UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE WILLINGNESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN PARENTS TO CONSENT TO THEIR DAUGHTERS PURSUING TERTIARY EDUCATION AND CAREERS

BY

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SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MAGISTER COMMERCii

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

IN THE

FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

AT THE

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

SEPTEMBER 2011

SUPERVISOR: N.M.H. CARRIM

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation submitted for the degree MCom (Human Resources Management) is my original work and will not be submitted for a degree at any other tertiary institution or professional body.

……..

Manisha Vangarajaloo

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is dedicated to many special people who shared their experiences, advice and guidance throughout the completion of this study. I respect them tremendously and appreciate all their support, encouragement, motivation, love and positive minds. It was their inspirational talks and views that uplifted my spirit to drive this dissertation to its successful destination.

I am pleased to thank my loyal and loving family – my dad Mathaven Vangarajaloo, my mum Anita Vangarajaloo, and my brother Prinesh Vangarajaloo. You constantly supported and motivated me throughout my studies. It's with your unconditional love and encouragement that I have reached my goal.

A special thanks to Nasima Carrim, my supervisor. I have learnt great things from you; you are a great leader and teacher. Thank you for keeping me positive; the time you have spent to assist me and for always keeping me on the right track. You have guided me to make this possible.

Thank you, Prof Basson, for sharing your expertise and your interest in my dissertation.

To my great friend, Florence Basetse - you have supported me and always empowered me with your words of encouragement. Thank you, my dear one.

To my life partner Shawn Govender, your devotion and understanding has been a blessing. Thank you for standing by me through the good and bad days of this journey.

I thank my Lord for this blessing and guiding me to pursue my goal successfully.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the willingness of Indian parents to allow their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers. This study firstly focused on how women who pursued tertiary education and careers were perceived by family and the Indian community when parents were growing up. Secondly, the study underscored the willingness of parents these days to allow their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers.

A qualitative research approach, using in-depth, semi-structured life-story interviews was used in the study to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that resulted in the development of certain perceptions towards women who pursued tertiary education and careers in the parents' youth. Content analysis was used to analyse the data.

A pilot study using purposive and snowball sampling was conducted using seven (7) sets of Muslim and Hindu parents. Thereafter, further questions were generated for the main study, where thirteen (13) sets of both Muslim and Hindu parents were interviewed.

The results of the study indicate that the attitude towards women pursuing tertiary education and careers has evolved over time. Parents are these days more willing to allow their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers. In the past women had not been encouraged to study and work. However, this perception has changed today. There is a great demand for Indian women in the workplace and many Indian women are enrolling every year at different universities to pursue tertiary education. The South African laws support women empowerment and education and, as a whole, many contributions in the country are made by women.

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CHAPTER 1

THE INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

Thirty years ago there were very few Indian females who pursued tertiary education and careers. Most Indian parents in South Africa (Muslim and Hindu) would not allow their daughters to pursue careers. The reason for this was the emphasis placed on Indian females by parents to become efficient wives and mothers. The trend was also for young Indian females to marry at the age of sixteen and seventeen. Hence, many Indian females did not complete their schooling, but dropped out of school and got married. Others got engaged while in their final year (matric) of schooling and got married immediately after completing their matric. In the past, Indian women who worked were mostly employed in textile factories and many worked in the informal sector, such as selling goods from their homes, assisting husbands in businesses or owning their own fabric shops. (Elion & Strieman, 2001). This is proof of the contribution this minority group has made in developing a multicultural South Africa, based on democracy and tolerance (Syed, 2000).

In the past few years many parents in India and other Western countries have allowed their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers, although the emphasis is still on the domestic sphere (Huang & Yeoh, 2005).

In the past twenty years a minority of South African Indian parents have allowed their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers. In addition, the legal position of South African women has changed dramatically following the new Constitution (108 of 1996), which guarantees citizens equality before the law, and emphasises the Government's commitment to eradicate all types of prejudices, including discrimination based upon sex (Flood, Hoosein &

Primo, 1997). Over the past seventeen years, the newly-elected South African government has been moving towards providing equal opportunities for previously disadvantages groups in terms of education and jobs, one such group being the Indian female.

The legal position and greater educational opportunities have had a major impact on the emancipation of Indian parents and their perceptions. In the past, Indian women were isolated and restricted by customs and taboos. These days more Indian females are becoming aware that they are also eligible to become academically and technically qualified for responsible, interesting and rewarding jobs (Huang & Yeoh, 2005).

1.1 The Background of the Research Study

The background-setting of the research problem will be described and formulated in terms of the willingness of parents to allow their daughters to be educated and to work.

The Indian Family

The family is one of the most basic institutions in Western culture and is the primary group that influences the young child (Rogers, 1985:222). Man is a social being and as such needs social relationships through which to develop and sustain the child (Angenent, 1990:19). These relationships, which are conditional to social integration and self-assertion, are not superficial – they are deep and intense. The family is the social structure that offers optimal opportunity for social integration (Angenent, 1990:9).

Over centuries the family's determinant role in the child's development has been acknowledged. Despite changes and development in the community, the important role and function of the family has remained unchanged. It is within the family context that a child becomes 'human' and learns the different roles that he/she is later to portray. The family also provides the security that is essential to adequate development (Witt & Booysen, 1995).

The value of Indian families is to protect the individuals within the family, where each family member's identity is recognised and a feeling of being part of the family is cherished. Indian families have a close-knit relationship that leads each family member to create and communicate their personal identity (Mol, 1984). Amongst Indian families, children's education and careers depend to a large extent on parents' especially fathers', decisions to allow their daughters to venture into the world of work and tertiary institutions.

Indian Community Today

After decades of sweat, toil and persistence to improve the education of their children, many Indian people are doctors, geologists, specialists, attorneys, accountants and other professionals (Elion & Strieman, 2001). Indian parents are encouraging their children to pursue careers and tertiary education, the reason being that they are concerned about their children's future and affording them better opportunities than they've had (Elion & Strieman, 2001). Not all Indian parents are affluent enough to pay for their daughters' tertiary education. This places a burden on Indian children to pay for their own studies.

Statistics of Indian females

The table below indicates that the number of Indian females who graduated with degrees/diplomas in 2001 needs to improve dramatically.

