environments influence the way they experience and make meaning of various issues. Qualitative research thus relies on the experiences and views of the individual; it asks broad, general questions instead of specific and narrow questions (Creswell, 2008). This suggests that qualitative research is not focused on dichotomous answers; it focuses instead on comprehensive unrestricted answers about the experiences of others. Qualitative research collects data largely composed of words, and these words or texts are grouped into themes which emerge from the data during the data analysis phase (Creswell, 2008). For greater depth of understanding of my research topic I felt that the qualitative research approach was a more suitable choice for this kind of research project than, for example, the quantitative approach, as the participating

students would be able to relate their subjective experiences more profoundly and unreservedly in a face-to-face situation and without any restraints.

Creswell (2008) states that qualitative researchers are most interested in understanding and exploring how humans arrange themselves and their settings. They are interested in how individuals who inhabit “these settings make sense of their surroundings through symbols, rituals, social structures and social roles” (Creswell, 2008:53). In this study I wanted to explore whether, and in what particular ways, different educational and cultural background experiences influence how students think about referencing and related concepts. A university is a social setting that has its own institutional expectations and certain ways of doing concerning literacy practices. As a result, the possibility exists that students from different backgrounds would experience this new context differently based on their unique family, cultural and educational background experiences.

Qualitative research employs the emic (inside) perspective rather than the outside (etic) perspective (Maree, 2016). This means that the unique experiences of the participant are much more important in qualitative research than the experiences of the researcher. The emic perspective is explained further by Corbin and Strauss (2008) when they say that it allows the researcher to look at the inner/subjective experiences of the research participants. The emic perspective is the best option for this study, as the main aim of the study is to explore each student’s individual educational and cultural background experience and how these experiences influence their referencing practices when they come to university. Adopting this approach ensures that as the researcher I focus on discovering the experiences and perceptions of the participants and not on imposing my own experiences or views on the participants.

This study employs the more exploratory qualitative study design. Exploratory study design does not start with a fixed theory or hypotheses in mind; it is inductive in nature and works towards building a new understanding of the problem (Maree, 2016). Thus, I did not initially have any fixed theories about the possible background contributing factors to how students think about referencing. Instead the study used open-ended interview questions to discover and to better understand how social factors influence participants’ knowledge and perceptions of referencing and their attitudes towards it.

3.2.2 THE PARADIGM USED IN THIS STUDY

This study was undertaken using the interpretative paradigm. The interpretative paradigm endeavours to understand the subjective world of the individual experience and not that of the researcher (Cohen et al., 2007). Individual experiences are more valued in the interpretative paradigm, as each person's contextual experience is seen as being unique. This paradigm assumes a subjectivist epistemology and a relativist ontology. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:33) describe the nature of the interactive process of the subjective epistemology in research: "The subjective epistemology means that the researcher makes meaning of their data through their own thinking and cognitive processing of data informed by their interactions with participants". This suggests that, although the researcher is the one who interprets the data (interview transcripts in the case of this study), the interpretation of the data has to be informed by the participants' inside experiences, understandings, and perceptions. Creswell (2007) describes qualitative researchers as embracing the relativist ontology assumption that reality is subjective and that there are multiple realities as seen by the participants in the study. Scotland (2012:11) concurs with Creswell (2007) when he says that relativist ontology assumes that "realities are individually constructed and that there are as many realities as individuals". This means that each individual's subjective reality and views of one thing or one issue are different from those of other individuals and are based on their own experiences and how they make meaning of the world around them. For example, in the case of this study, students might have multiple realities with relation to referencing and related concepts, based on their own unique background experiences.

Interpretivism is sometimes referred to as constructivism as it emphasises the ability of the individual to construct meaning (Maree, 2016:60). As individuals, we are able to create our own individual and subjective meanings based on our background experiences and the social structures and beliefs around us. Two people can therefore view a similar issue differently based on what their own social and surrounding experiences have been or are. Constructivism aims, as far as possible, to find the 'true', uninfluenced realities and experiences of the participant. Thus the interpretation of these experiences by the researcher has to stay as close as is possible to the participant's intended meaning when she was expressing or describing this reality or experience.

3.3 SAMPLING DESIGN

3.3.1 PURPOSEFUL SAMPLING

For this study I chose to use purposeful sampling. In using purposeful sampling the researcher intentionally chooses participants or a setting to ensure that the sample covers the full range of possible characteristics (Katzenellenbogen, 1997). In this study, for example, my intention was to include participants from varied socio-educational and cultural backgrounds as I considered that they would be able to provide rich data concerning possible background influential factors on how students think about referencing. The chosen site of study was CPUT's Department of Wellness Sciences. CPUT is one of many South African universities that admits students from different socio-cultural and educational backgrounds. Initially the plan was to include B-Tech students who were registered in 2017. However, only eight students out of fourteen 2017 B-Tech students agreed to participate in the study. I then approached third year students who were planning to register for B-tech in 2018. Seven students from the 2017 third year class participated. Within this purposeful sampling design, I adopted the heterogeneous sampling technique. Heterogeneous sampling, also known as maximum variation sampling, aims to constitute a sample of participants with a maximum difference of experiences, views and perceptions about a subject (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Thus, this sampling technique was selected to encourage inclusion of students who came from different cultural backgrounds, schooling systems, ethnic backgrounds, and different provinces, and who spoke a variety of languages. I considered that this kind of varied sample could provide rich data based on the unique background education and cultural experiences of the participants.

3.3.2 SAMPLE SIZE

In order to gain rich, complex and in-depth data from a sample, Maree (2016) suggests a method he calls a funnelling approach. The funnelling approach is adopted by the researcher to purposefully select more participants than he or she is likely to need and to undertake exploratory interviews with all of them. The researcher then selects cases from those interviewed where rich experiences and detailed knowledge are more apparent or forthcoming. I attempted to follow Maree's funnelling approach recommendation, and approached all of the 2017 B-Tech students to participate in the study with the intention of including all of these students. However, only eight students out of a class of fourteen agreed to be part of the main

study. Three students who participated in the pilot study were not included in the main study. The rest of the students from the B-Tech class chose not to participate in the study. Due to the small number of students in the B-tech class in 2017, I approached third year students who wanted to register for the B-tech class of 2018 to participate in the study. Only seven out of ten potential B-Tech students for 2018 agreed to take part in the main study. Consequently, the study included a small sample size of fifteen students in total. The small study population made it difficult to fully implement the funnelling approach. However, Cresswell (2012) recommends the inclusion of fewer individuals in a qualitative study than one would include in a quantitative study. He says that the ability of the researcher to provide an in-depth picture diminishes proportionally with the addition of new individuals. Therefore in the end the small sample size turned out to be what was needed to obtain rich data.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE

3.4.1 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

A biographical questionnaire and an in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interview were used in this study to collect data. This form of data collection was chosen as it encouraged a discussion of a topic of mutual interest in a relaxed, open and honest environment, as suggested by Morris (2015). The open-ended interview questions were piloted using three B-Tech students to ensure reliability and validity. Piloting the interview questions helped establish whether students were able to understand the questions and how long it took to complete the interview. Changes were then made based on their feedback, and the final draft demonstrated the potential of the set of questions to provide rich information about the experiences of the participants. The interviews were then conducted using the improved interview questions. The interviews were recorded on audio tape with the permission of the participants. The participants were informed that the data might be published, and that their anonymity would be protected for ethical reasons, as advised by Corbin and Strauss (2015) regarding the ethical considerations pertaining to any research study (see Section 3.7).

During the interview, while I directed the discussion, the participants were encouraged to talk freely and to cover the topic in their own terms and from their own perspectives. As mentioned above, interviews are the best choice for data collection in this kind of study, when detailed information is needed about the individual and their experiences, perceptions, and views. The advantage of the interview, particularly one guided by open-ended questions, was that it

allowed me an opportunity to draw out detailed information in the course of discussion with the participant (Katzenellenbogen, 1997). The disadvantage however, was that the study was prone to social desirability bias as the participant might have felt obligated to provide answers they thought I wanted to hear, especially since I am their lecturer. Therefore, to build trust and a comfortable and more socially equal relationship, and to minimise the social desirability bias, students were informed before participating in the study that the interview was purely for research purposes and would not be used as part of their studies, or their assessment, at CPUT. They were also informed that their honesty and openness was important for the success of the study in line with what Katzenellenbogen (1997) recommends.

The biographical questionnaire (see Appendix D) provided important information about the participants, such as age, gender, ethnicity, the type of high school they attended, which province they come from, and home language. This helped me to determine the profile of the sample to ensure that the participants possessed the desired characteristics that supported the research question and the information required was guided by the purposeful sampling strategy. These details also provided an opportunity to establish whether there was a correlation between these characteristics and the attitudes the participants revealed towards referencing and related concepts. Students from rural public school in the Eastern Cape, for example, might have attended poor marginalised schools, or former Bantu education schools compared to a student who attended an urban public school or Model C school in the Western Cape.

3.4.2 STUDY SETTING AND PROCESS

As has been mentioned, this study was conducted at CPUT in the department of Wellness sciences. Initially information letters (see Appendix A), together with the informed consent form (see Appendix B), were given to the participants to read and sign once all information was fully understood. The informed consent forms were collected just before the commencement of each individual interview. Interview protocol (see Appendix C) consisting of open-ended piloted interview questions was used as a guide throughout the interview process. Each interview lasted between 15 minutes to 30 minutes. The interviews were done in a quiet locked venue to ensure that there were no disturbances during the process of the interview and that the participants felt comfortable and secure concerning privacy and confidentiality.

