Reflections on a PhD journey

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Supervision

1. Communicate every **2 weeks** with your supervisors

2. Send **emails** to supervisors of work that will be handed in the future - create deadlines for yourself

3. Not **their responsibility** to contact you!

4. Supervisors and their **previous** students' **work**:

- ❑ **E- resources** and **E-thesis and dissertations (Library website)**

- ❑ (academic writing, outline of chapters, personal preferences of supervisors)

Similar Thesis

1. Find **thesis'** that are **similar** to your topic:

- - References
- - Literature review
- - Data analysis and interpretation

2. Use **Diagrams and tables**

My Research study

- **Racial identity as narrated by young South African adults with parents from different racial heritages**

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to the study

1. **Introduction:** [(i) My purpose of the study, (ii) International literature and South African literature on the topic]

- The purpose of this study is to explore how young adults in South Africa construct a biracial identity. In the American literature, the term **biracial** is used to refer to individuals who have parents from two socially defined races (Francis, 2006:2). Similarly, in the South African literature, the word **biracial** is used to refer to children from interracial relationships (Blankenberg, 2000; Francis, 2006; Maré, 2005; Mojapelo-Batka, 2008; Morral, 1994). **Internationally,** most biracial studies have been conducted in Canada, the United States of America (USA) and Britain, **with an emphasis** on exploring the factors that influence biracial identity construction, understanding the experience of being an individual with a biracial heritage and examining the identity formation of biracial individuals (Aspinall, 2003; Brunsma & Rockquemore, 2001; Song, 2010b; Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007).

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to the study

2. Locating myself within the literature ((i) interest in topic, (ii) reflexivity, (iii) being an insider researcher)

3. Rationale of my study (why is there continued research in this area, mini-literature review [what do we know…what we don't know..- gap in literature – aim of study is to build upon existing literature…

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to the study

4. Socio-historical context – South African context (I discussed Identity within the South African context)

5. Purpose and possible contribution of study ((i) explore…, (ii) objectives of the study, (iii) which theories will you contribute to?

6. Research questions: (Primary/ secondary)

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to the study

7. Theoretical framework: Root's (1999; 2003a; 2003b) ecological theory of multiracial identity:

- **(ii)** *the regional history of race relations of a country* refers to identity that is influenced by and subsequently influences racial history, racial proportions, and economics of a country. **Thus, within this study, I was aware of how South Africa's racial past may influence young biracial adults' identity construction** (Root, 2003a; 2003b);

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to the study

8. Concepts: Provide definitions for concepts within your research question

9. Overview of Research Methodology

Table 1.1 provides a visual overview of the research process, which will be discussed in depth in Chapter 3.

Paradigmatic approaches	I employed a postcolonial feminist paradigm
Research Design	I selected a narrative inquiry design as it is particularly suited to the exploration of one's identity construction

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- **Summary- what is your understanding of the literature**

- **I** concur with Singh (1997), who argues that in their newly democratic country South Africans have a significant opportunity to transcend and create new identities and a new understanding of who they are.

- **I propose that extensive research is needed,** specifically to understand how individuals with a biracial heritage construct an identity in post-apartheid South Africa **to contribute to current knowledge and literature on racial identity theory.**

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- Furthermore **within the study**, self-concept is defined as "*the sum total of an individual's thoughts, feelings and imaginations of who they are*" (Stets & Burke, 2003:5).

- **I support – within the context of my study –** the idea that the self-concept can exist only in a person's mind, while identity is essentially social (Swann & Bosson, 2010).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- As the study focuses on the identity construction of young adults, **I support Erikson's view that identity formation** does not end during adolescence, but rather that identity formation is an on-going process that continues and evolves throughout adulthood (Hoare, 2002).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- **For the purpose of this study, I kept in mind that the participants could not be understood apart from their social contexts,** as individuals and society are intricately interwoven and dynamically related in continual change (Erikson, 1959; Sokol, 2009).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- **I concur** with Huntemann and Morgan (2012), who advocate this statement by not viewing identity construction as passive, fixed and an internal phenomenon

- Within the context of this study, **I considered the family** as the first or primary agent of socialisation (Lucas, Milkie & Rohall, 2007).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- **Theory on racial socialization:**

- I was cognisant that participants may express multiple ways in which their **parents chose to racially socialise them.**

- Firstly, **the participants' parents** may have promoted cultural knowledge and traditions and endorsed cultural pride, thus engaging **in *cultural socialisation.***

- Secondly, **parents m**ay have chosen to engage in ***preparation for bias*** in which they employed racism awareness training and communicated discrimination and coping strategies with the **participants as children.**

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- **FACTORS THAT MAY INFLUENCE BIRACIAL IDENTITY FORMATION** (7 PAGES ON CURRENT LITERATURE FROM SIMILAR STUDIES)

- ✓ FAMILY
- ✓ PEERS
- ✓ ENVIRONMENT
- ✓ CULTURE

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

- Definition

- **Application** of research method within the study

- How does the research methodology enhance my study– **Link it to your research question**

- What are the **limitations** – how will you **overcome** potential limitations? **(Strengths and Limitations)**

- Paradigm , Research design, Qualitative approach, selection of participants (sampling), data collection and documentation and data analysis.