		African	Coloured	Indian	White
Female	**Higher (degree/diploma)**	49.9%	5.3%	4.6%	40.2%

Table 1.1 Higher Qualification by Race and Gender (EAP, 2001: p9)

Table 1.2 indicates the number of Indian female students who are obtaining degrees and diplomas from different faculties and are still continuously being awarded:

	UG DIP/CERT (1 or 2yrs)	UG DIP/CERT (3yrs)	1ST BACH DEG (3yrs)	1ST BACH DEG (4yrs or more)	PG /DIP/POST DIP DIP/CERT	PG BACH. DEG	HONOURS / NH DIP	MASTERS/ MASTERS DIP RESEARCH	MASTERS/ MASTERS DIP NON_RESEARCH	DOCTOR -ATE	TOTAL
Indian Female	258.00	475.00	1,781.00	1,188.00	339.00	5.00	753.00	148.85	176.15	44.00	5,168.0

Table 1.2: Qualification by Race and Gender (HEMIS, 2008: p9)

It is clearly evident from tables 1.1 and 1.2 that there has been tremendous movement from 2001; the number of Indian females who graduated with a degree/diploma has increased.

According to the tables published by the Department of Labour (2010), the statistics for working Indian females working are as follows:

Table 1.3 deals with data from the Labour Force Survey regarding the population group and gender profile of the workforce, as captured in Statistics South Africa's bi-annual Labour Force Survey. The number of Indian females employed in the formal sector was 1.3%, compared to 41.3% African, 4.6% Coloured and 5% White females. The table below shows that, when compared to females from the other race groups, the percentage of Indian females in the labour market is very low.

Population Group	Economically active (QLFS, September 2001)			Economically active (QLFS, September 2009)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
African	37.7%	41.3%	79.0%	39.20%	34.20%	73.5%
Coloured	4.3%	4.6%	8.9%	6.1%	5.2%	11.30%
Indian	1.20%	1.3%	2.5%	1.90%	1.10%	3.00%
White	4.60%	5%	9.6%	6.70%	5.50%	12.20%
Total	47.8%	52.2%	100.00%	54%	46.00%	100%

Table 1.3 Demographics: population group and gender (Employment Equity Analysis Report 2010: p13)

As far as recruitment is concerned, table 1.4 shows the number of Indian females recruited in top (12), senior (57) and middle management (168) positions.

Occupational Levels									TOTAL
	Africa	**Colour**	**India**	**White**	**Africa**	**Colour**	**India**	**White**	
Top management	25	4	12	168	12	2	4	32	**259**
%	9.6%	1.5%	4.6%	64.6%	4.6%	0.8%	1.5%	12.3%	**100%**
Senior	93	24	57	346	62	12	10	89	**693**
%	13.2%	3.4%	8.1%	49.1%	8.8%	1.7%	1.4%	12.6%	**98.3%**
Mid-management	565	128	168	1912	414	80	53	562	**3882**
%	14.5%	3.3%	4.3%	48.9%	10.6%	2.0%	1.4%	14.4%	**99.4%**
Skilled	2235	626	606	2554	1185	344	246	1396	**9192**
%	24.0%	6.7%	6.5%	27.5%	12.7%	3.7%	2.6%	15.0%	**98.7%**
Semi-skilled	6144	1051	648	1415	3455	902	346	1505	**15466**
%	39.9%	6.7%	4.1%	9.0%	22.1%	5.8%	2.2%	9.6%	**98.8%**
Unskilled	4936	388	149	217	2092	222	60	177	**8241**
%	55.1%	4.3%	1.7%	2.4%	23.3%	2.5%	0.7%	2.0%	**92%**
TOTAL	**13998**	**2221**	**1640**	**6612**	**7220**	**1562**	**719**	**3761**	**37733**

Table 1.4 Recruitment by occupational level, gender and population group (Employment Equity Analysis Report 2010: p25)

1.2 Research Problem of the Study

Against this background it is clear there are very few Indian females pursuing tertiary education and careers. The question to be asked is: are South African parents willing to educate their daughters and send them out to work? In the Western world, education provides economic prosperity by acquiring academic and professional skills to enable one to earn a respectable and comfortable life (Syed, 2000). For an Indian, education does not contradict his/her cultural beliefs; therefore concentrating the goals of education for money-making purposes is unpalatable. Indian men take pride in providing for their families and are very overprotective when it comes to their daughters' or wives. It is therefore a huge adjustment to accept when their daughter is pursuing a career, or working (Mol, 1984). According to the Indian culture, it has always been known that Indian men provide for their families financially and the Indian women take care of the children (Syed, 2000).

Purpose statement of the Research Study

The objective of this research study is to ascertain the position of women pursuing tertiary education and careers while the parents were growing up, and the factors that influence the willingness of present day Indian parents in terms of their daughters working and studying.

1.3 Delimitations

Limitations:

- ✓ The researcher was not able to generalise the study to Indian parents in other Western countries, as the experiences of these parents are specific to the South African context.
- ✓ The researcher was not able to generalise the study to Indians not living in Indian areas because the focus was on Muslim and Hindu religions and not other religions.
- ✓ The researcher focused on parents whose daughters were from various types of schools in the Pretoria region only.

Delimitations:

- ✓ The study focused on South African Indian parents' views of their daughters pursuing a career and tertiary education.
- ✓ The study focused on Muslim and Hindu Indian parents' views and opinions in Gauteng (Pretoria) only, as these parents from these denominations in this province are in the majority, compared to Indian parents from other religious denominations.
- ✓ No comparative study was conducted with Indian parents from other race groups, even if they are Muslim or Hindu.
- ✓ The study focused on South African Indian parents in Gauteng (Pretoria) and did not consider Indian parents from abroad, divorced or single mothers/fathers and those living in other provinces in South Africa.

- ✓ Parents whose daughters were in their final year of schooling were approached.
- ✓ The researcher did not approach Indian parents whose daughters were busy with home schooling, or completing their matric through correspondence.

The following research questions were formulated to address the perceptions of Indian parents in the South African context:

1.4 Research Questions of the Study

1. How did the apartheid era influence Indian women pursuing tertiary education and careers when the parents were growing up?

2. What were the Indian cultural factors affecting women pursuing tertiary education and careers when the parents were growing up?

3. Did Islam and Hinduism impact Indian women pursuing tertiary education and careers when the parents were growing up?

4. How did the role of the community influence women pursuing tertiary education and careers when the parents were growing up?

5. What was the role of the family in influencing women pursuing tertiary education and careers when the women were growing up?

6. What are the present-day factors of parents allowing their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers?

1.5 Research Methodology

An interpretivist, qualitative methodology was used in the current study to gain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions toward females pursuing tertiary education and careers when the parents were growing up and how these

perceptions and the parents' outlook have evolved these days. For this purpose in-depth life-story interviews were conducted.

This dissertation is structured as follows:

In this chapter (the **first**), the study was contextualised.
The study's research methodology will be the subject of **Chapter 2,** while **Chapter 3** consists of the research story, also referred to as the natural history of the study. **Chapter 4** is the heartbeat of the study and will contain the findings of the research. **Chapter 5** concludes the dissertation. In this chapter a summary of the study will be provided, its most significant contributions, implications and limitations will be discussed and recommendations for future research given. The chapter will be concluded with a reflection of the researcher's experiences of the study.