3.5 DATA MANAGEMENT AND STORAGE

The raw data collected was available only to my supervisor, to me, and to the individuals responsible for transcribing the interviews. However, the recorded interviews sent for transcription were coded to ensure the confidentiality of the participants, in accordance with the ethical considerations (Section 3.7). The coded transcribed information sheets were kept in my possession in a safe and locked cabinet at the CPUT offices. Information on the computer was protected by a password known only to me.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

For the data analysis I chose to use some elements of Grounded theory coding (GTC). GTC “means creating the codes as you study the data, the codes therefore emerge from the data”, in other words, the codes are not pre-planned (Charmaz, 1996:37). I chose to use two phases of GTC, namely, line by line initial coding as well as focused coding, also referred to as selective coding, as explained by Charmaz (2013:47). Coding was done manually. Table 3.1 provides the codes that were created from the interview transcripts.

Initially I read the transcripts repeatedly to familiarise myself with the data, as suggested by (Creswell, 2008:244). I followed the line-by-line initial analysis as it allowed me to stick closely to the data, and helped me refrain from applying my own experiences and perceptions to the data, as recommended by Charmaz (2013:50) and Charmaz (1996:37). I labelled each line from the transcript with words that reflected action. Charmaz (2013:48) recommends “coding data as action initially as this method curbs tendencies to make conceptual leaps and to adopt to external theories before we have done the analytical work”. Once all the initial coding was done, I moved on to focused coding.

I used the selective coding phase to reduce the initial codes further by selecting the most significant and frequent initial codes to sort, synthesize, integrate, and organise the data and make them more manageable for interpretation, as suggested by Charmaz (2006). The most prominent categories from the selective coding, as illustrated in Table 3.1 below, were then grouped.

Table 3.1 Prominent categories from GTC

READING AND WRITING AT SCHOOL	Types of reading and writing preferred in high school. Type of reading material preferred in high school. Monitoring systems used in high school to ensure that students are reading.
MANAGEMENT OF READING	Amount of reading as experienced by the student in high school. Ability to identify appropriate academic sources and critically analyse the readings.
READING AND WRITING AT UNIVERSITY	Types of reading and writing preferred in the university. Type of reading material preferred in the university.
BUILDING RESEARCH CAPACITY	Amount of reading experienced by the student at university. Ability to identify appropriate academic sources and critically analyse the readings.
CHALLENGES	Difficulties, struggles experienced by students at the university as a result of lack of critical reading and writing in high school and guidance in these.
PREFERENCE FOR ACQUIRING INFORMATION	Students' preferences of ways of acquiring new information.
UNDERSTANDING OF REFERENCING AND ITS CONSTITUENTS	How much detail of referencing students understand.
FIRST FORMAL REFERENCING EXPERIENCE	When the students were first formally trained and how in-depth the training was.
IMPORTANCE OF REFERENCING	Students' views about the importance of referencing.
VIEWS ABOUT THE REFERENCING	How students view referencing itself and what penalties they think are appropriate for not referencing.
FEEDBACK ON REFERENCING	Engagement with students with regards to referencing and other related practices.

3.7 ETHICAL APPROVAL AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of ethics in research is to protect human participants' rights and ensure that their safety and dignity is the first priority. I as a researcher was ethically obligated and accountable to protect the participants during the research process. The basic principles of the Belmont Report (1979) were used as a guideline for this study to ensure that all measures were taken

into consideration to protect the participants from any type of human rights infringement (Katzenellenbogen et al., 1997; Joubert & Ehrlich, 2007; Applied good clinical practice, 2007). These basic principles of the Belmont Report include the following ethical principles: principle of autonomy (ability of a participant to make informed choices), respect for people (protection of incompetent people), principle of beneficence (obligation to avoid harm) and the principle of justice (ensure that participants receive what is due to them).

The principle of autonomy and respect for people was applied through the use of a written informed consent form that was completed and signed by each participant. Four elements of informed consent were taken into consideration as recommended by Cohen et al. (2007) and Joubert and Ehrlich (2007). The first element is capacity. Students who participated in the study had a diploma or were completing their final year of their diploma. Therefore, an assumption was made that they were capable, competent, responsible, and mature enough to make their own decision to participate in the study after all relevant information about the research was provided to their own satisfaction.

The second element is the voluntary nature of the study. Participants were aware that their participation was on voluntary basis. They were aware that they could refuse participation and that they could withdraw at any point in the study without penalties or intimidation (Cohen, 2007). Therefore, care was taken to make sure that students did not give consent under duress.

The third element is understanding. Every attempt was made to ensure that the participants understood what the study was about and that no information was falsified or withheld. Participants were given enough time to read the information provided about the research and its purpose, and they were provided with answers to ensure that they had a clear understanding of the study.

The last element is disclosure. All relevant information was disclosed to the participant including anticipated risks. Comprehension by the participant of disclosed information of the situation in which they were placing themselves was vital. Due to their level of study students understood the English language and were able to read information given to them. All of the participating students were over 18 years of age and were able to give consent.

The principle of beneficence was considered as the study aimed to provide a clear understanding of background factors that could possibly influence how students think about referencing. The researcher considered that this understanding would in turn benefit educators and students in schools and universities by providing possible reasons for poor, or lack of, referencing practices, and for plagiarism. The principle of justice was considered by ensuring that all participants were treated the same and received and understood the same information about the study.

3.8 PERMISSION AND ETHICAL CLEARANCE

Permission to conduct the study was granted by the School of Education Ethics Review Committee of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Cape Town (Reference number: EDNREC2017-08-06). CPUT Faculty of Health and Wellness Science Ethics Review Committee granted me permission to interview the students in the Wellness Science department (Reference number: CPUT/HW-REC2017/H26).

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed in detail the research methodology and ethical considerations employed in this qualitative study. The next chapter presents the findings from the data analysis using the selective codes as set out in Table 3.1 as a guideline.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The chapter begins with a detailed description of the demographic profile of the participants obtained from the biographic forms completed by them before the interviews. It also presents data collected of the participating students' views on referencing, their first encounter with formal referencing, the students' understanding and technical application of referencing, learning, and interaction through feedback on referencing. Data captured also included details of the students' academic literacy practices at school and at university.

Although the study utilised a variety of the semi-structured opened ended questions to guide the interviews, the participant responses were not simply presented/recorded under each interview question asked. Instead the data were sorted and grouped into codes as shown in chapter three (Table 3.1) using Grounded theory coding (GTC) as a form of analysis. This helped me present the participants' experiences as accurately as possible as they were described by them without letting my own experiences and opinions affect the process or interfere with the 'true meaning' of the responses. The data were interpreted taking into consideration the relevant literature and the objectives of the study. These included: identifying socio-educational and cultural background factors that influences how students think about referencing and related concepts, identifying when and how students were initially formally introduced to referencing and how this affected the way they think about referencing, determining the students' thoughts about the importance of referencing, and finally, determining the students' understanding about what constitutes referencing.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The study aimed to recruit participants with a range of different socio-educational and cultural backgrounds in order to provide research data based on the aims and objectives of the study which has a particular focus on the influence of socio-cultural factors on students' attitudes

towards referencing and related concepts. The demographic profiles of the fifteen female students who participated in the study are shown in Table 4.1. The reason for recruiting only female students was that there were no male students registered for B-Tech and for the third year class. The participants comprised of eight B-tech students who were registered in 2017, and seven students from the 2017 third year class who had intentions to register for B-tech in 2018. Seven students had completed their matric in a public school, four in a Model C school and four in the private schooling system. Six students came from the Eastern Cape (EC), eight from the Western Cape (WC) and one from Gauteng province. In comparison to the number of public schools in the Western Cape and Gauteng, the Eastern Cape has a very large number of rural public schools that are underprivileged and under-resourced. Seven students were ‘coloured’, and eight students were ‘black’ (according to the old apartheid racial classification). Seven of the students spoke Afrikaans as their home language, six students had isiXhosa as a home language, and one student had Setswana as a home language. The students’ ages ranged from 20 to 27, with the exception of one student who was 55 years old at the time of the study.

