

Student safety and security for sustainable and inclusive residences: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract: Whether a campus is rural or urban, large, or small, private or public, policy makers and administrators within higher education institutions (HEIs) globally, face difficult decisions about how to respond to the challenges brought by theft, robbery and violence as they arise in student residences. Even though campus officials may have grappled with similar questions for decades, they have done so with increasing urgency and scrutiny in the wake of student stabbings, gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), robberies and sexual violence on and around campuses over the last decade. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by all member states of the United Nations (UN) in 2015, which South Africa is signatory. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 signaled the local, regional, and continental commitment of governments and stakeholders in Southern Africa and the rest of the continent of Africa, together to confront challenges that must be successfully overcome if student safety and security to be realised on and around campuses, including residences. To this end, student safety and security, where safety applies to creating protection from risks or dangers and security refers to the state of being free from danger or threats. These concepts are not concerned with whether students co-exist or live amid violent or safer communities, rather challenges HEIs communities to provide an effective programming framework for promoting inclusive and sustainable student settlements. The shortage of safe student accommodations or settlements in South Africa and the high demand for student population indicate the potential of the impetus for more sustainable and safer residences. The aim of this paper is to report on the findings of student population's perceived risk regarding safety in student residences. A quantitative approach following a cross-sectional design was employed. The data gathering instrument was a paper-based, self-administered structured questionnaire, which included a standardised measuring instrument using a five-point Likert scale. Approximately 260 questionnaires were distributed at a public university in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (also known as the City of Tshwane), Pretoria West Campus residences. A total of 60 students participated in this study. A random cluster sampling procedure was utilised to select potential respondents. The results of this study were that although most of the respondents in the exclusively female residences indicated that they felt reasonably safe in their residences, the responses from the mixed residences yielded conflicting responses. However, not all the respondents were willing to talk about their experiences and many were willing to talk off the record only about their experiences. Recommendations include ensuring that students receive adequate protection around and in the residences to help alleviate safety concerns they have as well as having campus security officials and other structures that practice campus safety concepts.

Keywords: Institutions of higher learning; residence; robbery, safety; security; student; security measures; residences

Introduction

The 2030 Agenda adopted by all United Nations (UN) Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for safety, security, peaceful co-existence and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action to address poverty of social groups, ethnic tensions within states, disintegration of elements of social ties, lack of care for the environment, non-compliance with the rules of social coexistence, weakening of the system of values and moral norms, intensification of social pathology (i.e., addictions, corruption), and social alienation are some of the factors that create unfavourable external conditions for the growth of humanity, by all countries, developed and developing, in a global partnership. Lack of ‘safety and security’ on campus, the challenges both HEIs administrators and relevant stakeholders inclusive of student population, to come up with progressive, implementable, and relevant solutions to reduce insecurity in and around student residences. For decades, students were not considered as relevant stakeholders when issues of student settlements or residences were discussed and implemented by HEIs. This lack of inclusion of student bodies by policy makers and administrators in decision making process, has brought myriad of challenges regarding safety and security in student residences. Mthethwa and Chikoko (2020, p. 211) concur with the above statement that “during the apartheid period in South Africa, students at historically black HEIs were excluded from participating in institutional decision-making affecting their enrollment, fee allocation, academic challenges and general well-being.”

Regarding exclusion of students as stakeholders from participating in institutional decision-making affecting their safety and security in residences, in order to understand the concept of inclusion, it is important to initially explain its opposite (Ojo, 2022). Exclusion happens when settlement dwellers are directly denied access to what they should normally be entitled to. If members of a settlement find themselves in a situation where they are unable to fully participate in economic, social, political, and cultural life, as well as the process leading to and sustaining their settlement, such persons can be described as excluded (Silver, 1994). Mapesela and Hay (2005) as cited in Mthethwa and Chikoko (2020, p. 212), highlight that during apartheid, students were not given opportunities to voice their concerns on tuition, the academic programmes offered and accommodation challenges they faced. Conversely, Martin and Cobigo (2011) posit that inclusion involves a deliberate process of systemic reforms to overcome the barriers of exclusion and to provide everyone with an equitable environment and opportunities that best correspond to their needs. Inclusion should be viewed as a deliberate process and a goal for settlements that want to do well. The upsurge of student protests at historically black HEIs between 1960s and 1980s heightened the pressure for change culminating in the promulgation of the Higher Education Act in 1997. This Act changed the landscape of HEIs to now include the Student Representative Council (SRC) as participants in university governance and therefore provided them the platform to influence issues related to student development (Mthethwa & Chikoko, 2020, p. 212). The goal is to improve the terms of participation in society for people who are disadvantaged based on their age, gender, disability, ethnicity, background, religion, and other aspects of socio-economic status. To achieve this, settlement dwellers must become more encompassing and welcoming of all persons while also embracing greater equality and tolerance.

How do the HEIs, policies, processes and goals of inclusion help to promote sustainable residences? One way to address that question is by revisiting the principles that underpin the 2030 Agenda for SDGs. Essentially, the Agenda 2030 is reinforced by the notion that all students should be able to reap the benefits of prosperity and basic standards of well-being (Ojo, 2022). The SDGs are designed with the intention of freeing all segments of society from poverty of social groups, ethnic tensions within states, disintegration of elements of social ties, lack of care for the environment, non-compliance with the rules of social coexistence, weakening of the system of values and moral norms, intensification of social pathology (i.e., addictions, corruption), and social alienation are some of the factors that create unfavourable external conditions in residences, by all stakeholders (Ojo, 2022, Ojo & Ojewale, 2019). Furthermore, inclusivity should be considered as an essential plank for fulfilling Agenda 2030 since the SDGs subsume targets that are aimed at promoting the rule of law, ensuring equal access to justice, and broadly fostering all-encompassing and participatory decision-making (Colglazier, 2015 as cited in Ojo, 2022).