CHAPTER 2

THE METHOD

2. Introduction

This chapter explains the applicable design and methodology used for this research study. The qualitative research strategy will firstly be discussed. The ontological and epistemological beliefs related to the research will also be outlined. The research methodology dealing with the sampling and data collection method, namely in-depth interviewing, recording and data analysis, will be discussed in detail.

2.1 Research Design

Research strategy - qualitative method

Qualitative research methodology studies the qualities of human behaviour. According to Flick (1998), the use of qualitative methods has a long tradition in psychology, as well as the social sciences dating back to Wilhelm Wundt (1900-1920), who used descriptive methods in his folk psychology.

The term ‘quality’ in qualitative research emphasises the approaches focused on processes and meanings that are continuously examined, rather than measured in terms of quantity and amount or frequency. In other words, with ‘quality’ there is richness of in-depth data produced from a smaller number of people and cases. With qualitative data, factual information is collected through description of situations, events, interactions and observed behaviours (Labuschagne, 2003). Qualitative research therefore refers to the meanings, characteristics, symbols and descriptions of things.

Berg (1998) mentioned that certain experiences cannot be meaningfully expressed by numbers. According to Flick (1998), qualitative research

methods are focussed on the context participants find themselves, rather than measuring participants as numerical values. To address research questions, qualitative methods are used to provide a clearer explanation or understanding of social phenomena and their context.

Qualitative studies deal with naturalistic approaches to understand the real world settings and provide researchers with factual information they are interested in without any manipulation (Patron, 2001). The aim of qualitative research is to emphasise the human factor and the personal involvement of the researcher within the research setting. With this in mind, a researcher's first-hand knowledge of events, participants and their situations may raise the question of bias, but will also provide a sense of immediate and direct contact that facilitates intimate knowledge of that which is being studied (Neuman, 2000). Interview transcripts and recordings, e-mails, notes, feedback forms, photos and videos are methods that are used to capture and analyse unstructured information in qualitative research (Golafshani, 2003). These methods will assist the researcher to observe, describe and interpret settings of social phenomena as they are (Hoepfl, 1997).

Hoepfl (1997) asserts that there are a number of considerations when deciding to use a qualitative approach. Qualitative methods are used:

- To understand phenomena where not much information is known.
- To gain different perspectives on things where more information is already known.
- To collect more detailed information that may be a challenge to convey qualitatively.

In terms of the research on the factors influencing the willingness of Indian parents in South Africa to allow their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers, the researcher felt the best way to describe the current study would be from a qualitative approach. This approach helped the researcher to obtain a deeper, complex and detailed understanding, and she was able to explore the deep-rooted cultural, religious and family aspects that influenced Indian parents' willingness to allow their daughters to study or work. In the

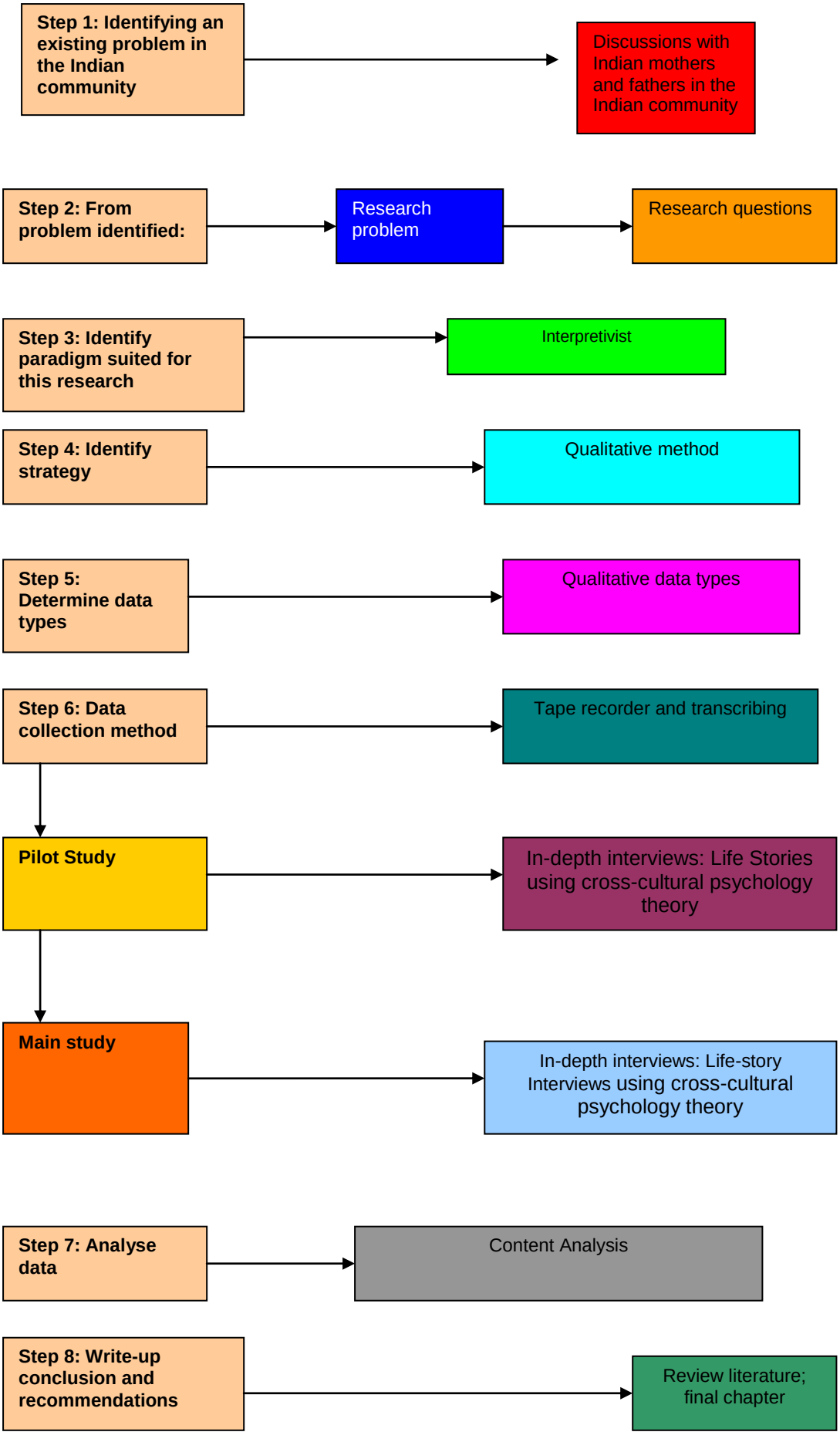
proposed study a qualitative method was used. This method assisted in understanding the context or setting in which many aspects influenced parents' willingness to allow their daughters to pursue further education and enter the world of work. This study cannot be conducted in an artificial setting; because the researcher would not be able to derive meaning and useful findings by applying the latter research technique. Another reason for using qualitative methods was that qualitative research allowed the researcher to unpack the information provided by the participants to make sense of the world they are living in. The researcher also heard the silenced voices of Indian parents with regards to the views they had in terms of allowing their daughters to study and work. In order to acquire this detailed understanding of the views Indian parents had in terms of their daughters studying and working, the researcher has opted to use an in-depth interview method of collecting data. The Indian parents' thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values and assumptive worlds were therefore captured through face-to-face interaction of the researcher and the participants, unencumbered by what the researcher expected to find and what was read in the literature. The researcher used in-depth interviews to collect information in the pilot project. The discussions from the in-depth interviews were analysed to extract themes which was further explored in the main study.