Table 4.1: The demographic profile of the participants

Participant	Type of School	Province	Ethnicity	Home Language	Age
P1	Model C	EC	Coloured	Afrikaans	23
P2	Private	EC	Black	isiXhosa	23
P3	Model C	WC	Coloured	Afrikaans	25
P4	Public	WC	Black	isiXhosa	27
P5	Public	EC	Black	isiXhosa	22
P6	Public	GAUTENG	Black	Setswana	24
P7	Model C	WC	Coloured	Afrikaans	24
P8	Private	EC	Black	isiXhosa	24
P9	Public	WC	Coloured	Afrikaans	27
P10	Public	WC	Black	isiXhosa	26
P11	Model C	WC	Coloured	Afrikaans	20
P12	Public	WC	Coloured	Afrikaans	22
P13	Private	EC	Black	isiXhosa	21
P14	Private	EC	Black	isiXhosa	27
P15	Public	WC	Coloured	Afrikaans	55

EC-Eastern Cape, WC-Western Cape

4.3 READING AND WRITING AT SCHOOL

This section explores the types of reading and writing practices most valued at the participants' respective schools. From what the participants said, one can see that reading and writing were encouraged mainly in language classes, such as English, Xhosa and Afrikaans. This may not have been evident for all subjects in high school unless reading and writing were motivated by grades from assessments. Students also indicated that reading and writing were mainly valued for 'language development' – to improve their grammar, spelling and sentence writing. The participants' views are captured in the excerpts below:

“Reading was encouraged but not in the terms of educational reading, more like you can go to the library and read science fiction or it wasn't more – it was like creative reading, if I can say that. So it wasn't academic based.” [Participant 1]

“In each grade we got different books that we had to finish, English, Afrikaans and we would be questioned on the books. We'd have to do orals.” [Participant 3]

“I think with high school we.... got taught how to write maybe longer sentences, more paragraphs, more structured way of writing.” [Participant 11]

Reading and writing were mostly encouraged in language classes such as Afrikaans, English and Xhosa (subject classes). The majority of participating students mentioned that they were encouraged to read novels, science fiction and poems. In these language classes, creative reading and writing were encouraged (reading for the purpose of language development). However, academic reading and writing (reading of research articles and academic books in preparation for a research project) was not encouraged as much in all subjects. The students reported having read mostly textbooks or notes they had transcribed in preparation for projects or tests. What is surprising to me is that students from all school backgrounds reported similar experiences related to reading and writing and felt the same way about this, particularly the lack of academic writing and encouragement by teachers to do this. Only one student (participant 2) from one private school reported that they read a lot in all subjects. Some of the students (participants 4 and 10) however felt that there was no encouragement at all when it came to reading in their schools. It was something that students needed to do by themselves:

“...I don't think so. I think I first experienced reading at university, not really in high school. We were only encouraged to study for ourselves in order to pass.” [Participant 10]

“At high school, we were never encouraged to read or write” [Participant 4]

The type of reading the students did in high school, according to the participants cited above, was instrumental. It was done in preparation for tests and examinations. This kind of reading may be intense and stressful, but in fact is surface and temporal. Whether the students' own volition without external push from the teachers was enough to drive their curiosity or not remains unknown.

4.4 MONITORING SYSTEMS AT SCHOOL

The majority of the participants mentioned that there were some kinds of monitoring and motivation systems that were used in attempts on the part of teachers to ensure that learners read both at school and at home. These systems included spot tests, writing of essays or narrative, reading aloud, giving feedback on read literature, oral presentation, electronic quizzes on spelling and grammar, and there was prize giving for students who performed the best in assessments. Participants 2 and 11 give a clear indication of these kinds of motivations:

“They just randomly give you tests in the morning to write, let's say, on a specific book that we did earlier on, or we would have, during our English class, we would have a reading session. So a specific number of students out of that day would read out of a certain book that we did during that year...even homework, they would tell you and emphasise that you need to read out, a certain number of pages, or read that book and then come back to class and give feedback on it...”[Participant 2]

“...Also, they gave us tasks in class. With my high school, teachers gave us tasks within our class to maybe have quizzes now and then with added prizes. So the class that maybe had an electronic quiz for example, where it would be spelling or grammatical errors or anything like that, the class that got the highest score out of a certain grade, they would get maybe a prize for the week or a prize for the month. So that allowed us to enable our abilities to write better and to read better and so on.” [Participant 11]

Furthermore, monitoring of the reading and writing only happened in language subjects (English class). Motivation was instrumentally to pass the test, write better or to win the prize. There seemed to be no clear strategy on the part of teachers to improve one's writing, except for a focus on grammatical errors and spelling. Teaching the students about the value of critical reading and writing seemed not to be emphasised or encouraged in the high schooling experience of the study participants, value and trust being placed on and in the mastery of textbook content. The students did not recall any independent research on the content/knowledge: the content was provided to them. Nonetheless, participants conceded that there were some benefits generated from reading. Participant 9 had this to say about the degree of importance and value placed on reading:

“Well, at high school, there was emphasis placed on it. It’s very important because reading and writing enhances your knowledge and understanding. It helps with accuracy of information, but I feel like it’s more intense and emphasised at a university level. In high school, it was just merely to build an understanding and to help you get from one day to another.” [Participant 9]

Participants also mentioned issues such as ‘enhancement of knowledge’, ‘comprehension’, and ‘improvement on composition’ as crucial benefits.

4.5 BUILDING RESEARCH CAPACITY IN HIGH SCHOOL

The majority of the participants did not recall doing much independent reading in preparation for the school projects at high school; they mostly read what was given to them in class. Only three students out of the entire group mentioned reading more than one book in preparation for a project. Students who had internet access used Google and Wikipedia for their projects; they did not use books or research articles. Notes and textbooks were provided to students, and these resources were what they were able to access for reading purposes. Participants never read academic articles or any sources that were scholarly based. One participant from a private school in the EC reported:

“That thing that I’m given to read that’s the thing that I will actually read”. [Participant 14]

Others had the following to say about accessing textbooks and journal articles:

“No. No, I wouldn’t – maybe one or two pages that I find and then I’ll Google and then will write anything from Google.” [Participant 6]

“I don’t remember a time whereby I had to go and look for my own research. I was given something, and I had to write it...” [Participant 5]

“Everything that we did was just handed to us in terms of books and we just had to look for the information in what we were given” [Participant 2]

From the comments above it is clear that the majority of participants from different educational backgrounds were never encouraged to do independent research: to find their own information and use or evaluate this in a critical manner, something that is expected of them when they get to higher educational institutions. If they were not previously exposed to using more than one or two sources in their own writing, lecturers cannot assume that students will know how to refer, evaluate or collate two or more sources when they come to the university. Preparing catch up lessons for “their” students might be necessary, considering the variety of socio-cultural and educational backgrounds these students might be coming from. High school education cannot and should not be blamed for this, given the historical background of the South African education system outlined in Chapter 1. I, and other researchers in this area, argue/advocate for schoolteachers and lecturers working together to try and guide and prepare the student for academic research and writing in higher education.

Participants also indicated that they read the provided textbook for learning – often rote learning - purposes. Seven out of the fifteen participants indicated that they were not encouraged to read further than the prescribed textbook, and if there was encouragement to do so, it was only verbal and was never followed by the majority of the students. The comments below indicate this clearly:

“No. We only concentrated on the textbook” [participant 4]

“In high school, we were given a textbook to read for the subject and that was it.” [Participant 14]

High school education such as that experienced by most of the study participants, encourages and motivates students to place absolute, uncritical trust in these textbooks to the extent that they believe that textbooks include all the important information (often without processing, or interpreting the information). This pedagogical practice could be considered as one of the reasons why students battle with textual borrowing and evaluating later in their writing.

4.6 READING AND WRITING AT UNIVERSITY

What was apparent in the participants' responses was that academic writing was more valued at university than was the case in high school. Participants reported that referencing sources and doing literature reviews was something they encountered for first time at the university. Unlike their experience of high school reading and writing, students were now, at university, being encouraged to read material that is evidence based and academic, such as journal articles. Many students had also been introduced to different search engines, such as Google Scholar and other scientific databases at school. As a result of this, as participants 1, 2 and 3 reported, they struggled with the sudden demand of a new and foreign academic Discourse:

“I think it [reading and writing] was more encouraged in university than what it was in high school. So that is why a lot of students or myself, why I struggled getting into university; you were encouraged to read more articles about subjects and do extra reading. So I think it was more encouraged at university than what it was in high school and it was difficult to adjust to reading more in university.” [Participant 1]

“But here in varsity it's a bit different or things are different because it's more focussed on journal articles mostly and your more scientific books...But finding articles on a specific topic sometimes can be a bit difficult. I don't know if it's because there is a lack of them or it's just me not knowing how to search for what I'm looking for on the website that I'm using.” [Participant 2]

“Diploma, also not a lot. Like for one project I would like use four books, maximum and then only since last year when we did our literature reviews I would use maybe one or two articles. But this year [B-tech level], much, much more like 20 to 30 articles maybe, and I used about five books. I'm thinking of one specific assignment now.” [Participant 3]

Some participants indicated that the amount of reading and writing increased drastically at the B-Tech level as compared to Diploma level. They (participants) identified with the positive effects of extensive reading and writing at the university. They felt that the reading and writing practices improved their writing skills, and some indicated improvement in language development, specifically in English, which is the main language of instruction at the university. Their claims and reactions are captured in these statements:

“In university it required you to read more to understand the topic and even to have a broader understanding of what you’re doing. So, I did do some reading of journals and articles. Support structures such as the writing centre are pivotal for the development of students’ academic literacy” [Participant 4]

“But now with university, I learnt how to put sentences in appropriate places and how to format everything and like for referencing you learn especially when you read a lot of books. Then you also see how they do it in their books and you can include that in your assignment and that is how I learnt. Like I feel like I’ve grown in writing and that. I’ve grown a lot by knowing how to reference. That helped me a lot in writing up my stuff that I need to and yeah.” [Participant 12]

Some participants were of the view that understanding, and comprehension of their work, improved once they engaged with academic texts at university. Their way of thinking in terms of writing for different purposes was also enhanced. This included their English language proficiency. One participant identified the support systems offered by the institution, such as the writing centre, as playing a crucial role in developing the requisite literacy practices and ways of doing at university. Lastly, participants also felt that the writing centre enabled them to follow instructions better in their assessments (theory tests and marking rubrics).

