

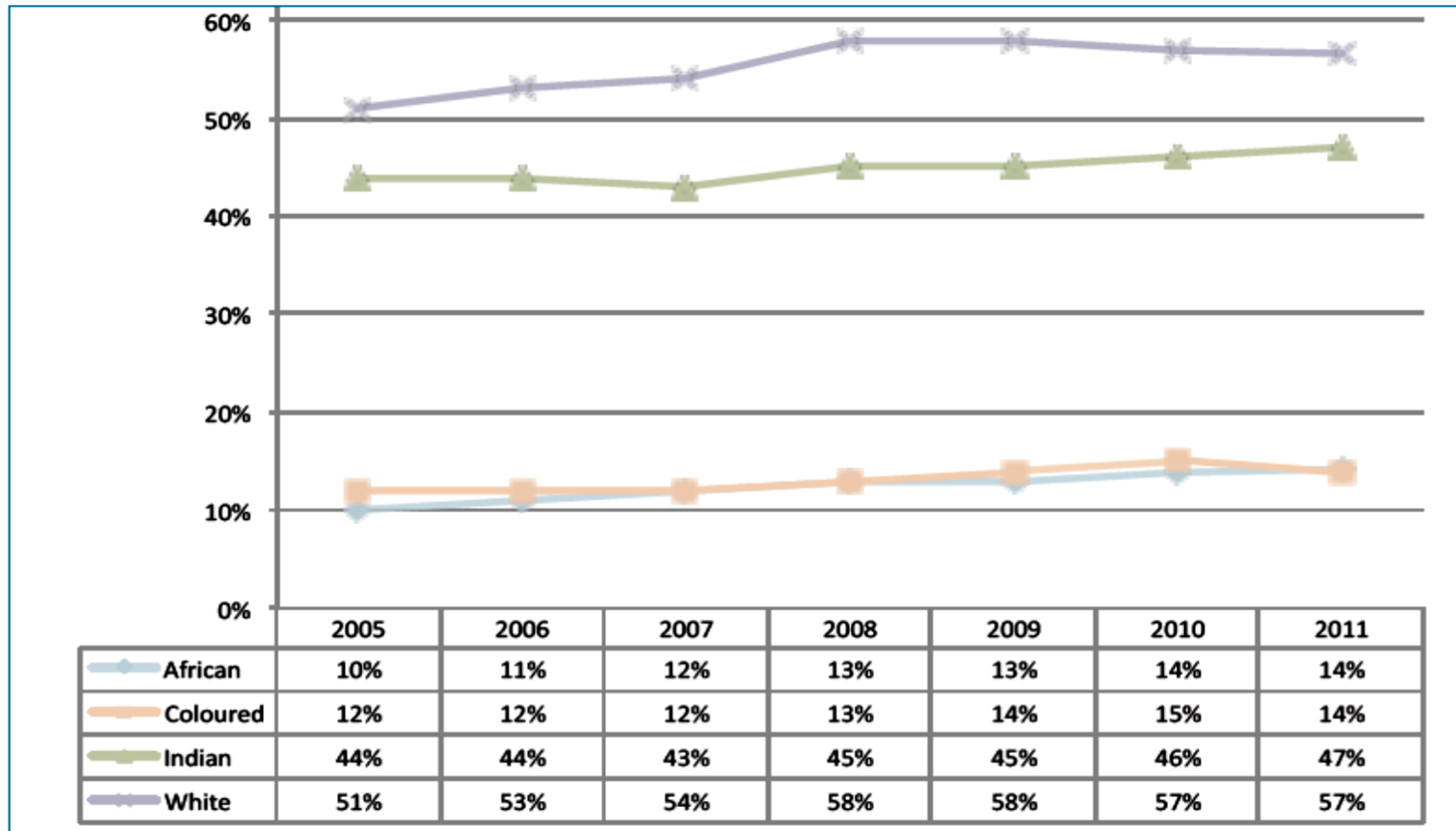
The university students' use of alternative social/cultural networks as support systems to improve their overall campus experience and academic throughput

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Point of departure:

Mamdani's (1999) conceptualisation of South Africa as a 'two nations' country, constituted by the 'world of the settler' and the 'world of the native', is evident within all South Africa's institutions and structures, including the HET sector

Context



CHE, 2013: Gross higher education participation rates by race for 2005 to 2011

How/has race impacted your life?