Hoepfl (1997) reminds us that qualitative study is designed with a purpose of a study that depends on information that is the most useful and most credible. With all said, researchers are advised to invest their scientific values and research guidance (comprising ontology, epistemology and methodology) with regard to choosing one particular research design (Holloway, 1997; Schurink, 2002b). The following section outlines the research paradigm that will be used in the study.

2.2 Research Paradigm

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) define a research paradigm as "a basic set of beliefs that guide action," 'ultimates', or the researcher's experiences and views about specific social phenomena. A paradigm is the pattern of a person's way of thinking; it's a principal example to follow according to which

design actions are taken. The research problem, the research aim and the research questions all suggest that a qualitative approach was used in studying the phenomenon of the factors influencing the willingness of Indian parents to allow their daughters to pursue a career in South Africa. The following diagram outlines the steps that will be followed in the proposed research:


Step 1: Identifying an existing problem in the Indian community
Discussions with Indian mothers and fathers in the Indian community
Step 2: From problem identified:
Research problem
Research questions
Step 3: Identify paradigm suited for this research
Interpretivist
Step 4: Identify strategy
Qualitative method
Step 5: Determine data types
Qualitative data types
Step 6: Data collection method
Tape recorder and transcribing
Pilot Study
In-depth interviews: Life Stories using cross-cultural psychology theory
Main study
In-depth interviews: Life-story Interviews using cross-cultural psychology theory
Step 7: Analyse data
Content Analysis
Step 8: Write-up conclusion and recommendations
Review literature; final chapter

According to Denzin & Lincoln (1998), a researcher must make his/her paradigm known, such as his/her beliefs and perceptions about the nature of reality, the way of searching for the truth in relation to his/her research and the methods and techniques used to research the reality of a specific study.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2006), there are three types of research approaches. The approaches are as follows: the qualitative approach, which is related to phenomenology or interpretivism; the quantitative approach, which is related to positivism, and participatory research, which is related to the critical paradigm in meta-theory.

Because of the qualitative methodological pluralism (Schurink, 2002b) which exists, a researcher must make his/her paradigm known, i.e. what constitutes his/her ontology (beliefs and perceptions about the nature of reality), his/her epistemology (where the researcher stands in relation to reality and in which way she/he will go about searching for truth) and his/her methodology (the methods and techniques that will be used to research reality; the how) to those with an interest in research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Mason, 1996; Schurink, 2002b). Creswell (1994, 1998) and Denzin and Lincoln (2000b) add a fourth concept, i.e. the researcher's axiology (i.e. ethics and values). This concept is particularly important since it differs from quantitative research endeavours, which claim to be value-free and unbiased, in that qualitative research is value-laden and biased.

In this section, the researcher defends why a particular research approach has been chosen to study the phenomenon in question. In order to defend the use of a particular research approach, the interpretivism tradition is discussed.

2.3 The Interpretivist Tradition

Interpretivisim is characterised by seeing the social world from a subjective viewpoint that is always negotiated within cultures, social settings and relationships with other people (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). The aim of social research is to investigate the meanings and interpretations of social individuals in specific situations, and not general rules and external structures

of society that do exist (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). In the study the researcher was not only interested in understanding the Indian culture, but also explaining the cultural and religious values and beliefs which have had an influence on the lives of the Indian parents, which may have influenced the willingness of Indian parents consenting to their daughters being educated and pursuing careers.

Another aspect of interpretivism is ontological that holds the beliefs and interactions between individuals in real social contexts. With interpretivism the social world cannot exist outside the independent minds of social individuals. The interpretations of the world are connected to the experiences individuals have had throughout their lives (Weber, 2004). In reality the lives of individuals consist of both subjective and objective characteristics. This means that the subjective characteristics reflect people's perceptions of their understanding of the world they live in. With objective characteristic, this means that people are always engaged in negotiating this meaning with others with whom they interact (Weber, 2004). The researcher was interested in both the subjective and objective world of the Indian parents while they were growing up, and witnessing the position of women during that era and in terms of their daughters pursuing a career and tertiary education in the present situation. For the researcher to collect in-depth information, she was interested in building a relationship with the Indian mothers and fathers of the study. According to Burrell and Morgan (1979), "the social world is no more than the subjective construction of individual human beings who, through the development and use of common language and the interactions of everyday life, may create and sustain a social world of intersubjectively shared meaning."

There are assumptions on the interpretivist whereby social reality and individual desires can be expressed freely. Garrick (1999) in Trauth (2001) states:

- ✓ People are actively involved in social, political and historical affairs and have inner capacities that allow for unique judgements, perceptions and decision-making autonomy. In this case the Indian parents' are

focussing on educating their daughters rather than becoming a passive person.

- ✓ Events or actions are viewed from multiple factors, events and processes. The researcher ascertained the multiple factors impacting on parents and their willingness in consenting to their daughters being educated and pursuing careers.
- ✓ It is difficult to observe the objectivity of confused individuals' meaning. Indian parents witnessed the position of women relating to pursuing tertiary education and careers while they were growing up and had their own interpretations of why their daughters should/should not pursue a career and work for a living. This was based on the phenomena and events as understood by the Indian parents.
- ✓ The object is to have an understanding of individual cases, rather than universal laws/predictive generalisations. This therefore this implies that the findings cannot be extended logically and used in some way, as the purpose of the research is questionable.
- ✓ The world is made up of multifaceted realities, studied holistically, thus becoming aware of the significance of context in which experiences occur. In the proposed study, the researcher has focussed on the way in which the Indian parents made meaning of their lives (Neuman, 2000).
- ✓ Inquiry is always based upon those values that influence the frame, focus and direction of the research.