4.7 CHALLENGES DUE TO BACKGROUND EXPERIENCES

All of the participating students felt unprepared, or felt some difficulty initially, when they started university. They specified several reasons for this. They found they needed to use different types of reading material other than the prescribed textbooks to which they were accustomed. They had to read a larger number and variety of sources than they had read at high school. Finding information that was relevant and accurate for a specific topic was

difficult initially as students were not used to researching information by themselves. The concept of using your own voice was new and difficult, especially because they were all second language speakers. For example, Participant 4 highlights that language proficiency might have been a contributing factor in her struggles with plagiarism and the use of her own voice in academic Discourse. Lack of reading, or lack of opportunities for independent reading, in high school made it difficult to adjust to the amount of reading required at the university. Students also reported a lack of confidence in their writing abilities. This might also have contributed to students' lack of understanding of referencing.

In addition, students identified a huge jump in the load of required reading and writing between diploma and B-Tech level. This could be due to the introduction of research subjects at the B-Tech level, or maybe the diploma level does not motivate effectively or make academic writing mandatory. English is a second language for all of these students and this made it difficult for them to avoid plagiarism, as concepts such as paraphrasing, summarising and use of own words was new. While there were no monitoring systems to ensure that they read, their written projects and assignments had to reflect that they did read and were able to understand and apply their knowledge through their own interpretations and use of their own voice. The majority of the students had only heard about referencing and a literature review for the first time when they entered the university. Lastly, reading and academic writing was not encouraged or instilled in high school, nor was it taken for granted. Therefore students found it difficult adjusting to the new culture of reading and writing. The students' comments below reveal the factors contributing to their struggle with academic writing and referencing:

“It really affected.... especially in terms of avoiding plagiarism.... having to change someone’s words and put it in my own words. Maybe it’s also because I’m a – my home language is Xhosa. Maybe that also affected me because if I were to correct my life I would read every day. I’ll read every day and write things and explain to the next person what I’ve just written....it really affected me so badly” [Participant 8]

“I think when I came into university it was a bit hard for me at first. A bit difficult because I had to now get used to not using Google and Wikipedia all the time as a reference. And I had to get used to using articles and books and publishers, which I found it actually increased my capability of reading and writing certain things and also, putting things in my own words...”[Participant 6]

“It really was more frustrating because articles are done online mostly and that was an unknown territory before. So really, learning what citations are and which journals – what journals are and how they work, and like recognising them and what to search for was a bit of a challenge but really helped a lot with the assignment.” [Participant 9]

All students indicated that they did not come from a family background where referencing was discussed or talked about. Some students expressed their regret that they never had an opportunity to learn about referencing and academic writing at an earlier stage. I also noticed that both students who went to the model C schools, and those who went to a public school, did not learn about referencing at school. One student said;

“It affected me so badly, because having not even heard the word plagiarism was just wrong. If I’m comparing the past because I never heard of plagiarism in primary, high school. It was like, oh whatever. Why not? They’re not going to see me if I copied their work. I’m giving it to my teacher.” [Participant 8]

It is clear that when these students came to university for the first time they needed a lot of guidance and support in adjusting to the demands of the university. The ways of doing at the university were completely new to them. From this there arises a strong argument against bombarding first year students with documents that provide legalistic rules about referencing and plagiarism as this might confuse them further. An environment that promotes and encourages learning is a better option.

4.8 BUILDING RESEARCH CAPACITY AT THE UNIVERSITY

The shift from just reading what is given to one by a teacher to reading, critiquing and writing more research articles and books is evident from students’ responses. More in-depth, broad and self-directed reading and researching more information became necessary. Students started reading more than just the prescribed textbooks or notes provided to them by their teachers. Students reported reading up to fifty research articles in B-Tech as compared to one or sometimes none in high school. This was often the case in first year and second year. Unlike high school, where students relied on textbooks, notes, and information from Google and Wikipedia, at university students became more aware of the importance of reading academic

sources and were more aware of where to find academic data bases such as in Google Scholar and other databases. The remarks below from the participants demonstrate the change in materials that students were reading later in their studies:

“...Okay, in our first year, it was more of books than articles because I think, I still had that mind-set of high school where I was book orientated, if I would put it like that. And then second year up until B.Tech, it was more of articles. So those would be roughly about, no more than ten though and then there a few articles. But now it’s more article orientated than books because articles give more of the newer insight, more especially if you get articles which are from that year, which you’re conducting your research or you’re doing the topic on.”
[Participant 2]

“In university it required you to read more to understand the topic and even to have a broader understanding of what you’re doing. So I did do some reading of journals and articles.”
[Participant 4]

From the students’ comments it is therefore clear that what is expected at university level is far different from what the students were used to in high school.

4.9 PREFERENCE FOR ACQUIRING INFORMATION

Thirteen out of the fifteen students indicated that they preferred the teacher providing them with all the information about a topic in class when they were at school. Participants 1, 2 and 4 provided reasons for this preference; they felt that they did not know any better, that they had a mind-set that teachers are supposed to provide all the information to the learner, and that they continued to unquestioningly value the authority of the teacher. Another student felt that this was the best way to ensure that she got all the information she needed to pass a theory test. One of the students felt that thinking and doing things for herself was not a concept that she was used to; at high school she had mainly done what the teacher told the class to do without questioning this. This practice and experience can have negative implications when students come to university as they are unable to work independently and cannot find or evaluate information on their own. The comments below show the students’ conditioned preference concerning acquiring information:

“I think the reason why I would say I preferred the teacher to teach everything so that I know like I was taught everything maybe that’s going to be asked in a test.... if you would learn by yourself, you would maybe still be unsure. Maybe there’re areas that you didn’t focus on that’s more important. So I think that’s the only reason I would say I prefer being taught.”
[Participant 1]

“.... growing up, I never had that environment where thinking for yourself, do that, do this, do that on your own. So it was just always a teacher telling me something and then I have to actually then try and work more on what I’ve been told and not to think for myself.”
[Participant 14]

However, some participating students preferred finding their own information at the university level. They felt that it was more valuable to them to find their own information in terms of understanding the information better. They felt the lecturer needed to provide them with the basics or the foundation about the topic only, as the comments below indicate:

“Well, I think it would be more valuable to go and research for yourself. It depends also on your personality: if you’re the type who wants to go the extra mile or wants to enhance what you know and also find out yourself as opposed to just being fed by someone, everything and just believe what they say as opposed to validating is that true. So yeah, research is definitely way better.” [Participant 9]

Participant 13 indicated that she preferred finding information herself but only for the topics that are interesting to her at the university:

“.... It depends if I find the topic interesting. If it’s very interesting I like doing my own research and then if it’s not something I’m very passionate about, or I don’t like, then I want to be given the information so I can just cram it in my head.” [Participant 13]

Five out of the fifteen students felt that they preferred the lecturer to provide all the information instead of them searching for the information for themselves. One of these students changed her mind about this only at the B-Tech level when she was required to do her research project:

“For high school Diploma I would prefer a lecturer to give me all the information in the world and then I can take that information home and then I will read what the lecturer gave me in class. But now, I think I’m comfortable just to be given a topic and then I will just research about it.” [Participant 8]

“I think the reason why I would say I preferred the teacher to teach everything so that I know like I was taught everything maybe that’s going to be asked in a test.... if you would learn by yourself, you would maybe still be unsure. Maybe there’re areas that you didn’t focus on that’s more important. So I think that’s the only reason I would say I prefer being taught.” [Participant 1]

Two out of the fifteen students stated that they preferred “a bit of both”: a lecturer or teacher giving them some information, and their searching independently for more information about the topic.

“I would say a bit of both. I mean, it’s nice if a teacher tells you something but explains it to you in a way that makes you understand but doesn’t give too much of it away. Because personally, as a learner, as a student, you kind of need to kind of figure out things for yourself as well. I mean when you grow up, no-one’s going to be there to hold your hand to tell you this and this and this must be done. So I prefer having a teacher or a lecturer tell us, this must be done but it’s also your responsibility now to go look for further information there. Because it kind of gives you a bit of independence as well as it will increase your skill to find more information; to go look for places where you’ve never looked before.” [Participant 11]

The students reported that when they were in high school they mostly preferred to be told what to do. However, as they continued with their studies at the university, some of them saw the value in finding information for themselves but only in terms of improving their understanding of the topics. They still did not see the benefits of the process of finding information as a means towards enabling them to read the literature critically and widely, and to synthesise the voices of others with yours in order to create a rigorous argument while using the correct referencing practices.