Chapter 4: Results and Literature Control

- **Peer debriefing** is so important

- **Current trends** – Results and literature control (Chapter 2- lit review/ new literature)

- **Socio-cultural context** is important for readers! (i.e. language in South Africa)

- Summary of **Similarities**/ **Contradictions** and **New Insights**

Chapter 4: Results and Literature Control

- **Integrated discussions and interpretations …on category 1:**

- **As encountered in studies** by Fhagen-Smith (2003) and Suyemoto and Dimas (2003), the biracial adults **in this study** showed a preference for a certain cultural heritage in their family.

Chapter 4: Results and Literature Control

- **In support of several other biracial studies** (Buckley & Carter, 2004; Henriksen & Trusty, 2004; Korgen, 1998; Khanna & Johnson, 2010; Nakazawa, 2003; Miville *et al*., 2005; Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007; Roque, 2011; Suyemoto, 2004; Tahiro, 2002: Tang, Ann, Mullins, Brackett & McKenzie, 2006; Williams, 2011), the young South African biracial adults **in the current study** confirmed that

Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

- **Overview** of preceding chapters

- Situating your results within the **theoretical framework**

- **Conclusions** in terms of research questions

- **New insights –** Contribution to existing knowledge

- **Limitations-** Recommendations (practice and research)

Introduction and rationale

- o - Why are you doing the study? / back ground to the study.

- o - Reasons for the study (motivation)

- o - What does the (theoretical) literature say about teenage pregnancy in South African schools.

- o Development of initial idea / and research question

Introduction and rationale -

- **The focus of the study is ....**

- **- international literature on topic**
- According to international scholars teachers' experience the following regarding teenage pregnancy .... (USA, Britain, Asia)

- - **national literature on topic**

- Within the South Africa context, the following authors have found that ....

- **- gap in literature (what is known and unknown)**

- - I have noticed that there is **a gap in literature** regarding teachers' experiences of teenage pregnancy in the classroom in a South Africa context............

Rationale –(brief to the point!)

- Reasons for the study

- How did you come **to be interested** in this study?

- why have I chosen this research question?

- How am I going to fill **the gap in literature**?

- How will my **research add to existing literature**?

- Add a personal component/ background context

Literature review (what have other authors said about the topic)

- **- international literature**

- **- national literature**

- - **trends and critical issues** in literature

- **- gap in** literature (what is known and unknown)

- - relate it to **your research question**

- (articles and books that help me to understand the area that I am researching)

RELEVANT TO YOUR RESEARCH QUESTION AND PURPOSE

Literature review

1. **Identify key terms:** to use in your search for literature =(research question)

2. **Locate the literature:** (Online website search= Eric database and Google scholar)

3. **Critically evaluate and select the literature** for your review: (is it a good source, is it relevant to your research study)

4. **Organize the literature:** Visual picture – create a literature map to organize the work –how will you present the different sections to your audience.

5. **Write a Literature review:** Review must be organized, headings, sub-headings , text referencing, logical subdivisions of the text, sentences must make sense…

6. **Conclusion:** what have you learnt from reading the literature???

(Creswell, 2nd edition).

# Literature review/ conceptual framework (synthesis)

- **Trends and critical issues** in existing literature

- **Concepts** in research question to be discussed in this section

- Indicate what **is known in your study.**

- Indicate what has **already been written** in your study

- Indicate what **has not been written about**

Literature review/ conceptual framework (synthesis)

- Is the review well **organized and flows** logically

- References have to be published recently **(2008-2014)**

- Is the literature **review comprehensive** (does it cover all the concepts in your research question)

- **Text references** to be added in your literature review

Literature review/ ~~conceptual~~ framework (synthesis)

- Who said what??

- Described
- Stated
- Discussed
- Argued
- Identified
- Agree
- Explored
- Confirm
- Elaborated
- Expands
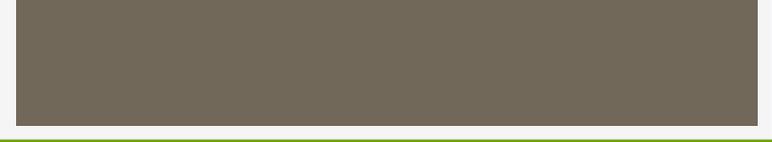
Assumptions: (what do I think the participants will say- what do I think I will find out during data collection)

Purpose

- There is **a gap** in the literature

- Fill that **gap in literature** by doing this study

- Adding to the **body of existing literature** and knowledge

- **Expand the literature** on the topic

- What is the **significance** of your research study

Paradigmative perspectives: (justify your choice)

- 1. **epistemology/ paradigm** = (interpretivism/ social constructivism…..etc….)

- 2. **methodological approach=** (qualitative or quantitative approach….)

- 3. **Research design =** (Narrative design/ case study design, etc….)

- 4. **selection of participants =** (Snowball sampling, convenience sampling, purposive sampling)

Paradigmative perspectives: (justify your choice)

- 5. **data collection methods** (interviews, questionnaire,)

- 6. data analysis (**inductive analysis/ deductive analysis)**

7. Ethical considerations

- - Informed consent
- - confidentiality / anonymity
- -Protect the participants from harm
- - Reflexivity (Role of the researcher)

8. Quality Criteria

8. 1. Credibility

- Prolonged engagement
- Peer debriefing
- Member checking
- Crystallization

8. Quality Criteria

- **8.2 Transferability:**

- in-depth and rich descriptions of the phenomenon being studied.

- **8.3 Dependability:**
- - audit trail

8. Quality Criteria

- **8.4 Confirmability**

- Reflexivity