In interpretive research, studies are small in scale and emphasis is placed on the validity and insight of the research, rather than in simple outcomes or results (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006).

In general, interpretivists share the following values about the nature of understanding reality:

- ✓ Relativist ontology - refers to the meanings and understandings developed socially and experientially.

- ✓ Transactional or subjectivist epistemology - assumes that we cannot separate ourselves from what we know, who we are, how we understand others and the world (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

Interpretivists understand that human behaviour is voluntary. In other words, people choose the paths they take and the decisions they make. By placing reality that cannot be separated from our knowledge, the interpretivist paradigm implies that researchers' values are incorporated in all phases of the research process. The truth of reality is therefore negotiated through dialogue (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

Findings or knowledge claims are created through dialogue, whereby the collisions of interpretations are negotiated among members of a community.

- ✓ It is very important to consider moral and practicality when evaluating interpretive science. Fostering a dialogue between researchers and respondents is critical. It is through this dialectical process that a more informed and sophisticated understanding of the social world can be created.
- ✓ All interpretations are based in a particular moment. That is, they are located in a particular context or situation and time. They are open to re-interpretation and negotiation through conversation.

From an interpretivist view, Angen (2000) offers criteria for evaluating research:

- ✓ The research questions should be carefully considered and articulated.
- ✓ Inquiries should be carried out in a respectful manner.
- ✓ Awareness and articulation of the choices and interpretations the researcher makes during the inquiry process, and evidence of taking responsibility for those choices.
- ✓ A written account develops persuasive arguments.
- ✓ Evaluation of results.

- ✓ Validity must be located in the 'discourse of the research community.'
- ✓ Ethical validity – are the choices made through the research process, considering the political and ethical aspects.
    - Researcher questions if the research is helpful to the target population.
    - Search for alternative explanations as well as the researcher constructs.
    - It's vital to recognise if there are any lessons to be learnt from the work done.

- ✓ Substantive validity - evaluating the content of an interpretive work.

    - Evidence of the interpretive choices the researcher has made should be visible.

    - An assessment of biases should be done on the overall existing work of the research project.

    - Self-reflect to understand our own transformation in the research process.

This type of research creates a relationship between the researcher and participants, who are partners in the research process (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

The key scientific beliefs will now be elaborated upon.

2.4 Key Scientific Beliefs

In this section, the researcher will elaborate on the key scientific beliefs by defending the research approach selected:

2.4.1 Ontological Position

The researcher was interested in the nature of reality (Collins & Hussey 2003 in ADT 2006). From an ontological position or perspective, qualitative

researchers believe that reality is created by individuals, i.e. different personal versions of reality and the essence of things (Mason, 1996). A multitude of realities therefore exist. According to Williams (2000), the 'social world' is the inter-subjective construction of its participants. That is, it is created and recreated continuously as a result of their subjective understanding of it. In the proposed study the researcher was dependent upon the voices (quotes and themes in words), as well as the interpretations of participants and subjects by understanding a given reality (Creswell, 1994). Williams (2000) posits, thus, that individuals can attribute different meanings to the same action and, contrary, different actions can form a similarity of expressed meanings.

Ontologically, the perceptions of Indian parents would be different in their characteristics as a result of how they are interpreted and recreated by the participants. The researcher is aware that people are able to attach meaning to their social environment through experiencing and understanding it. The researcher was interested in understanding the types of challenges (in terms of culture, religion, family dynamics, societal expectations and individual factors) Indian women experienced in the parents' youth, as well as in terms of their daughters being educated and working (pursuing a career).

2.4.2 Epistemological Position

The researcher's epistemology refers to searching for the truth in relation to reality; his/her knowledge will therefore serve as a guideline to decide the way in which the social phenomena will be studied (Holloway, 1997; Mason, 1996; & Creswell, 1994). According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003), the researcher is interested in knowing what method to use to study the world. According to them, the epistemological position in terms of the interpretive tradition is:

- ✓ The researcher and the social world impact each other.
- ✓ The researcher's values and perspectives inevitably influence the findings of the research study, thus making it impossible to conduct objective, value-free research, although the researcher could declare and be transparent about his or her assumptions.

- ✓ The social researcher was focussed on exploring and understanding the social world by using both the participants' and his/her experiences.

The researcher in the study believed she had acquired the personal qualities to conduct the proposed studies. The researcher was interested in understanding the factors of willingness of Indian parents to allow their daughters to pursue a career and tertiary education from a phenomenological perspective. The researcher is also an Indian female. She is currently pursuing her career in a large organisation. Even though she may understand and have insight into some of the factors experienced by Indian parents, she still needed to have a deeper understanding of what the factors are of other Indian parents in terms of their daughters pursing a career and tertiary education. In her case she had qualified with a BCom degree at a tertiary institution. She had also been exposed to cultural, social and family issues, which affected her parents in their decision to allow her to pursue tertiary education and work. The researcher has done her best to be objective in the reporting of information and did not allow her position as an Indian female pursuing her career to influence the results of her study. Not only did the researcher try to understand the world of her participants, but she had a better understanding of the culture, religion and social environment of her participants, compared to an outsider. The researcher approached the proposed study with an open mind and without any prejudices and preconceived ideas. She was objective as far as possible and therefore asked the participants for their interpretation of the final report. This was one way of maintaining objectivity. In order to ensure objectivity, the researcher asked questions that were linked to general research questions, determined from the review of the literature.

Now that the research design and relevant key concepts have been discussed, the next part explains the particular methodology of research used in the current study.

2.5 Methodology of the Research Study

The research methodology starts with locating the research subjects, then the data-gathering methods are selected and used to collect information, and thereafter the storage of data methods where the information is kept will be discussed. In other words, it focuses on specific tasks such as collecting of data or a sample of a group of people used in the research study. Babbie and Mouton (2006) adds that the methodology of research focuses on the research process and the tools and procedures used in a specific study.

2.5.1 The Setting of the Research Study

Indian, Muslim and Hindu parents in Gauteng (Pretoria) only were chosen.

2.5.2 Locating Research Subjects/Informants

To gain access to a specific site, the researcher often had to go through a gatekeeper, a person who can provide a simpler entrance into the site. Once entered into the site, the researcher established a rapport with the people being studied and gained their trust. The researcher was, at the same time, open regarding the reason for the visit.

In the study, the researcher visited various schools in the Pretoria region. The interviewer visited the principals of the various schools to outline the purpose of the study and obtain permission to address the girls in their final year of study at the school. The interviewer outlined the purpose of the research and asked the girls to discuss the purpose of the research with their parents. Those girls whose parents were willing to take part in the study were contacted. The interviewer provided the parents with more detail on the reasons for the research. A meeting was set up at the participants' home. The Indian parents were the interviewees of the study and serve as the main group to be studied and analysed (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000) and the interviews were conducted with their 'informed consent' (Bailey, 1996).