There are many local and global hazards that threaten the sustenance and existence of human settlements (Leal, Azul, Brandli, Ozuyar & Wall, 2020) and the recent outbreak of COVID-19 is only one of example. An important lesson from these recent events is the realization that the nature of risk across human settlements has changed dramatically. Human-centred activities have become the dominant influence on the environment. A key element of this is the requirement for urban and rural settlements to provide security for their residents, businesses, and visitors. The objective of human settlement security is to safeguard the vital core of all human lives from critical pervasive threats in a way that is consistent with long-term human fulfilment (UN-Habitat, 2018). If this objective is unmet, settlement insecurity can entail substantial human and economic risks. However, if addressed, the safety and security

of students can be used as a mechanism to facilitate how residences on campuses and outside campuses including accredited residences, create more sustainable ways to live. Although there is a plethora of literature about the links between inclusivity and sustainable development, there is minimal understanding about how the safety and security of settlement dwellers can be used to facilitate the long-term sustainability of such settlements (Ojo, 2022).

Nowadays, both the challenges brought by crime and violence in HEIs residences and the evolution of society generate new consequences, which may be harmful for students development (Dlamini & Olanrewaju, 2021; Gopal & van Niekerk, 2018; Govender, 2020; Makhaye, 2021; Marakalala, Mofokeng, Khosa & Motlalekgosi, 2022; Masike & Mofokeng, 2014, 2017; Mathosa & Mofokeng, 2017; Steyn, Booysen, Foster & Ehlers, 2012); even across the continent of Africa (Attakora-Amaniampong, Appau & Osumanu, 2021; Aydin, 2014, 2015) and the world over (Carrico, 2016; Courtois & Leveson, 1996; Hemphill & LaBanc, 2010; Jore., 2017, 2019; Simpeh & Adisa, 2021, 2022; Sui, 2018). Even though violent crime exists everywhere (places of teaching and learning are no exception), more attention is paid when these incidents occur at a school, college, or university campus (Dibelka, 2019; Lynn, 2020). Researchers conclude that crime and violence are prevalent in higher learning communities. These campus safety issues also can affect the reputation of a college or university (Dibelka, 2019, p. 1). The law requires all HEIs to maintain a daily incident log and to publish an annual report that contains three years of campus crime statistics, in addition to disclosing their campus security policy to current and prospective students and employees. Also, the institutions must immediately notify or warn the campus community regarding any crime or activity considered to be a threat to students or employees. HEIs are held more responsible for their actions, or lack thereof, to ensure safety and keep students updated about how their concerns are being handled (Chekwa, Thomas & Jones, 2013, pp. 325-326). Therefore, HEIs should attach great importance to campus safety management to ensure the normal development of HEIs (Sui, 2018, p. 886).

There is research available on campus safety perspectives and issues, but these studies are primarily from the faculty, staff and administrators' perspectives. Of the few studies that show campus safety perspectives from the faculty and staff viewpoint, fewer of these studies reflect these perspectives as they occur on community college campuses. Students' perceptions of the safety and security provisions on HEI campuses are crucial to ensure that they get the best quality of service. The students' points of view, how they think the service will work efficiently and their special needs can be used as a cornerstone in reforming the security services into a modernised and efficient system. Students are the 'customers' of security services, but very little is known about their behaviours, attitudes and their perceptions of their safety and security needs (Syaznida, Normala, Azlini, Lukman & Kamal, 2018, p. 379). Even though William (2002) (cited in Navarez, 2017, p. 2) posits that it is risky to view students as customers, given the current atmosphere of higher education marketplace, there is a new moral prerogative that students have become customer, therefore, as fee payers, could reasonably demand that their views be heard and acted upon. Therefore, student satisfaction is of compelling interest to HEIs as they seek to improve the learning environment for students continually, meet the expectations of their constituent groups and legislative bodies and demonstrate their institutional effectiveness (Navarez, 2017, p. 2). The present paper fits into the category about the students' perspectives regarding the safety and security of public services provided at the residences located on the HEI campuses. The aim of this paper is to report on the findings of student populations' perceived risk regarding safety in HEI's residences. A quantitative approach following a cross-sectional design was employed. Furthermore, this paper investigates how HEIs can be proactive when it comes to safety and security at student residences. This was done to understand university students' perceived risks and fears of robberies on campus residences. A quantitative approach following a cross-sectional design was employed. The result should benefit not only the students but, ultimately, the university. The following section details reviews from various studies. Section 3 provides the approach used, Section 4 presents the results and discussions, and Section 5 concludes.

Literature Review

Safety and security

Muslim, Karim and Abdullah (2012a, b) posit that the majority of studies on residential satisfaction have been conducted in Western countries. These studies have examined how satisfied users are with their environments, the factors that account for satisfaction or dissatisfaction and the models, which may explain satisfaction. However, there is very little research to inform policy and practice, whether the results of the studies are generalisable to other developing countries. Hence, more research is needed in other contexts, to test the generalisability of the results and the models developed in Western contexts. Gopal and van Niekerk (2018, pp. 172, 175) share the same sentiments that a perusal of South African national databases demonstrates a significant body of literature on student residences in European countries, the United States and some in Australia, but a dearth of similar literature in a South African

context. Many South African residence students have had unsafe experiences, some of which have been documented by researchers in the field (Gopal & van Niekerk, 2018, pp. 172, 175). Gawlik-Kobylnska (2021, p. 2) posits that the concept “security and safety” is a broad and multi-faceted concept, discussed in detail and defined many times by scholars. The concept refers to individuals or social groups (micro- and macro-social categories), countries, regions, and the globe. Its understanding is considered as a state (giving a sense of confidence and guaranteeing its behaviour and a chance for improvement; it means no risk of losing something, e.g., health, material goods, respect, feelings) and process (a dynamic phenomenon to which a person is subjected).