4.10 UNDERSTANDING OF REFERENCING AND ITS CONSTITUENTS

All of the participating students seemed to understand the elementary definition of referencing. They defined referencing as acknowledging, crediting, or recognising that you have used the work of someone else in your project. One student mentioned that summarising the information was also an important part of referencing. One other student was of the view that this practice is a way of avoiding plagiarism. This implies simply that, if the student's referencing skills were accurate, then they would potentially avoid plagiarism. Comments below clearly demonstrate the students' simplistic understanding of referencing:

"I understand it to be a way of acknowledging the researcher, avoiding plagiarism as well as a way to refer back to sources that you have referred to because it might help you with future research as well." [Participant 9]

"...I would say it's to recognise the author first. The person that actually wrote also to know how to not steal someone's work." [Participant 14]

"Referencing is listing, I think, all sources that you have used in your assignment to avoid plagiarism." [Participant 3]

However, when the participating students were asked to explain other related terms, such as citation and bibliography, the majority of the students could not do so. Only three students were able to give a brief explanation of these concepts. The quotes from the students demonstrate their lack of understanding of exactly what constitutes referencing:

"I know bibliography, it's the work that you read but you didn't reference." [Participant 6]

"I don't know what citation is." [Participant 6]

"Is there a difference? I don't know." [Participant 10]

All students mentioned that they used the Harvard style of referencing. However, when they were asked to explain how they do the Harvard style, there were inconsistencies in their explanations. They either gave a technical description of how to compile a reference list, or how to do in-text referencing, but were not able to provide a complete picture of what referencing really entails. The remarks of Participants 2 and 13 demonstrate these inconsistencies:

“I put – at the end of each assignment I have a reference page and then I put the person’s initials and then the surname, comma, the name of the book, another comma and the page, another comma and whoever published the book and where it was published....” [Participant 13]

“So if you write a text which you know that it’s not yours, which you know that you took from an article then you have to in-text reference by putting that author’s name there and the year. So that if someone is searching for it, they’ll know that okay at the reference page which you have the full list, they will be able to find where you got that section from. And as well as, we put in-text throughout the project and then at the end you will have your full reference page” [Participant 2]

All fifteen students indicated that referencing was not taught in their high schools. In some schools referencing was not mentioned at all; however, in other schools referencing was mentioned but there was no direction on how to use referencing skills properly. As a result students battled with plagiarism issues when doing their projects at university. Some of the students were not aware that cutting and pasting was bad as they were not penalised for it at school and continued doing it at university. Students battled with concepts such as writing in their own words. The annotations below show when students were first exposed to referencing and their struggles due to this lack of training in its use:

“We were never taught about referencing in high school. I first learnt referencing when I was in tertiary level, never knew about it in high school.” [Participant 10]

“...in high school, we didn’t do a lot of referencing. In fact, we didn’t do referencing at all. I only started learning about referencing in my first year and for me that was new word...I would just copy and paste. I couldn’t turn things into my own words.” [Participant 5]

These responses indicate that many students, particularly those from certain education and cultural backgrounds, are in need of interventions that promote learning and acquisition of the referencing practice and other literacy practices instead of the formal, non-interactive legalistic Discourses that are currently a traditional practice in higher educational institutions.

4.11 FIRST FORMAL REFERENCING EXPERIENCE

Twelve students agreed that they first received their formal referencing and plagiarism formal training at the beginning of their first year of university. While other students said that they were taught this practice in high school, later on when reading their responses, I found these to indicate that only some parts of referencing were taught. For example, they were told to include the bibliography or a reference list with their work, but they were not specifically taught how to include citations or about the different referencing styles from which to choose. The comment made by Participant 6 demonstrates that the information provided to students at her high school was not sufficient:

“I think Grade 9. That’s when they told us we have to reference peoples’ work. But it was not explained in detail how you must reference. So it was not actually a proper way of referencing” [Participant 6]

“.... formally, I learnt about it at university first year when the library team,... did an introduction to what referencing was and the type of referencing styles and they also made it clear that referencing is very important to avoid plagiarism and also, helps with anybody who is interested in reading the same information that you have or the sources that you’ve used. And also, to further that research as well” [Participant 9]

All fifteen students indicated that referencing was taught in their first year of university. They however differed in their reports concerning who taught them referencing and the length and/or thoroughness of the course. However, the similarities between their responses that emerged was revealed from the majority of the students reporting their having been taught by someone from outside the department where they were registered, such as the subject librarian and as part of a generic ‘information literacy’ course. Some reported that their communication skills lecturer taught them these skills/practices. All students in the sample were taught only the Harvard style of referencing. Some students felt that the course on referencing they had been offered at the university was too short. They felt that the course should be longer and provision of detailed reading material to be necessary. The remarks from students below demonstrate the views of those students who felt that the training provided was not sufficiently intensive or ‘hands on’:

“.... It’s difficult you know, for somebody starting out. I don't think there was enough emphasis on it. It should have been a week-long course as far as I was concerned. You know, with exercises, and this is how you do it, because up to now, I can tell you, there’re third years that get it wrong, totally wrong, that still ask questions like how do you in-text reference? Where that is something that should have been okay, in first year already. So I don't think enough emphasis was put on it. It was an afternoon thing that we spoke to – somebody came up to chat to us and showed us a couple of things.....” [Participant 15]

“.... We were never taught in the lectures; it was just a one-day training” [Participant 8]

“Someone external came in and gave us a lecture on referencing. But that was the only – it was one class. That was the only referencing class that we had.” [Participant 1]

A few issues have been identified by the students in this study regarding referencing training. These include: lack of formal training in their schools, limited training in referencing skills/practices and resources at the university, engagement between students and academic staff needing to be improved, and lastly, recognition that bombarding students with vast amounts of unknown/unfamiliar concepts does not help students to master crucial academic literacy skills and practices. Students obviously want intensive training in these practices and in an environment that promotes learning as well opportunities to practise the skill – linked to their particular subject - as part of the training.

4.12 IMPORTANCE OF REFERENCING

The students provided several obvious reasons why they thought – or had been (superficially) taught - referencing to be important. Firstly, to help locate the original author and to show that you have done extensive research. Secondly, to encourage people/students to read more, and to avoid stealing other people’s work, thus avoiding plagiarism. Thirdly, to acknowledge the next person and to point the reader to where you obtained the information. Fourthly, to avoid losing your qualification and (related to the second reason) to make absolutely sure you do not copy someone else’s work. Lastly because it is the right thing to do. Students were in agreement that without referencing people would not put effort into doing whatever needs to be done. These reasons emerged from several students’ comments:

“...it’s not our original work so if you’re going to use someone else’s work, you have to – you can’t take the credit for that....” [Participant 7]

“...so that we shy away from stealing because if you don’t – it’s basically plagiarising and if you don’t reference that’s basically stealing someone’s work, someone’s thoughts.... So we reference... to acknowledge the next person and it also helps a person that’s reading your article or that text to also get further knowledge as to where you got it...” [Participant 2]

“I think it is necessary because if you become a professor one day and someone else uses your work without acknowledging that this is your work, then that is sort of like an insult to you. So I think for me it’s like respecting someone else’s work. That’s why I think it’s necessary to reference.” [Participant 1]

One student eloquently summed up the value of, and effort involved in, referencing: *“Research is not just something that happens overnight. So it’s a lengthy process. It’s about accuracy. It’s about acknowledgement, appreciation for the information, enhancing the field of research as well.” [Participant 9]*

However, the reasons provided by the participating students were limited. All students did not appear to relate the referencing skill to academic writing. For example, students do not specifically mention the importance of sharing and communicating information with other scholars in the field and other disciplines. Also, there was no mention of improving critical thinking skill through engagement with, and analysis of, others’ ideas or findings in relation to those of the student, and, in so doing, creating convincing arguments. In addition, students did not mention the development of an ability to identify a student’s’ own voice in an argument and recognising others’ voices in their analyses or arguments.

4.13 VIEWS ABOUT REFERENCING

The majority of the participants felt that referencing was serious and important, and that it was unfair/unethical not to reference. All participants agreed that failure to reference deserves some kind of penalty or punishment. However, they felt that the ability to reference properly depended on a student’s level of education. Some felt that if students referenced incorrectly at

the B-tech level they should be given a second chance. One student felt that if you come from an education background where referencing was not considered important, then at the diploma level you should be given a second chance, but that at the B-tech level not referencing is unacceptable. Some felt that at the B-Tech level you should lose marks and at the Master's level, you should be excluded. Their comments show that they felt that each plagiarism transgression should be treated individually based on the student's contextual circumstances:

“For a student maybe, don't be harsh on them because it's hard. But for somebody that's submitting articles, that's getting recognition for submission of articles, book chapters, etcetera, it should obviously make a difference to whether they attain what they aim for, for example a qualification. It should make the difference.....If it's somebody that's lecturing at the university, he is teaching other people not to commit plagiarism. So he should be – he should be fired.” [Participant 15]

“You must just be penalised with the marks. It also depends with the levels I think because if you're doing Master's the school must exclude you.... you just can't.” [Participant 8]

“If it's a student, they should be marked down and then if it's somebody that's writing their own book maybe an older person, their book should be not sold.” [Participant 13]

The students' suggestions seem to indicate that unintentional plagiarism should not be punished. Instead, initially, it should be corrected, and the student made aware of the correct ways of referencing.

Two out of the fourteen students felt that the student should undergo a disciplinary hearing, or be suspended or fined. One student felt that it is a criminal offence to plagiarise, and that the student should go and spend three to five years in jail. However, when she was asked if students in the B-Tech class should go to jail, she felt that students at Master's and PhD level should go to jail and that B-Techs should only lose marks. The rest of the students felt that the student should lose marks, or their work should not be marked, and that this would be an opportunity for the student to learn from their mistakes.