2.5.3 The Sampling Methods

Qualitative researchers rely on non-probability samples. Samples are small and usually purposively selected on the basis of salient criteria. In non-probability sampling, elements (or rather, cases) are selected for their particular characteristics. The sample is never intended to be representative in statistical terms. Selecting cases in terms of their characteristics makes it suitable for in-depth analysis (Ritchie &Lewis, 2003).

The process in which the researcher conducted the sampling was as follows (O'Neil, 2005):

- Defined the target population according to the specific criteria of the study – that was the population from which the sample was taken. This implied that the researcher would set out the criteria and include the elements in the study. This list of criteria was prioritised, and, where needed, criteria were categorised in groups.
- The researcher identified the specific cases included in the sampling frame. For instance, a specific organisation from which the cases were selected, or administrative records, telephone books. The researcher could also have used snowball sampling as a sample frame.

For the study the researcher conducted in-depth life-story interviews with Indian parents about the freedom given to women when they were growing up, relating to pursuing tertiary education and careers, as well as their current situation regarding cultural, religious and family aspects they perceive as influential factors in their daughters' pursuit of tertiary education and careers. The researcher chose a small sample of Muslim and Hindu parents on whom the study was conducted.

Purposive sampling:

According to Babbie and Mouton (2007), purposive sampling was appropriate to use, based upon the researcher's knowledge and understanding of the group of people, the aspects that have an influence on the group studied, and

the characteristics and feelings of the sample group. Purposive sampling was applicable, in connection to the study, based upon the researcher's views and the objective of the study. As mentioned earlier, the researcher chose Indian parents who have daughters completing their final year of schooling (matric) and who either belonged to the Muslim or Hindu religious denominations. The sample was chosen from the Muslim/Hindu, Western private all-girl and public schools. The reason for choosing Indian parents from the various types of schools their daughters attended was to identify whether parents who send their daughters to the various schools have a different outlook on girls pursuing tertiary education and careers.

Biographical Data of sample of Indian parents in the study:

Name of Parent	Gender	Age	Religion	Occupation	Highest Qualification of Parent	Type of schooling daughter is attending	Number of daughters
Bibi	Female	47	Muslim	Part time cashier	Grade 10	Public	Three
Abdul	Male	50	Muslim	Part time admin clerk	Grade 10	Public	Three
Sadia	Female	45	Muslim	Currently Housewife	Grade 12	Muslim (Home schooled)	One
Rashid	Male	50	Muslim	Self-employed	Grade 11	Muslim (Home schooled)	One
Dinesh	Male	36	Hindu	HR Advisor, Human Resources	BCom: Human Resources	Hindu	One
Anisha	Female	32	Hindu	Bursar Co-ordinator	Grade 12	Hindu	One
Rajen	Male	46	Hindu	Mechanic, by trade	Grade 12	Girls Only	One
Ranitha	Female	40	Hindu	Credit Controller	Grade 12	Girls Only	One
Moosa	Male	61	Muslim	Electrical Engineer	BEng: Electrical	Muslim	Two
Fahima	Female	55	Muslim	Housewife	Grade 12	Muslim	Two
Sharmla	Female	51	Hindu	Housewife	Grade 12	Public	One

Sunden	Male	55	Hindu	Sales	Grade 10	Public	One
Ruweida	Female	39	Muslim	HRD Assistant Practitioner	BCom: Human Resources	Girls Only	One
Shiraaz	Male	45	Muslim	Chartered Accountant	BCom: Accounting	Girls Only	One
Farzana	Female	35	Muslim	Personal Assistant	Grade 12	Muslim	One
Uzair	Male	38	Muslim	Sales Manager	Grade 12	Muslim	One
Siva	Male	55	Hindu	Sales Rep	Grade 12	Public	Three
Melissa	Female	53	Hindu	Home Executive	Grade 12	Public	Three
Menagay	Female	46	Hindu	Administration Clerk	Grade 12	Public	Twins
Poovan	Male	48	Hindu	Financial Advisor	BCom: Financial Management	Public	Twins
Haseena	Female	32	Muslim	Housewife	Grade 12	Public	One
Imraan	Male	36	Muslim	Entrepreneur	Diploma: Entrepreneurship	Public	One
Asogran	Male	49	Hindu	Relationship Analyst	BCom: Marketing	Hindu	One
Nisha	Female	35	Hindu	Banker, by profession	BCom: Financial Management	Hindu	One
Rubina	Female	37	Muslim	Teacher	Diploma: Teaching	Muslim	One
Abdul Kader	Male	41	Muslim	Chartered Accountant	BCom: Accounting	Muslim	One

2.5.4 Data Collection Method: In-Depth Life-Story Interviews

When it comes to collecting data, interviews are the best method to use to receive quality and detailed information (Berry, 1999). There are many types of interviews: structured interview, survey interview, informal/unstructured interview and conversations, just to mention a few (Hitchcock, 1989). On the other hand, Cohen and Manion (1994) prefer to group interviews into four kinds, namely the structured interview, the unstructured interview, the non-directive interview, and the focused interview. Life-story interviewing is another kind that serves researchers to elicit information so to have a bigger picture and understanding of the interviewee's experience or situation. The

researcher can also use it to examine interesting areas for further investigation. With life-story interviewing, the interviewees are asked open-ended questions. If the information received is not sufficient or clear, it is necessary to probe the interviewee in order to obtain valuable information that is useful to the researcher. It's important to note that life-story interviewing often involves qualitative data, which is also called qualitative interviewing (Berry, 1999).

Life-story interviewing was used to collect data for the study, as an interpretative approach (qualitative in nature) was adopted for the investigation. Interpretative research focuses on the overall understanding of human experiences at a holistic level (Berry, 1999). The data is usually recorded by means of video, audio tape or script. The researcher informed the participant about the reasons for record-keeping. The participant had given his/her consent and was given the opportunity to withdraw from the study (O'Neil, 2005). The researcher attempted to understand the reality from the subjects' views and to reveal peoples' experiences (Cameron, 2001). The researcher decided to conduct life-story interviews with Indian Muslim and Hindu parents for the following reasons:

- The researcher was interested in the background of the participants' families;
- The researcher wanted to explore the perceived individual, societal, family, religious and cultural barriers influencing the willingness to allow their daughters to study further and work.
- The researcher was interested in the religious and cultural context in which these barriers and facilitators reside.
- Cultural, religious and family issues, societal expectations and individual factors were sensitive issues. Participants did not want to share their views in front of others; therefore interviews were conducted where participants' confidentiality was guaranteed.