Nas (2015, pp. 53-54) posits that it is seen that the words of safety and security are being used interchangeably in daily use of language. Yet these are defined as a synonym in many dictionaries. On the other hand, for a long while, there has been an attempt to clarify in what way “security” differs from “safety” in terms of meaning in aviation and maritime transportation. Following definitions have been made in the academic literature to make a distinction between these two words. Thus, the definitions of “safety” is considered as “the state of being away from hazards caused by natural forces or human errors randomly. The source of hazard is formed by natural forces and/or human errors. Security is defined as the state of being away from hazards caused by deliberate intention of human to cause harm. The source of hazard is posed by human deliberately.” The most common definition of security and safety is zero risk and protection against dangers (Zieba, 2012 as cited in Gawlik-Kobylnska, 2021, p. 2).

Inclusive higher education governance

The perceptions and experiences of students are important dynamics when considering campus life and safety at residences. HEIs seek to provide a secure environment in which students do not have to question their well-being. Residential satisfaction of university residences serves as one of the significant aspects in sustainability in higher education. Moeng (2021, p. 2) posits that universities around the world always play valuable roles in the economies of the cities and towns in which they are located. In France, they are known as *Villes Universitaires*, acknowledging that as university towns, they attract large numbers of students who come not only from other parts of the country, but also from across the world. Apart from the fees they pay – where such are applicable, particularly for foreign students – tertiary students contribute massively to the economies of their university towns. They shop, they go out for entertainment, they participate in sports and other leisure and developmental activities/ programmes of their university towns. In many cases, lifelong ties are established with the town and residents that students might meet there. Smart university towns appreciate the socio-economic value added by their temporary residents and they go out of their way to make themselves student friendly. Safety must be a key consideration in such arrangements, particularly in a country like South Africa, where GBVF is still prevalent.

Najib, Yusof and Osman (2011, p. 52) posit that lately, the residents’ satisfaction is used as an important indicator in assessing the student residences’ quality and the services provided within them by the HEI. Equally, the Minister of Higher Education and Training (DHET) appointed a Ministerial Committee in August 2010 to review the provision of student accommodation at HEIs and to benchmark South African universities against each other, as well as against international institutions operating in similar environments. This study found that, because of the exceedingly high demand for student housing, on-campus accommodation has been under pressure, often resulting in informal and unmanaged over-accommodation, including ‘squatting’ and significant overuse and decay of existing infrastructure and utility services (DHET, 2011, p. xiv). Youth and students are often at the forefront of the latest social trends, as well as being directly targeted by advertisers of anything new or up to date and their expectations, or at least their aspirations, are correspondingly high. In this light, where they have a choice, all students in all locations are increasingly swayed by the quality and availability of housing services and amenities. For instance, both on- and off-campus students at the University of British Columbia emphasised the importance of proximity to shops and services (Knight & Parr, 2010, cited in DHET, 2011, p. xiv).

The above statement is supported by La Roche, Flanigan and Copeland (2010, p. 45), that the students of the millennial generation have higher expectations regarding student residences and housing facilities. Douglas, Douglas and Barnes (2006, p. 264) believe that improving the students’ satisfaction can be achieved only if all the services that contribute to the ‘academic life’ are delivered to an appropriate standard, students being the only ones through which this issue can be assessed. As such, research on their satisfaction must be conducted regularly and the public services provided by the universities adapted accordingly. Results of a study conducted by Khozaei, Hassan and Ramayah (2011, p. 7335) show that the facilities most preferred by the students in the residences have free access to the internet, lockable storage space, mirrors in the rooms, water dispensers and a variety of snacks available in vending machines. This enables students to focus on their learning. However, this does not suggest that campus environments are crime-free or that those living, working, and attending classes at HEIs are free of fear or concern for their safety. During

recent years, South African universities have dominated headlines due to violent student protests. There is a growing need for these institutions to improve safety on campus, not only for students but for staff and security personnel as well (Dlamini & Olanrewaju, 2021, p. 220). One of many case studies, is an example of a rape of a foreign student at the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN) residences. In this study, Swartz, Mahali, Arogundade, Khalema, Rule Cooper, Molefi and Naidoo (2017) (cited in, Gopal & van Niekerk, 2018, p. 175) found safety not only to be a threat in UKZN but for many students across various universities in South Africa. Gopal and van Niekerk (2018, p. 175) posit that the study by Swartz et al. (2017) highlights UKZN students being particularly concerned with safety even though three years earlier the matter was raised with university management.