NWUSTUD5: Not much because I believe like now South Africa is free and stuff so opportunities are given to everyone irrespective of their culture, their race and staff so I think that's fine.

UKZNSTUD3: No, I am a freedom baby. I don't care if you are black, white, or pink. I am colour blind,

UFHSTUD1:- [I] I never thought about that actually think that I grow up in Umtata it was black dominated I haven't heard circumstance with that could take me to that question.

How/has race affected your life?

UKZNSTUD1: What I can say is that to be a black south African, our identity because I want to start with our identity I will come with my identity, has affected us especially at the university not in a good manner because we are the ones who starts strikes we are the one who are complaining, we are the one, even to other races we end up being that race that is always complaining you know

UCTSTUD5: Like race is actually everywhere, like no matter how much you try to avoid it or ignore it, it somehow still there.

Structural Impacts

UFHSTU10: (researchers summary): He has spent the past four months shuttling between campus and home in the rural Eastern Cape in order to find the money to pay back a friend who lent him the R2400 required to register for this year. Eventually he succeeded in getting his grandfather to give him the money even though his grandfather's wife did not approve. He is currently failing maths but passing his other subjects. He says he has been working as hard as possible given all the uncertainties and that although he has some 'mental health issues' from all his worries and stresses over fees, he has not been to the Student Counselling Unit – 'although I should have gone'. He tells me its 'fear and pride' that keeps him away from seeking out more help. He lives off campus and survives on R850 a month for board and lodging, that his mother sends him.

Structural/personal?

UL – mother alcoholic, brother arrested for killing someone, failing his courses, his friends told him to go back to varsity. Didn't think of accessing student support system. Incredible adversities yet doesn't access.

SM: Are there any services for students here you know like if you have a problem you can go to and help you with the problem?

NWUSTUD4: Ya there are a lot of services here like the SI that I have just mentioned, there is academic development center we can always go there they help with assignments, they just instruct you with whatever that you want even maybe if we have social problems or something like that there are groups on campus some of them am not even aware of them but I here that there are some place where you can go there are some psychologists ya.

BM: And any other support services?

UCTSTUD1: Support; I know they are available I know about the writing centre but I never used it.

CPUTSTUD1 : I know about the writing center yes but I don't really go there much because, the only time I do the writing for subjects called software kills programming but that is only installed in the commerce building so I would ever go there.

EA and do you think the people use the counseling Fundani [academic support services] and a career service as well? Do you think the students use them as much as they should?

CPUTSTUD4: I don't think they do.

EA: And why do you say that?

CPUTSTUD4: I don't know. It's just that when you pass by their offices it's just quiet. There is no one there.

UCTSTUD3: Students wellness there is a lot, there is never a day if I don't see people there is always people but many don't know how to use it. I know with commerce students, they very close minded they actually don't want to do anything they came here to get their degrees they would rather die. They are a big problem, I was close to so many of them making use of facilities here at UCT, I don't know if you are familiar with UCTSTUD10 is also on the project. He is back home he stays at the rural areas he was a commerce student and he didn't get excluded academically he did not want help. Commerce student that's why they get excluded a lot because they do not know where to go for help.

- how models of student support are developed and why?
- how do we know that the student support services make a valuable contribution to the objectives of the institutions they serve?
- student support programmes, how do we know that they are effective?
- student support programmes are modelled on the paradigm of psychological counselling
- however, prior to enrolment at the university what are forms of support do the young people access
- how many students prior to dropping out of university access student support programmes

Deficit model / Disadvantage

The dominant thinking in higher education attempts to understand student difficulty by framing students and their families of origin as *lacking* some of the academic and cultural resources necessary to succeed in what is presumed to be a fair and open society (Smit, 2012:369).