4.14 FEEDBACK ON REFERENCING

At the university which was the site of the study, interactions between students and academics about referencing were and are clearly limited. The majority of the students participating in the study complained that they are trained very late and when they are trained, the training sessions are very short and not detailed or sufficiently in-depth or practical. Furthermore, the majority of the students indicated that they had never received any feedback from school on referencing. This come as no surprise since the participating students had indicated that they never learned about referencing at school anyway. Their comments clearly illustrate this lack of feedback they experienced at their schools when asked how much and what kind of feedback they had received:

“Honestly, none. It would just be about how you presented the assignment. Your understanding of the assignment.... in terms of grammar and spelling. But not really the source of the information.” [Participant 9]

“They would just say it’s the wrong.... But they wouldn’t tell us actually like how to reference properly.....So basically you don’t know, you’re just doing the same thing over and over. But they’re not really telling you how to actually reference.” [Participant 7]

Fourteen students indicated that they understood that poor referencing at university was considered a very serious matter. The feedback they received from lecturers focussed on the strict correctness of the format of the referencing style. Students were also instructed to use newer/more recent references. Students were warned that plagiarism was illegal and unacceptable in academia. Students were made aware of plagiarism detector internet applications, such as “safe assign¹” which would be used to check any plagiarism in their projects. Students were encouraged by lecturers to use their own words and not to copy information as is from the source. Therefore, the feedback that students received was mainly based on ensuring that the correct technique was used accurately throughout the document. Students’ comments, however, showed how this kind of feedback was failing to convince many students of the ways in which referencing benefits their own writing in terms of critical reading, writing, and research skills:

Safe assign is a plagiarism detection application that is used by students and staff to check for plagiarism percentage in an academic project¹

“At university, I would get comments like that’s an old referencing you used. There are more studies done. So you have to go look for other referencing. It was always about the year and the style of referencing even though I’m using Harvard, but I used it wrong. So it was that.” [Participant 14].

“Very strict feedback. Very, very strict; we were constantly reminded that plagiarism is wrong. You’re not allowed to do it. It’s illegal. You can’t do it and that kind of gave us the motivation to not do a lot of the other things that we did in high school. And the lecturers would come back saying, “Okay, your referencing is wrong.” Because we had to submit a rough draft and then it will give the lecturers an idea of where we stand with regards to referencing, etcetera. Not just the information, but the referencing as well. And then the lecturers would come back saying, “I think you could word this part differently” or “This referencing isn’t particularly right here...” [Participant 11].

One participant (Participant 15) indicated that they did not get feedback for many assignments, and that in some instances the feedback was not explained or clarified.

“...a lot of our assignments we don’t even get back.” [Participant 15]

After reviewing the students’ responses above, I went to look at our departmental study guides. I realised that, unlike the modules in fourth year (B-Tech), which use more assignment projects and case studies as a form of assessment, the majority of our undergraduate diploma major subjects require students to write four theory tests, four practical tests, and to hand in one or two assignments. Due to the fact that some of the submission dates for assignments are late in the year, opportunities to provide feedback on an assignment are limited. Also providing feedback on one assignment does not provide, or is not seen by lecturers or students as, an opportunity to improve on the next assignment. The need for these challenges to be addressed in the future is discussed in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the concluding discussion of the study, and the recommendations. This study aimed to explore whether and to what extent the background socio-educational and cultural factors of a sample of B-Tech students influenced how these students perceived and thought about referencing and about related academic literacy concepts. As was described in Chapter 1, South Africa is a multi-cultural country with many different languages, cultural values, and has a history of unequal and inequitable educational systems. My core interest was to find out whether and to what extent these background experiences of the sample B-Tech students participating in my study affected their referencing practices. The investigation was conducted at every stage of the research, taking into consideration the objectives of the study. The objectives included to explore the many and various factors that influence how a sample of B-Tech students think about referencing and related concepts, including their socio-educational background, and socio-cultural factors. Included in the objectives was an investigation of where and when in their education paths the participating B-Tech students were initially formally introduced to referencing and related concepts, and how and to what extent their experience of this affected the way they think and act about referencing. In addition the objectives included eliciting the B-Tech students' views on the importance and value of referencing, and exploring the participating students' understanding of what constitutes referencing.

I felt that this topic needed to be explored in order to understand why so many students at CPUT continue to battle with grasping referencing practices and related concepts even after three or more years at the university. While a once-off training session is provided on referencing within the first month of first year students arriving at the university, the students are reluctant – or unable to - implement the referencing skills - supposedly learned - in their own work. One would assume – or it is assumed by the institution - that after such training the students would be able to integrate the skill in their academic Discourse. However, this has

been found not to be so, as many third and fourth year students in my class continue to plagiarise in their academic assignments.

Subsequently, to help provide an answer to the research question and the research objectives, data were collected and analysed from verbatim interview transcripts in conjunction with a review of existing literature on the topic of my research. A summary of the discussion on the findings of the study, together with recommendations, is provided below:

5.2 SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS

Socio-cultural and educational factors that seem to influence the referencing practices of the 15 students participating in this study included lack of academic reading and writing in high school, and, in part, during the first years of university, poor language proficiency, and dependency on, and trust in, authoritative figures and resources (teachers, lecturers, textbooks) to be the providers of all needed information.

Regarding reading and writing across all background educational systems, the data revealed that most of the participating students had not been exposed to critical academic reading and writing in high school. Students were only exposed to 'creative' (non-academic) reading and writing for the purpose of language development (Xhosa, Afrikaans and English). Students' reading and writing practices in language classes were sometimes monitored at school through written essays, reading aloud, giving feedback to teachers on literature read, and oral presentations. However, at the university they experienced reading and writing as becoming more self-directed and, unlike at high school, there were no monitoring systems. Concerning other high school subjects that are not language related, such as Natural Science or History, students read only allocated textbooks and the class notes that were provided to them in preparation for the assessments at school. This pedagogical practice disadvantaged students as they were not exposed to the various different kinds of literature mentioned by scholars such as Wallace and Wray (2011). These scholars identify two kinds of literature that students can benefit from when conducting research. These include support literature and frontline literature. Textbooks and encyclopaedias are examples of the support literature which can help the students learn and understand a subject. Research articles, research books, the internet, and policies are examples of front-line literature which are usually aimed at creating and adding new claims and knowledge about an academic subject. Students in the current study reported

that in high school they were only exposed to textbooks and lecture notes, and only a few students used on-line sources such as Google and Wikipedia. Consequently, when the students came to university and found the institution to value frontline literature more than support literature, they battled in their researching and reading and assimilating of academic books and research articles as they were had never been exposed to frontline literature.

Students reported their battle to adjust to the new forms or types of reading and writing they were expected to understand and make use of. When they came to the university, they found they had to read academic books and research articles for the first time. They were not used to the increase in the load of reading and writing, and for the first time they were required to read more than one textbook in preparation for their academic projects. These students reported that they had never been encouraged to find their own information at school and as a result they struggled with their search for different sources of literature as they were used to using their one allocated textbook for each subject, and internet sites such as Google and Wikipedia for learning and for assignments. The concept of using their own voice and recognising the voices of other researchers when writing was very difficult to comprehend, considering that, apart from this being a new and unfamiliar concept, for all of the students in the study sample, English was not their mother tongue and they were not used to collating information from more than one or two books. Use of only one or two books to prepare for an assignment in high school, and in some cases in the first and second year of their diploma course, militated against the students' learning the skill of synthesising large text from various books and academic articles. As a result, these students missed many learning opportunities, a situation mentioned by various scholars in this field. For example, scholars such as Hutchings (2013), Wallace and Wray (2011) are of the view that, in order to create a credible argument, students need to critically engage extensively, and in an ongoing way, with existing literature in the field/knowledge area they are writing about. This cannot be achieved at university level by reading one or two textbooks; it can only be achieved by referring to a sizeable number of academic sources. The studies mentioned found that, through this engagement with a range of academic sources, students learn many things: they learn how to find credible sources, how to reference properly, how to synthesise information, to use their authoritative voice, and to identify the voices of other researchers in academic writing. In the course of this, they discover different ways of avoiding plagiarism.

Based on these findings one needs to take into consideration what Mckenna (2010) says about educational inequality and unacceptable literacy practices. Mckenna (2010) suggests that, considering the South African history of inequality and marginalisation of the poor and underprivileged, we should celebrate when these ‘disadvantaged’ students manage to reach university level. She also mentions that these students might bring with them to the university unacceptable academic literacy practices and that our duty should be to make explicit to these students the value and importance of the acceptable literacy practices, and apprentice them into the new academic practices to minimise dropout. We should also be helping these students catch-up with their fellow – more privileged - students.

Concerning their accustomed dependency on their superiors, students felt that at the time they preferred that, or did not question that, the teacher at school provided them with all the required information about the subject instead of their researching their own information on a new topic. The students reported that they trusted their teachers to provide them with all the information they needed to succeed. This culture of dependence and unquestioning respect for authority was evident from all the participating students from different school backgrounds. Students in the study reported that they trusted their superiors to provide them with all the required information uncritically and without question. Understanding, and the ability to memorise, the provided content seemed to be what was valued more, rather than questioning the integrity or validity of the information. The culture of dependency on those in positions of power and control (teachers, textbook writers) was both strong and endemic at their high schools. This culture deprives a student of the opportunity to learn how to create a meaningful argument and to trust his/her own authoritative voice. One has to wonder whether some of the African cultural value systems do not contribute to this dependency, especially among those students from rural schools. For example, the highly valued philosophy of Ubuntu, which teaches young African individuals, both at home and in public spaces, to value and respect the authority of their elders and superiors (teachers and lecturers in this case) without question, whether these elders are educated or not (Lefa, 2015; Khomba & Kangaude-Ulaya, 2013). Consequently, students growing up in this cultural context may see themselves as receivers of knowledge from those who are considered wise and intelligent rather than as the creators of knowledge. While this is speculation, and the current study does not provide a clear indication of the influence of this philosophy, its influence on the attitudes and values of students in an academic context needs deeper investigation.