A particular event in which a female Lehigh University student, Jeanne Clery, was accosted in her sleep, assaulted, and murdered in her residence hall brought attention to colleges and universities minimising and failing to report crimes on their campuses. As a result of this tragic event, her parents became deeply committed to increasing campus safety and found there had been 38 violent crimes committed on the campus of Lehigh University in the three previous years, yet none of them had been reported to the students (Carrico, 2016, p. 4). Social science inquiries into crime and fear on HEI campuses dates back several decades (Chekwa et al., 2013; Fisher & Sloan, 2003; Kadison, 2004; Velasquez-Garcia & Garcia, 2016). However, Sani, Nunes, Azevedo and Sousa (2020) posit that interest in crime and (in)security is not widespread but, instead, is mostly concentrated in Anglo-American countries and it is risky to apply conclusions from studies in these countries to different cultures and contexts. SaferSpaces (2021) posits that South African HEIs are often affected by the country's consistently high crime rates. Many would perceive HEIs as being safe environments where education is the common language for everyone. However, it is an inevitable fact that students often become victims of crime within the campus and even their own residences. Crime on campus is a problem that affects students and staff. The amount and type of crime on campuses has implications for students' educational and social development. This is because they are less likely to attend, spend time on, or participate in social activities on high-crime campuses (Barton, Jensen, & Kaufman, 2010, cited in SaferSpaces, 2021).

Universities South Africa (USAf), formerly known as Higher Education South Africa (HESA), is a membership organisation representing all 26 of South Africa's public universities. These 26 public universities are distributed throughout all nine provinces of South Africa. Each province has at least one university, with Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape provinces having acquired their own institutions during 2014/2015 (USAf, 2022). Gauteng province is home to excellent tertiary institutions offering a range of both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. These are the Vaal University of Technology (VUT), the University of South Africa (UNISA), the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), the University of Pretoria (UP) and the Sefako Makgatho University (SMU). The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) is working on building two new universities in the country. The University of Science and Innovation (USI) as well as a new Crime Detection University (CDU). These two universities will be added to the already more than adequate HEIs in Gauteng province, raising the number from five to seven public universities in one province. The first will be built in the City of Ekurhuleni, East Rand region of Gauteng and the second will be built in northern Gauteng in Hammanskraal. In the 2021 academic year, a Walter Sisulu University (WSU) student was stabbed to death, allegedly by a fellow student he accused of using *muthi* at the university's East London residence. The university confirmed that the incident happened at the St Patrick's Court student residence, which houses 89 male students in Southernwood. The building where the incident happened is privately owned and is leased to the university for student accommodation (Dayimani, 2021). Off-campus residences also confronted with more challenges as students due to robbery and victimisation. One example is the incident that happened in another province, two University of the Free State (UFS) students were killed and two others were in a critical condition after robbers demanded money and their electronics near Phuthaditjhaba (Mthethwa, 2021). The reality is that the deaths of these students further highlight the devastating state of student accommodation in the South African HEI sector, particularly off-campus or in private student accommodation (Dlanjwa, 2021 cited in Mthethwa, 2021). Violence in the form of stabbing also takes place on campuses. Govender (2018) reported on the gruesome attack of a student at the UKZN; three unknown suspects fatally stabbed a 22-year-old student and then fled.

In 2017, students at the Nelson Mandela University (NMU) threatened to shut down the institution until the university management agreed to strengthen security at all its campuses. This arose after a female student was raped and another stabbed in a computer lab at the Second Avenue campus in Summerstrand, Port Elizabeth, by an intruder who gained access to the campus (Macupe, 2017). At the University of Limpopo (UL) campus, four students and a lecturer sustained multiple stab wounds in their upper bodies (Ramothwala, 2019). These and other incidents led to several studies of student fear and critical incident policies (Brown, Simelane & Malan, 2016; Gopal & van Niekerk, 2018; Lamb & Warton, 2017; Marakalala, et al., 2022; Masike & Mofokeng, 2014, 2017). Prior research implies that highly publicised critical incidents, such as shooting incidents on HEIs campuses, could increase student anxiety about

low probability criminal events (New, 2017; Ross & Rasool, 2019; Saha & De Choudhury, 2017; Wood, 2014). A great deal of empirical social science research is emerging from various scholars in the fields of engineering, performing arts and humanities, especially on aspects of campus safety. These studies are conducted in recognition of a societal crisis and as a form of raising more awareness of the issue of GBVF at HEIs in South Africa. However, there is still a lack of a nationally representative research, which can provide policy makers and researchers with a clearer understanding of the nature and extent of this phenomenon. Further, the under-reporting of this violence, particularly safety at on-campus and off-campus residences, in the forms of robberies, stabbing and sexual violence, to name a few, makes it difficult to determine the true prevalence of the different forms of GBVF at HEIs (SaferSpaces, 2021). Though Chekwa et al. (2013) posit that the law requires all HEIs to maintain a daily incident log and to publish an annual report that contains three years of campus crime statistics, in addition to disclosing their campus security policy to current and prospective students and employees, this remains a challenge the world over. Owing to under reporting and, consequently, low numbers of officially reported incidents of sexual violence, HEIs may perceive that violence in residences and on campus is not a major issue at their institution and argue that it does not require a concerted institutional responsibility (SaferSpaces, 2021).

The recent awarding of the African Research Chair on Campus and School Public Safety to the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) in Cape Town, on 9 September 2021, marked the birth of another platform geared to act as a catalyst towards contributing to the ideals of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. Both the inauguration and the launch, mark the re-dedication of African Research Chair towards the attainment of the Pan African Vision of *an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena*. The Agenda 2063 is the concrete manifestation of how SaferSpaces (2021) coins it 'nationally representative research', the Research Chair, through its strategic partnerships continentally and beyond the borders of Africa, intends to achieve this vision within a five-year period from 2022 to 2027. Agenda 2063 encapsulates not only Africa's aspirations for the future but also identifies key flagship programmes, one of which is Programme 5, "Silencing the Guns by 2020", which saw the interruptions brought by COVID19 and still need to be attended to amongst other platforms, through the office of the Research Chair. The sound of guns, infiltration of dangerous weapons, culture of violence and criminality, have become a way of life at campuses in South Africa, continentally and across the globe. The African Research Chair launch will go a long way to ensure that Agenda 2063 – Programme 5 - "Silencing the Guns by 2020", informs the activities of the Research Chair and forges partnerships with various stakeholders, to achieve the goals of Agenda 2063 and work towards reducing GBVF, victimisation on residences and violent activities in and around campuses.