2.5.4.1 Life-Story Interview Method

McAdams (2008) defines a life-story interview as "*the story of an individual's life, such as experiences, perceptions and feelings."* The interviewer was interested in hearing the interviewee's life story, including the past, just as the interviewee remembers it and the future the interviewee imagines. The life story was specific, not everything is included about the interviewee, and therefore the interview was focussed on certain things in the interviewee's life story – only certain scenes, characters and ideas. With this in mind, the interview questions had no right or wrong answers, only the important events that occurred in the individual's life story was discussed. Everything said in the interview was voluntary, anonymous and confidential.

The life-story interviews were used to conduct face to face interviews with the Muslim and Hindu Indian parents, because the researcher was interested in collecting the life-stories of the parents. In essence this helped the researcher to have a better insight into the way the parents live, taking into consideration the parents' views and understanding of the way they differ in their lifestyles.

The researcher focused on the following eight key events:

1. High point – the researcher discussed the absolute high point in the parents' entire life, for example, a wonderful or joyous moment in their story.
2. Low point – the researcher allowed the parents to think back over their lives and discuss an unpleasant scene in their life.
3. Turning point – the researcher identified specific moments that are regarded as turning points. These are series of events that were considered as bringing about a significant change in their lives.
4. Positive childhood remembrance – a positive memory from early childhood that stands out.
5. Negative childhood memory – a negative memory from early childhood.
6. Vivid adult memory – a meaningful occurrence, positive or negative, that stood out in the more recent memory of the parents.
7. Wisdom event – this episode might have occurred where the parents had acted or reacted in a wise way.

8. Religious, spiritual, or mystical experience – the experience of the parents might have occurred within the context of their religious traditions, or maybe a spiritual or mystical experience of any kind.

Roberts (2002) stated in his research that biographical research is an exciting, stimulating and fast-moving field. This means that the written life of individuals can be easily understood through their experiences, the changes they have made and interpretations of their life. The researcher did not follow a set of procedures when attempting to do a life story of the Indian parents. The central assumption of the biographical method, that life can be captured and represented in text, was open to question. Denzin (1989) adds that a life is a social text, a fictional, narrative production. It is what is produced about it.

A pilot study was conducted first; four sets of parents (mothers and fathers) from the two religious denominations (Hinduism and Islam) were selected. These parents' daughters were attending Hindu, Muslim, public and/or girls-only schools and were in their final year of study. Life-story interviews were not conducted on them. However, their interviews indicated that life stories were important to the topic. The main study focussed on a larger sample of two sets of Indian parents from each type of school mentioned above, the focus being on more in-depth information gathered on their cultural, family and religious beliefs relating to life stories.

Life-story interviews were applicable in this study, because the individual's entire life was looked into in the main study relating to the freedom given to Indian women regarding education and careers. People cannot be understood apart from one another, but rather as a story of the individual's life, including the challenges, personal ideology, life theme, future and reflection of their family dynamics, society pressures, religion, culture and individual factors. The researcher collected in-depth information from the interviews of the Indian parents' life stories.

2.5.5. Recording and Managing Data

According to McLellan, MacQueen, and Niedig (2003), the researcher captures experiences of people; qualitative data is thus collected. To record all data for analysis, all tapes need to be transcribed, typed and stored on the computer. The researcher must have backup copies of the tapes recorded. The backup copies of the tapes have to be securely stored in a separate location from the original tapes. Note-taking is another way to record the conversation with the participant and allows the participant to slow down while the researcher is writing.

To record the conversations with the participants, the researcher in the study used an audio tape. The researcher made the participants feel comfortable by explaining their participation and providing the clear, logical explanation about its value. The researcher made it clear that the conversations will be kept confidential and clarified what will happen to the recorded conversation and transcripts. Specific points were also noted by the researcher to probe more about what the participant meant. The researcher then transcribed sections of the tape that specifically addressed the concerns of the research.

McLellan, MacQueen, and Niedig (2003) stated that, keeping data together in one place, organised and in a systematic fashion, helps to manage data more effectively. They recommend keeping all documents related to a given data collection event in a secure location at each field site, and to store the original tapes in an envelope.

In the proposed study of the factors affecting the willingness of South African parents to allow their daughters to work or study was a process. The researcher at the beginning of the analysis had an overview of the information covered, familiarising the data set. The researcher focussed on the data set pertaining to the objectives of the research. The researcher also focussed on the diversity within the Indian parents' samples, identifying any gaps or overemphasis on certain issues, as well as the difference in participants' characteristics and circumstances.

2.5.5.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study is a small-scale experiment of the actual study. It is the initial phase of a project. The purpose of a pilot study is to focus only on specific parts rather than as planned in the full study, and the scope of the study is smaller than the full study. The researcher is provided with ideas, approaches and clues that are not foreseen before conducting the pilot study. It helps the researcher to have transparent findings in the main study. The pilot study also permits a thorough check of the planned statistical and analytical procedures, allowing the researcher a chance to evaluate the usefulness of the data. The pilot study almost provides sufficient data for the researcher to decide whether to go ahead with the main study (Meriwether, 2001).

The proposed study deals with the factors affecting the willingness of Indian parents to allow their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers. The researcher was interested in identifying themes for further investigation. She conducted the pilot study to ascertain if the correct questions were being asked and also to ascertain which areas to probe in-depth. The pilot study also allowed the researcher to practice the questions and adjust to respondents so that she could be better prepared for the next phase of the interviews, which was for the main study. In order to avoid duplication of the pilot study, the researcher had, in the main study, probed further into the cultural and religious aspects during the in-depth interviews about what Indian parents perceived as factors influencing the willingness to allow their daughters to study or work. Questions pertaining to religious, cultural, societal and family aspects were probed to gain a deeper understanding of why these factors were perceived as factors influencing the willingness of parents to allow their daughters to study or work.

2.5.6. The Analysis of the Data

2.5.6.1 Content Analysis

Content analysis is a *methodology* of research, studying the content of communication. Babbie (2007) defines content analysis as "the study of recorded human communications, such as books, websites, paintings and laws." Content analysis is commonly used by researchers in the social

sciences to analyse recorded transcripts of interviews with participants. Today, content analysis is the most-employed analytical tool used fruitfully in a variety of research applications in information and library science (ILS) (Allen & Reser, 1990).

Qualitative content analysis has been defined as:

- "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005),
- "an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytic rules and step by step models, without rash quantification" (Mayring, 2000),
- "any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings" (Patton, 2002).