Furthermore, in line with the Constitution and the Language in Education Policy (1997), South Africa promotes multilingualism in order to show respect for all eleven official languages and the speakers of these. As a result, some students have had to learn three languages at school (mother tongue, English and Afrikaans), especially if they attend Model C schools. In rural public schools students are required to learn and develop their mother tongue and English. This might have implications for their English language proficiency, depending on their family and educational background. Some scholars, such as Angelil-Carter (2000) and Burnette (2002) have identified poor English language proficiency as one of the contributing factors to unintentional plagiarising as students battle with paraphrasing and summarising, and lack the confidence to use their own voices in a written text. Although this study does not explicitly identify South African cultural and educational practices and poor language proficiency as the actual reasons for poor referencing skill, these factors might have an influence on, and contribute towards, how students perceive and think about referencing and related concepts.

While all students in the study sample reported that they preferred their teachers to give them all the information in class while they were at school, and that the same applied to their lecturers when they were in their first and second year of study at the university, a few students in the sample saw the benefit in finding information for themselves on a particular topic, especially at B-Tech level when the research modules were introduced. However, the majority of these students still preferred to be given, and to passively receive, all information even at the university.

5.3 VIEWS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF REFERENCING

Concerning the participating students' views on the importance of referencing, the majority of the students viewed referencing as important. However, many of these students reported that they did not fully comprehend how and why referencing was beneficial to their own academic writing specifically. Although they acknowledged the importance of referencing, when asked why they thought referencing was important, they provided various reasons pertaining to acknowledging and crediting others, locating texts, and avoiding plagiarism. They did not mention any of the following benefits: the improvement of academic writing skills, the development of an ability to handle vast amounts of information and to distinguish their own and other's voices in an argument, and the improvement of their own critical writing and argumentative skills and practices. Similar to these findings, Park (2003), in a study conducted

in the UK, found that the importance of plagiarism and referencing was not always apparent or rendered explicit to the students in his study. The results of his study, as with those of the current study, would suggest that these benefits need to be made explicit when students come to university through training and continuous practice and interaction in the classroom.

Sharing of knowledge with other practitioners and scholars has been found to be fundamentally the core function of academic writing, and referencing plays an important and crucial role in this sharing process. Neville (2012:2) makes this point clear when he emphasises the importance of referencing to the academic community: it “facilitates collective development and transmission of academic knowledge”. He comments further that scholars are expected to be critical of, and critically evaluate, this available knowledge. This critical approach includes the intelligent selection, review, analysis and presentation of ideas in support of the chosen argument. This suggests that referring to the work of others is a crucial part of this critical approach and that it is imperative for the students to understand the benefits underpinning referencing in order to appreciate the value and importance of referencing.

5.4 UNDERSTANDING OF REFERENCING AND ITS CONSTITUENTS

While students in the current study understood what referencing means, they did not grasp the full detail of the practice. Most of students in the sample were not able to differentiate between a reference list, a bibliography, and citation, and could not see how these concepts relate to each other. While these students also understood that referencing was about acknowledging the work of others in their own writing, they did not understand the value of referencing for themselves in their own writing, including the value of helping them identify a gap(s) in the field, and one to which they could then contribute by doing their own research in that area. Gullifer and Tyson (2010), Gu and Brooks (2007), Devlin and Gray (2007) and Ashworth et al. (1997) all observed similar results with their participants. The participants understood what plagiarism is; however they had a problem identifying in full what constitutes plagiarism. For example, students in the study done by Gullifer and Tyson (2010) had little insight into the scholarship of the importance of citation and attribution to authenticate their own work, and they battled with the idea of intertextuality and ownership of ideas. Moreover, students in the earlier Lea and Street (1998) study lacked clarity with regard to the relationship between plagiarism and correct referencing. This remains a serious concern 20 years later, as students

need to understand the relationship between referencing, plagiarism and academic writing in order to succeed in academic institutions.

Students in the current study acknowledged that they all used the Harvard style of referencing; however when they were asked to explain how to use the Harvard style of referencing, they provided inconsistent technical descriptions of how to reference using this style. Mertens and Baethge (2011), and Pears and Shields (2008), emphasise that it is crucial for academic writers to ensure that the references in their work are formulated precisely and accurately. They point out that this makes it easy and quick for other scholars in the field to access the information and encourages knowledge sharing within the academic community. These studies suggest the need for technical referencing skills to be learnt and practised by students on a continuous basis in order for them to learn and fully acquire, and be able to use these skills and practices, and that teaching strategies to deal with students' apparent lack of understanding of, and ability to apply, these practices are needed.

5.5 FIRST FORMAL REFERENCING TRAINING

Unfortunately, the students in the current study reported that they had never had training in these practices in high school. Some of them said that they were only instructed to reference, but were not really taught how to reference nor why referencing was important. Similarly, the McCabe (1999) study on academic dishonesty amongst US students, reported that students in the study had been exposed to almost no discussion or teaching about referencing in their schools. Students participating in the current study reported that referencing was only mentioned briefly during orientation at the beginning of the year, and that they experienced formal referencing training for the first time in university (CPUT). Consequently, these students found the skill too overwhelming and difficult to learn in the short space of time afforded. Usually at this institution the training happens during the orientation period, in the first term of the first year. Furthermore, these students felt that the training was not sufficient and that they should be given an opportunity to practice, learn and gradually acquire and use the skill correctly and in a beneficial way. The findings in this study are not unique: participants in the Devlin and Gray (2007) study, conducted in Australia, also felt that referencing and plagiarism training was inadequate and resulted in poor understanding of the referencing. Moreover, university students in Gullifer and Tyson (2010) study also reported that discussions about plagiarism were only conducted at the beginning of the year and no further discussion

or learning workshops were provided after that. These studies, together with the current study, suggest that this issue needs to be addressed urgently taking into consideration the complex nature of the referencing skill and its relationship to other academic concepts and conventions that also need to be acquired, such as the awareness of plagiarism and academic writing practices. The studies also suggest that expecting students to learn these concepts overnight, or by osmosis, is unrealistic and that lecturers need to be mindful of this when dealing with students entering higher education institutions and academic Discourse communities.

Moreover, the majority of students participating in the current study reported that they had never received feedback about referencing, or on their attempts at referencing, at school. This was because they were never specifically taught how to reference in high school. At the university, they reported that feedback from lecturers was sometimes not sufficiently detailed or specific. Feedback mainly focussed on incorrect format and warnings about the seriousness of plagiarism without explaining the importance of referencing and the specific implications of plagiarism for academic research. Students were also instructed to use electronic applications to check for plagiarism in their document. These findings would suggest that training is needed for lecturers as well as students in referencing and on how to provide effective and useful feedback to students. The findings also suggest the need for assessment strategies to be evaluated to check whether, and in what specific ways, they provide an opportunity for the students to build their academic literacy skills. Moreover, the conditions around the provision of feedback need to be evaluated as results from other scholars such as Heckler and Forde (2014) have showed that excessive work loads of lecturers were not conducive to their providing much needed developmental feedback on the content of students' work as well as on their referencing skills and practices. In addition huge classes were not conducive to providing individual constructive/developmental feedback. The findings of the current study suggest that such shortcomings need to be evaluated among the CPUT staff as well

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of my study, and on the literature reviewed, my recommendations include introducing critical reading and writing skill in all subjects in high school and in all undergraduate subjects across the curriculum. I would argue that use of assessment practices that promote and build critical reading and writing would provide the trigger for students to

realise the value and importance of referencing. Thus, I would recommend that students be made aware that reading, writing and referencing are interlinked skills that cannot happen in isolation. In order to produce acceptable and credible academic writing a student needs to correlate his own thoughts and ideas with existing literature, and this can only be achieved by reading a range of different literature sources, analysing and interpreting the information found, citing the origin of the information, and sharing her own information and argument with others, thus opening up the possibility for receiving valuable critical feedback.

Thus, I would recommend that training in referencing start at an early stage in school. For this to happen, ideally teachers themselves need to be trained in referencing styles and conventions, in how to teach referencing, in choosing appropriate assessment techniques that promote and develop referencing practices in learners, as well as in giving constructive and developmental feedback to learners in manner that promotes learning on an ongoing basis. This would help learners understand why referencing is important and the benefits of referencing throughout their education and academic literacy lives. Then, I would advocate for students entering university for the first time undergoing an intensive and practical/’hands on’ training in academic referencing and related concepts. These students should attend refresher courses throughout their academic lives to reinforce and improve these academic skills and practices. Lecturers and tutors themselves should also receive training in referencing, in how to teach referencing, and how to provide the kinds of useful and developmental feedback that facilitates learning. Interaction between students, teachers and lecturers in the practices of referencing and the negative aspects of plagiarism should not be based on warning the students about the consequences of plagiarism; instead, more time should be spent helping and encouraging students to develop referencing skills and practices, and giving them a sense of responsibility and agency to acquire and share the skill with others. In order to achieve this, referencing training should not be a one-off orientation exercise, but be longer, more in-depth, practical, and ongoing throughout the years a student is at the university.