Materials and Methods

For this study, the research paradigm was rooted in positivism; consequently, a quantitative approach was adopted following a cross-sectional design. The data-gathering instrument was a paper-based, self-administered structured questionnaire, which included a standardised measuring instrument using a five-point Likert scale. Three fieldworkers distributed 260 questionnaires at the Pretoria West Campus residences. The questionnaires were distributed to student populations from various faculties, between the ages of 18 and 26 who are first- to fourth-year students. Before collecting data, an ethical clearance certificate was obtained from the University's Research Ethics Committee. Permission to carry out the research was sought from the Campus Director, as well as respondents who were shown copies of permissions obtained before they answered the questionnaires. Consent from the respondents was obtained. Respondents were told of the purpose of the study and of their right to participate or not. Furthermore, respondents were informed that their safety and rights would be respected, their identity is not revealed and the information provided would be treated with confidentiality and used for research purposes only. Ethical considerations are an important aspect of any research, especially research that deals with human participants. All research requires ethical clearance and approval to be conducted. This study was conducted at the Pretoria West Campus of a public HEI. The campus is attended by about 10 000 students from all over the country and neighbouring countries such as Lesotho, Botswana, Zambia and Swaziland, as well as some European countries. A random cluster sampling procedure was followed. This approach turned out to be a cost-effective way to generate a high response rate and a large, representative sample. Narrative data were collected from a sample of 210 undergraduate students and three residential managers randomly selected from the university's population. The Pretoria West Campus has seven residences, which at the time of the study accommodated approximately 2 170 students from all over the continent. Some of the residences are only for women and some are for both genders. The students and residential managers were also informed that they could receive a summary of the findings of the study after its completion by contacting the author. Respondents who answered this questionnaire were 60 respondents, including male and female students. Respondents in the survey were asked to state their level of agreement with the given statements (discussed

below) from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The data collected were analysed by coding and were computerised. Answers within the questionnaire were assigned numerical codes and entered Microsoft Excel. The codes from Excel were subsequently transported into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (Field, 2013; International Business Machines Corporation (IBM), [sa] for coding and further analysis (McCormick, Salcedo & Poh, 2015, p. 12). The quality of the data was ensured through demonstrating validity and reliability.

Results

Statement 1: Failure to control who enters the residences is the cause of robberies inside the residences

Table 1 portrays the response of residents to the question whether the fact that security officers fail to control people entering the residence is the cause of robberies inside the residences.

Table 1: Failure to control who enters the residences is the cause of robberies inside the residences

| Variable | Agree | Disagree | Uncertain |
|-----------------------|--------|----------|-----------|
| 16 to 20 years of age | 26.69% | 57.8% | 16.51% |
| 21 to 25 years of age | 41.31% | 35.5% | 23.66% |
| 26 to 30 years of age | 0% | 28.57% | 71.43% |
| Males | 44.78% | 16.42% | 38.81% |
| Females | 25.54% | 61.71% | 12.77% |
| Residence A | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Residence B | 25.72% | 60% | 14.29% |
| Residence C | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Residence D | 30% | 46.67% | 23.33% |
| Residence E | 47.06% | 2.94% | 50% |
| Residence F | 0% | 44.44% | 55.56% |
| Residence G | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| First-year students | 18.86% | 56.61% | 24.53% |
| Second-year students | 21.62 | 56.75 | 21.62 |
| Third-year students | 41.79% | 35.82% | 22.39% |
| Fourth-year students | 75% | 18.75% | 6.25% |

Source: Authors illustration

Statement 2: Armed robberies take place because security officers do not search students and visitors who enter the residences

Table 2 portrays the response of residents to the question whether armed robberies occur because security officers do not search students and visitors who enter the residences.

Table 2: Armed robberies take place because security officers do not search students who enter the residences

| Variable | Agree | Disagree | Uncertain |
|-----------------------|--------|----------|-----------|
| 16 to 20 years of age | 19.27% | 66.97% | 13.76% |
| 21 to 25 years of age | 37.63% | 48.38% | 13.98% |
| 26 to 30 years of age | 0% | 85.71% | 14.29% |
| Males | 34.33% | 38.81% | 26.87% |
| Females | 23.41% | 69.5% | 7.09% |
| Residence A | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Residence B | 20% | 68.57% | 11.43% |
| Residence C | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Residence D | 23.33% | 63.33% | 13.33% |
| Residence E | 29.41% | 11.76% | 58.82% |
| Residence F | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Residence G | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| First-year students | 18.87% | 66.04% | 15.09% |
| Second-year students | 13.51% | 70.27% | 16.22% |
| Third-year students | 35.82% | 50.75% | 13.43% |
| Fourth-year students | 75% | 25% | 0% |

Source: Authors illustration

Statement 3: Armed robberies take place because security officers do not search strangers and visitors who enter the residences

Table 3 portrays the response of residents to the question whether armed robberies take place because security officers do not search strangers and visitors who enter the residences.

Table 3: Armed robberies take place because security officers do not search strangers and visitors who enter the residences

| Variable | Agree | Disagree | Uncertain |
|-----------------------|--------|----------|-----------|
| 16 to 20 years of age | 11.92% | 65.13% | 22.94% |
| 21 to 25 years of age | 33.33% | 43.01% | 23.66% |
| 26 to 30 years of age | 0% | 85.71% | 14.29% |
| Males | 22.39% | 32.84% | 44.78% |
| Females | 20.57% | 67.37% | 12.06% |
| Polonaise | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Minjonet | 11.43% | 71.43% | 17.14% |
| Astra | 0% | 100% | 0% |
| Denise | 20% | 60% | 20% |
| Magalies | 5.88% | 0% | 94.12% |
| Lezard | 0% | 88.89% | 11.11% |
| Orion | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| First-year students | 7.54% | 67.92% | 24.53% |
| Second-year students | 12.16% | 60.81% | 27.03% |
| Third-year students | 29.85% | 49.26% | 20.90% |
| Fourth-year students | 68.75% | 25% | 6.25% |

Source: Authors illustration

Statement 4: Robberies take place in residences because students are careless or do not protect their belongings

Table 4 portrays the response of residents to the question of whether some robberies happen because students are careless and do not protect their belongings in the residences.

Table 4: Robberies take place in residences because students are careless or do not protect their belongings

| Variable | Agree | Disagree | Uncertain |
|-----------------------|--------|----------|-----------|
| 16 to 20 years of age | 52.78% | 32.41% | 14.81% |
| 21 to 25 years of age | 60.21% | 22.58% | 17.20% |
| 26 to 30 years of age | 100% | 0% | 0% |
| Males | 80.59% | 11.94% | 7.46% |
| Females | 45.32% | 35.25% | 19.42% |
| Residence A | 43.75% | 43.76% | 12.50% |
| Residence B | 29.41% | 44.11% | 26.47% |
| Residence C | 52.63% | 26.32% | 21.05% |
| Residence D | 53.33% | 30% | 16.67% |
| Residence E | 82.35% | 11.76% | 5.88% |
| Residence F | 96.3% | 0% | 3.70% |
| Residence G | 46.88% | 31.26% | 21.88% |
| First-year students | 45.1% | 39.21% | 15.69% |
| Second-year students | 59.40% | 25.68% | 14.86% |
| Third-year students | 59.71% | 22.39% | 17.91% |
| Fourth-year students | 68.75% | 25% | 6.25% |

Source: Authors illustration

Discussion

Responses in Statement 1 highlighted that Many of the robberies that take place in the residences are assumed to result from the lack of control of the security officers over people entering the residences. This might be the case with the robberies that are reported to the management by students, where the perpetrator was unknown to the student. The residence managers were reluctant to respond to this allegation. The respondents in the age group 21-26 agreed with the statement that the security officers fail to control who enters the residences, while other groups disagreed and were uncertain. The findings show that many male respondents, probably the third-year students, agreed, while the female respondents disagreed. The respondents who agreed came from the mixed residences E and G, while other mixed residences were uncertain. At the time of this research, the university did not have any policies or regulations

in place to guide the residence managers in dealing with security issues in their residences. The residence managers are expected to draft policies that will govern the security officers who are working in their residences and to orientate the security officers when they start performing their duties in the residences with the help of the Residence Committee (RC) members.

As campuses do not comprise homogeneous population, Franzosa (2009, p. 21) states that the most effective way to do crime prevention is through encouraging communication between students and campus security services. The above statement is supported by Owusu, Akoto and Abnory (2016, p. 76), that there are important things students can and are supposed to do and abide by to avoid being a victim of theft or a more serious crime. Thus, students especially are often urged to lock their room door when they are asleep or out of their room even when out for a few minutes. They are admonished also not to leave their personal property unattended anywhere that has public access, such as libraries, cafeterias, lecture theatres, and the like. They are always to be aware of their surroundings, whether on or off campus. They are counselled to if possible, walk with friends when out at night as a measure to ensure their own safety and report any suspicious characters immediately to the security section. Franzosa argues that by communicating that campus security is alert and knows how to react in any situation, students are more likely to be informed and participate in campus safety measures. Students also need to be informed of the risks that exist, without being unnecessarily fearful of the campus. "The key to fighting campus insecurity is not to create fear or diminish freedom, but rather to keep resources available, raise awareness that threats exist and maintain open lines of communication" (Franzosa 2009, p. 21). When one looks at the unique and individual characteristics of South African tertiary institutions, one sees that there are both similarities and differences between campus law enforcement and policing in general, such as the South African Police Service and private security policing (Marakalala et al., 2022, p. 9). Campus law enforcement shares many problems with these policing agencies. By virtue of the tertiary institution's size, economic importance and geographic location, campus law enforcement encounters problems like those in the surrounding jurisdiction.

By searching students who enter the residences, the safety of the other students could be ensured. This would eliminate the risk of students being attacked with weapons. When the security officers fail to search students and the students know they will not be searched, they increase the chance of armed robberies inside the residences. The residence managers were unable to shed any light on this question. For Statement 2, many of the respondents disagreed with the statement that armed robberies take place because the security officers fail to search students and visitors when they go inside the residences. Residence G agreed 100% that security officers fail to search students and visitors when they go inside the residences. This might be because Residence G is a newly built residence and it is possible that everyone concerned, including the security officers, are still trying to find their feet. The university where this study was conducted, does not have its own in-house security guards, but hires and deploys external security companies on a contract basis. However, the university has its own Director of Campus Security Services who is responsible for managing and coordinating all security activities on the various campuses. As the security officers are not university employees, they do not have any loyalty towards the university and if they do not do their jobs effectively, they are merely replaced by another security officer from the security company. The management of the external security officers by the internal security director is, therefore, problematic and hampers effective security services on campus. The fact that security officers from the private company are rotated on a regular basis also hampers effective security services on the Pretoria West Campus, as the security officers are replaced by new officers before they know and understand the security needs and setup on the campus.