Policies on plagiarism should be made more visible, explicit, accessible, and included in the training sessions and student guides, so that the students can thoroughly familiarise themselves with them. Clarity from the university about who is responsible for developing referencing skills and practices would be needed. The roles to be played by faculty and by the department in developing students’ referencing skills, and the respective responsibilities of these stakeholders, also need to be made clear. All staff members need to undergo training

themselves to ensure that they themselves understand these concepts, and that they are familiar with all policies and aware of their roles and responsibilities in teaching referencing skills and practices.

5.7 CONCLUSION

This study has concluded from the findings that some socio-cultural and educational background experiences, such as lack of encouragement of academic reading and writing as well as lack of formal referencing and plagiarism training had led to students in the study sample having difficulties in adapting to the demands of the university concerning academic literacy practices. Other factors, such as dependency on superiors, and on the provided textbooks also resulted in students battling to understand the role and value of referencing in academic writing, as well as its role in the avoidance and prevention of plagiarism, including lack of understanding of plagiarism itself. Furthermore the study concludes that, although there is a form of training offered to first year students in the first term at the university, the students participating in the study felt that the training did not achieve its purpose, and that, as a result, students did not understand, or had acquired only a limited understanding of, the concept of referencing and were not really clear in terms of its benefit to them in their academic lives. Therefore, they recommended, as I have recommended, that the training period be extended and that more practical sessions on referencing in a learning environment be implemented.

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APPENDIX A: INFORMATION LETTER

Dear Participant

I, Nozuko Mbutho, am presently registered for a Masters in Higher Education at the Department of Education, University of Cape Town. In order to complete the research component of this programme I am required to complete a mini dissertation which includes conducting a study in the field of higher education.

The title of the study is:

Socio-cultural factors that influence the ways B-Tech students think about referencing and related concepts as a literacy practice

Ethics reference number:	EDNREC2017-08-06 (UCT) CPUT/HW-REC2017/H26 (CPUT)
Name of the supervisor:	Dr. Catherine Hutchings
Name of the student:	Mrs. Nozuko Mbutho

I am writing to respectfully request your participation in my research project by participating in a face to face unstructured interview. The purpose of the study is to determine if background education, socio-cultural values, and power relations in society influence the way students think about referencing and related concepts. The interview will be held at the department of Wellness sciences at CPUT in a private room to ensure privacy and confidentiality. The interview will take 30 minutes to an hour to complete.

The interview will include questions on the following broad themes:

How reading and writing skills were encouraged at your high school as compared to your higher educational institution.

When you first learned about referencing.

What feedback you got on referencing in your assignments at school.

What feedback you got on referencing in your assignments at university.

How you think differences in culture and power structures in society influence the way students think about referencing.

While there may be no direct benefit to you, the participant, it is hoped that your participation will help lecturers and academics to understand the struggles students face in higher education institutions related to referencing and related concepts beyond just textual issues. Participants will have access to the findings of the study after the study is completed.

My role in this is purely as a researcher, and not a lecturer, and therefore the information obtained from the interview will not influence your marks. When data is published, your anonymity will be protected, and personal details will be kept confidential.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may at any stage withdraw from the study. All the information obtained from the interview will be kept in the possession of the research team only (Supervisor, researcher and the individual transcribing the data). Contact details of the researcher for further information are as follows; telephone: 021 460 3435 or e-mail mbuthon@cput.ac.za.

Thank you for your interest and participation

Yours sincerely

Nozuko Mbutho

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

Title of the research study:

Socio-cultural factors that influence the ways B-Tech students think about referencing and related concepts as a literacy practice.

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Catherine Hutchings

Name of the researcher: Mrs. Nozuko Mbutho

Date: _____

Please circle the appropriate answer

1. I have been asked to participate in the above-mentioned study	Yes	No
2. I have been informed about the study by the researcher	Yes	No
3. I have had the chance to ask questions regarding the study	Yes	No
4. I am satisfied with the answers	Yes	No
5. I have received enough information about the study	Yes	No
6. I understand that my participation in this research study is voluntary and I will not be penalized or lose benefits if I refuse to participate or decide to stop.	Yes	No
7. I understand that I am free to withdraw from study at any time without having to explain myself.	Yes	No
8. I understand I will be given a signed copy of this consent form document and the participant information sheet which is a written summary of research	Yes	No
9. The research study, including the above information, has been described to me orally. I understand what my involvement in the study means and I voluntarily agree to participate.	Yes	No
10. I understand that all my details will be kept anonymous and that what I say in the interview will remain confidential and will not have an impact on my marks.	Yes	No

You may contact myself, the researcher, Nozuko Mbutho at (021 460 3435) or e-mail at mbuthon@cput.ac.za at any time if you have further questions about the study.

I _____ the undersigned, hereby agree to participate in this research study.

Name of participant: _____

Signature: _____

Telephone: _____

Date: _____

Email: _____

Name of researcher: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:**

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Project: Socio-cultural factors that influence the ways B-Tech students think about referencing and related concepts as a literacy practice

Time of the interview _____ **Date** _____ **Place** _____

Interviewer _____ **Interviewee** _____

Study code _____

Interview procedure

This interview is a face-to-face interview. The interview will be audio taped and will be transcribed verbatim. Only the interviewer and the interviewee will be in the venue. The interview results will be confidential, and you will not be identified personally. The interview will take 30 minutes to an hour. Further interview might be requested.

Informed consent

Please sign the informed consent to show your willingness to volunteer in the study.

Questions

How were reading and writing skills encouraged at your high school as compared to university?

When doing your projects, did you read a lot of books or articles to help you understand the topic better at your high school as compared to university?

How many books and articles did you read, for example, at high school in preparation for your projects as compared to university?

Were you encouraged to read further than the textbook at high school for each individual subject as compared to university?

How does what you have reported in your answers to the above questions affect your reading and writing habits?

Do you prefer the lecturer to tell you everything about the topic at hand in class here at the university, or do you think finding information for yourself is more valuable, and how does experience this differ from your experience of finding information at high school?

How do you think your experience of reading and writing affected your referencing skills in high school as compared to university?

When did you first learn about referencing?

How was referencing taught?

What is your understanding of referencing?

Why do you do it?

How do you do it?

What style of referencing do you use?

Can you explain the difference between citation, referencing, and bibliography?

Do you think referencing is necessary and why?

What sort of punishment do you think people who do not reference deserve?

What feedback did you get on referencing in your assignments at school?

What feedback did you get on referencing in your assignments at university?

Do you think differences in culture and power structures in society influence the way students think about referencing? In what ways do they do this?

Have you come across any cultural/ institutional differences relating to referencing?

Closing

Thank you for participating in the study. I will contact you in the future for a follow up interview if required. Please feel free to contact me at mbuthon@cput.ac.za or 021 4603435.

APPENDIX D: BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Project: Socio-cultural factors that influence the ways B-Tech students think about referencing and related concepts as a literacy practice

Name and Surname:

**Contact details cell
number:**

High school Name:

**Type of high school:
Model C/ Public/ Private**

**Potential B-Tech class
2018/ B-tech 2017**

Province:

Ethnicity:

Age:

Current University:

**Previous higher education
institutions attended**

APPENDIX E: ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER - UCT



School of Education

Dr Linda Cooper

Associate Professor

University of Cape Town, Private Bag X3, Rondebosch, 7701

Physical address: 5.16, Neville Alexander Building, University Ave South, Upper Campus

Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 3999 / 2772 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 3489

E-mail: linda.cooper@uct.ac.za <http://www.education.uct.ac.za/edu/staff/academic/lcooper>

EDNREC2017-08-06

6 August 2017

Nozuko Mbutho

RE: Ethical Clearance for Master's Research Project

I am pleased to inform you that ethical clearance has been granted by the School of Education Ethics Review Committee of the Faculty of Humanities for your Master's research project entitled: **Socio-cultural factors that influence the ways B-tech students think about referencing and related concepts as a literacy practice**. I wish you all the best with your study.

Yours sincerely,

Signature removed to avoid exposure online

Associate Professor Linda Cooper

Acting Chair, School of Education Research Ethics Committee

APPENDIX F: CPUT ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER



HEALTH AND WELLNESS SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HW-REC)

Registration Number NHREC: REC- 230408-014

P.O. Box 1906 • Bellville 7535 South Africa

Symphony Road Bellville 7535

Tel: +27 21 959 6917

Email: sethn@cput.ac.za

21 November 2018

REC Approval Reference No:
CPUT/HW-REC 2017/H26

Dear Ms Nozuko Mbutho

Re: APPLICATION TO THE HW-REC FOR ETHICS CLEARANCE

Approval was granted by the Health and Wellness Sciences-REC on 19 October 2017 to Ms Mbutho, for ethical clearance. This approval is for research activities related to student research in the University of Cape Town.

TITLE: Socio-cultural factors that influence the ways B-tech students think about referencing and related concepts as a literacy practice Supervisor: Catherine Hutchings

Comment:

Approval will not extend beyond 22 November 2019. An extension should be applied for 6 weeks before this expiry date should data collection and use/analysis of data, information and/or samples for this study continue beyond this date.

The investigator(s) should understand the ethical conditions under which they are authorized to carry out this study and they should be compliant to these conditions. It is required that the investigator(s) complete an **annual progress report** that should be submitted to the HWS-REC in December of that particular year, for the HWS-REC to be kept informed of the progress and of any problems you may have encountered.

Kind Regards

Signature removed to avoid exposure online

Mr. Navindhra Naidoo

Chairperson – Research Ethics Committee Faculty of Health and Wellness Sciences