Statement 3 reflected diversity of responses. It seems to be a normal practice for security officers at the main gate not to search strangers who enter the campus, which could mean that the same applies to the residences. Residence managers at the exclusively female residences denied this allegation, as they managed their respective residences with the assistance of the security personnel allocated to each residence. According to them, access control and the searching of strangers and visitors at their residences are done on a regular basis. The managers at the mixed residences, which are fenced off, are in a different situation in terms of access control and the searching of visitors and strangers, as this is the responsibility of the patrolling security officers who are not allocated to a specific building or residence but are responsible for patrolling the campus area in general. When the responses are analysed according to age group, it seems that most of the respondents disagreed with the statement, while the male respondents were uncertain. Residence G was the only residence that agreed 100% and 68.78% of the fourth-year students in Residence G agreed. This might be because there are many postgraduate senior students in Residence G who have been in the university's academic system for quite a few years (see the response of the fourth-year students to this question) and who have a more comprehensive knowledge of the reasons why robberies take place in the residences.

This argument is confirmed by the steady rise in the affirmative responses from first-year level (7.54%) to the fourth-year students (68.75%). The first visible line of defence at the Pretoria West Campus is the fence, which is not patrolled by the security officers. Then there is the main gate, which most people entering and leaving the campus use. Some security officers are stationed at the gate to check the identification of people entering the campus. These security officers also open the boom gate for those entering the campus after checking their identification documents and for people who leave the campus, after searching their vehicles. The vehicles of people who enter the campus are not searched. The equipment that is visible and is at the disposal of the security officers is the boom gate and the closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras. Residences like E, F and G are mixed (male and female) residences. They are fenced off and have street lights and a guard room with security officers who do access control. The street lights are not always in working condition and it is easy to jump over the fence as it is in a state of disrepair. In many cases, students use the fence instead of the gate to avoid being asked to produce student cards and to bring in their friends without having them entered in the visitors' register. Effective patrol duties by the private security officers are, therefore, of the utmost importance at these residences. Patrol duties in this area are normally done on foot. There is a general belief among non-residents that the students who live in the residences fall victim to crime and especially robberies, in the residences because of their own negligence and because they do not take care of or protect their belongings in the residences. The researchers of this manuscript are of the opinion that this allegation might be unfounded and biased and therefore asked the respondents how they felt about it.

For Statement 4, the purpose of this statement was to determine whether students contribute towards their own insecurity and unprotected environment. Residence managers declined to respond to this question. All age groups agreed with the statement that some robberies take place because students are careless and do not protect their belongings in the residences. It is interesting to note that the age group 26-30 had a very high positive response (100%). This response could be directly connected to the year of study the respondents were in at the time of the research. The first-, second-, third- and fourth-year students agreed. This showed that even the newcomers agreed that students are sometimes at fault when they are robbed. The mixed residences E and F were the two residences with the highest percentages of agreement, namely 82% and 96% respectively. The female respondents were neutral and uncertain about this issue, but the exclusively female residences like C and D also responded in the affirmative to this statement. It should also be noted that the female respondents, in general, were to some extent uncertain about this question. After analysing and interpreting the responses to this question, the researcher is convinced that the students who live in the residences do indeed contribute to their own vulnerability and unsafe circumstances in the residences because they do not protect and look after their belongings in the residences.

Management implications

The implications for this study, based on the findings, are that it is very important that the residences be patrolled because students can take drugs and friends through areas that are not patrolled. Stolen goods can also be taken out of the residences through such areas. Patrol duties inside the residences are of equal importance to identify and eliminate unwanted persons in the residences. This aspect of the security functions in the residences poses a serious problem to most of the residence managers, especially those managing the mixed residences.

Study limitations

Notwithstanding, there are several limitations to this study that could be improved in future research. The sample for this study consisted of Pretoria West Campus residences. Although this population is important, it limits the generalisability of the findings. Future studies should take into consideration students and staff from other campuses, including parttime students.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to understand university students' perceived risk and fear of robberies on campus residences. The findings indicated that students from all age groups and all years of study, felt relatively safe in their residences at the Pretoria West Campus, even though most male respondents were uncertain, and females were sure that the residences were safe. It was clear from the responses that most female residents felt safer than residents of the mixed residences. These groups of females were from the female residences that are not fenced off but look like blocks of flats with one joint entrance, as opposed to the fenced-in mixed residences. The reason may be the fact that alcohol and drugs can easily be taken into the mixed residences without being detected by using the fence to gain entrance instead of the gate. Moreover, the gate in the fence between Residence E and F is never patrolled. This leads to the kind of crime that is committed in these two residences. In the case of the female residences, security officers

do not have to patrol the area, but only must search students who enter the residence. Patrol duty at the Pretoria West Campus should be subdivided into general patrol, patrol of the female residences and patrol of the mixed residences. It was determined that the security guards on general patrol do not patrol the residences at all, but are responsible for patrolling the parking areas, open areas, etcetera. The female residences are not patrolled, as they have residence managers, assisted by security officers, who are responsible for access control at the residences. Residences E, F and G are mixed (male and female) residences and are fenced off and they have street lights and a guard room with security officers applying access control at these residences. Students often climb over the fence instead of using the gate to avoid being asked to produce student cards and to bring in their friends without them being entered in the visitors' register.

Effective patrol duties by the private security officers are, therefore, of the utmost importance at these residences. Patrol duties in this area are usually done on foot. A one-size-fits-all approach to designing a security system cannot be applied due to many external factors that influence campus security such as the location of the campus, demographics of attendees and the budgets of different universities (Dlamini & Olanrewaju, 2021, p. 227). South African towns and cities that want to compete against more established university towns and cities around the world have their work cut out for them. Competition against longer established university towns in Europe, the United Kingdom and North America will remain stiff, but smart, aspirant, African university towns have a chance in what will soon be a post-COVID world to build and offer modern, safe, amenities and partner with destination marketing bodies to promote themselves in the global market, not just in Africa. As the world gets increasingly connected, safety, including health safety, will remain at the heart of consideration by parents looking at foreign, multicultural study destinations for their children and by students seeking the same. Quality higher education offering will not suffice on its own if utmost safety is not an integral part of the offering. Kickstarting the Safety and Security Chair will be preceded by a series of practical capacity-building programmes for staff and students at TUT to tackle the huge challenge of GBVF at all its campus branches located in five provinces in South Africa. The programme is likely to serve as a blueprint and provide practical guidance for the other 26 universities and 54 TVET colleges in South Africa on how to impactfully expose and deal with the GBVF scourge in and around the campus precinct. Winning of students and staff to join and become "Gender-Based Violence Ambassadors" will go a long way in creating an environment conducive for learning, teaching, and research. Tshwane University of Technology Executive Management must be commended for this courageous step, which will have profound implications across South Africa and the continent at large (Moeng, 2021, pp. 2-3). Thus, the findings of this study, highlighted the absence of effective policies and institutional interventions for dealing with lapse of security on campuses. In the absence of such interventions, HEI responds in ways that may bring personal immediate satisfaction without regard for the long term common good. Security and education are part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and speak to the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. Thus, it is expected that HEIs should constitute safe places. HEIs campuses are among those and had traditionally been seen as protected from the criminality and danger that affected outside communities. Nonetheless, there is yet a coordinated awareness about gender, safety on student residences across Southern African and continentally.

Consequently, there is a dire need for HEIs in collaboration with the African Research Chair for Safety, to fill a gap based on previous research, to inform policy and practice by examining variables that to our best knowledge, have not been previously studied and by presenting African data. There is a need to cover all 740 African universities in Africa including law enforcement agencies, non-government organisations (NGOs). The contributions can cover as widely as possible, the following regional economic communities (RECs) that recognise by the African Union (AU), where the events could rotate around - namely: Arab Maghreb Union (UMA); Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD); East African Community (EAC); Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Southern African Development Community (SADC). The focus of dialogue could be around but not limited to the following general themes, namely: (i) perceptions of (in)security and crime on campuses and residences, (ii) sociodemographic and criminal predictors of perception of insecurity, (iii) gender differences on these variables and (iv) indigenous knowledge and or African philosophies impact on patriarchy and GBVF. More specifically, there is a need to create a dialogue and research papers including among others, a descriptive approach about (a) explanatory reasons for the perception of (in)security, (b) GBVF, patriarchy, or gender disparities (c) the *modus operandi* and emerging crimes affecting HEIs, (e) the perception of occurrence (specific personal – cybercrime including cyberbullying), (f) the perceived trend of crime on campus and its explanatory reasons, and (e) factors that promote campus violence and (in)security. Additionally, any futuristic possibilities to identify predictors of perception of (in)security based on sociodemographic and criminal variables.

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Professor Jacob Tseko Mofokeng holds a Doctor Technologiae (D-Tech): Policing, from Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). He holds a portfolio of African Research Chair for the Campus and School Public Safety in the Department of Safety and Security Management, and also a member of the Council of the Criminological and Victimological Society of Southern Africa (CRIMSA). Before joining TUT, he was a functional member within the South African Police Service (SAPS) within the Detective Service for ten years and additional three years in a support environment as a Unit Commander within the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Infrastructure Service Management at Component: Information and Systems Management (currently known as Division: Technology and Technical Management). He has published articles in accredited journals, a book chapter as well as presented papers both at national and international conferences. He is focusing his research inquiries in transnational crime specifically in human trafficking, organised crime and terrorism. Other focus areas are police corruption, safety and security on campus as well as on detective pedagogy and knowledge management.

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Nozipho Nkosikhona Simelane is a graduate of Tshwane University of Technology with a National Diploma: Road Traffic and Municipal Police Management and Advanced Diploma in Traffic Safety and Municipal Police Management. She earned a Master of Policing from the same institution. Simelane is a postgraduate studies coordinator in Department of Safety and Security Management and an undergraduate studies tutor for traffic and policing undergraduate students. As a tutor, she assisted a wide variety of Municipal Policing, Traffic Strategies and Practices, Road Traffic Management and crime scene investigation classes to both traffic and policing majors at the undergraduate graduate levels. Her areas of specialisation are around road safety, gender equality and sustainability, as well as gender-based violence and femicide as a catalyst of gender reforms toward strengthening the affirmation, that equality in the status of men and women is fundamental to every society. And this concern has prompted her to refine existing perspective on what development should be and how to bring it about efficiently. She has presented technical reports to professional audiences, including the road traffic practices, policing safety and security environments. As a newly graduate, she has publications to her name, comprised of peer reviewed articles in accredited journals, as well as papers presented at local and international conferences which resulted in inclusion in conference proceedings. Ms. Simelane is eager to participate in the policing discipline to advance her own intellectual development, engage in profitable policing and economic activities, and make a valuable contribution to society.

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