With the above three definitions in mind, it was a clear illustration that qualitative content anaylsis emphasised an integrated view of speech/texts and their specific contexts. Qualitative content analysis allows researchers to understand social reality in a subjective, as well as in scientific terms. It focuses on unique themes that illustrate the different meanings of a phenomenon in a particular text, instead of counting words or extracting important content from texts.

Inductive vs. Deductive

Within the framework of qualitative content analysis, it is designed to reduce raw data into categories or themes based upon inference and interpretation. Through the researcher's careful examination and constant comparison, themes and categories emerge from the data; this is inductive reasoning. According to Patton, qualitative content analysis includes deductive reasoning. Researchers who create concepts from theory or previous literature are very useful for qualitative research, especially at the beginning of the data-analysis stage (Berg, 2001).

Based on the degree of involvement in inductive reasoning, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) discuss three approaches to qualitative content analysis:

1. Conventional qualitative content analysis: these are coding categories that are derived directly and inductively from the raw data. The approach is more related to grounded theory development.
2. Directed content analysis: this coding starts with a theory or relevant research findings. During the data analysis, the researcher absorbs the data and allows themes to emerge. The aim is to validate or extend a conceptual framework or theory.
3. Summative content analysis: it starts with the counting of words, and then extends the analysis to include latent meanings and themes.

2.5.6.2 Conducting Content Analysis: Standard Rules

According to Dr. Klaus Krippendorff (1980 & 2004), six questions must be addressed in every content analysis:

1. Which data are analysed?
2. How are they defined?
3. What is the population from which they are drawn?
4. What is the context relative to which the data are analysed?
5. What are the boundaries of the analysis?
6. What is the target of the inferences?

However, three problems might occur when documents are being assembled for content analysis.

a.) First problem: when a number of documents from the population are missing, the content analysis must be abandoned.
b.) Second problem: inappropriate records (e.g., ones that do not match the definition of the document required for analysis) should be discarded, but a record should be kept of the reasons.

c.) Third problem: some documents might contain missing passages that could match the requirements for analysis, but are uncodable (GAO, 1996).

Qualitatively, content analysis can involve any type of analysis where communication content (speech, written text, interviews, images, etc.) is categorised and classified. Weber (1990) states: "To make valid inferences from the text, it is important that the classification procedure be reliable in the sense of being consistent: Different people should code the same text in the same way."

Process of Qualitative Content Analysis

This process begins in the stages of data collection. In the analysis phase, the involvement may help direct data collection toward sources that are more useful for addressing the research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Content analysis may be standardised and divided as below:

Step 1: Prepare the Data

Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse various types of data. The data needs to be transformed into a written text before the analysis stage begins (Patton, 2002).

Step 2: Define the Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is the individual themes, rather than the physical linguistic units (e.g. word, sentence, or paragraph). The unit of analysis is based upon the group of text that is classified during content analysis (De Wever et al., 2006). Thereafter it is vital to define the coding unit (Weber, 1990).

Step 3: Develop Categories and a Coding Scheme

Categories and a coding scheme can be derived from three sources:

- The data.

- Previous related studies.
- Theories.

According to Tesch (1990), content analysis allows the researcher to assign a group of text to one or more categories simultaneously. A coding manual is also developed, especially when multiple coders are involved, consisting of category names, definitions or rules for assigning codes and examples (Weber, 1990).

Step 4: Code All the Text

In the coding process, the coder must review the coding to avoid "drifting into an idiosyncratic sense of what the codes mean" (Schilling, 2006).

Step 5: Assess the Coding Consistency

Once the data set is coded, the coder needs to monitor the consistency of the coding. New codes may have been added. It's also important at this stage to note that the coder understands the categories and coding rules may change over time, which could lead to greater inconsistency (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Weber, 1990).

Step 6: Draw conclusions from the Coded Data

In this step the coder should make sense of the themes or categories identified, and their properties. This is a critical step that relies on the success of the researcher's reasoning abilities.

Step 7: Report Methods and Findings

Content analysis does not produce counts and statistical significance. It aims to uncover patterns, themes and categories relevant to reality. According to Patton (2002), the researcher is required to monitor and report for the study to be replicable, ensuring the analytical procedures and processes are completed truthfully.

In the proposed study, the content analysis was used to look at the text or speech to see what themes emerge in explaining the Indian parents' willingness to allow their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers. The researcher had extracted themes relating to their culture, religion, society and family background. This allowed the researcher to ascertain how these themes were related to each other.

2.5.7 The Quality of the Research

Trochim, Guba and Lincoln (2006) proposed four criteria for judging the soundness of qualitative research. The four criteria reflected below are the underlying assumptions involved in the qualitative research to obtain the trustworthiness of any study.

2.5.7.1 Credibility

The first criterion involves establishing the results of qualitative research that are believable from the views of the participants in the research. The objectivity of qualitative research is to describe or understand the phenomena of interest from the participants' views; they are the only ones who can legitimately judge the credibility of the results (Trochim, 2006). Credibility depends on the detail of information collected and the analytical abilities of the researcher (O'Neil, 2005). Credibility can also be enhanced by means of the triangulation of data. That is the use of different data sets (from different times, different places or different people) and assessing to what extent they 'say the same thing' (O'Neil, 2005). In the proposed research on Indian parents, the researcher conducted member checking by discussing the themes with the participants. The participants agreed that the themes and analysis accurately depicted what they had discussed. The researcher had also achieved credibility through triangulation, where daughters also agreed that parents supported them during their school careers and encouraged their further education and future careers. The participants were also given the opportunity to refuse being participants in the study. The researcher had also ensured the utmost confidentiality relating to the study. Regular debriefing sessions were conducted with the study leader. The study leader was also

shown the themes and a thorough discussion relating to was conducted these. Detailed descriptions in the study, which enhances the credibility of the research, were also used.

2.5.7.2 Transferability

The second criterion refers to the extent to which the results of qualitative research are generalised or transferred to other contexts or settings. Transferability is primarily the responsibility of the one doing the generalising. The qualitative researcher can enhance transferability by doing a thorough job of describing the research context and the assumptions central to the research. The person who “transfers” the results to a different context is responsible for making the judgement on how sensible the transfer is (Trochim, 2006). In the proposed study, the researcher could not mention the transferability of findings; the researcher could, however, provide enough information that was used to determine if the findings were applicable to other situations (O’Neil, 2005). For transferability to take place, another researcher will have to take into account the culture, religion, societal and family factors in the South African context.

2.5.7.3 Dependability

The third criterion emphasises the ever-changing context within which research occurs. There is no credibility without dependability and therefore an illustration of dependability will prove the credibility. They then suggested an inquiry audit where the auditor examines the documentation and interview notes. The auditor will assess acceptability and simultaneously determine the dependability. It will thus be a step in the right direction to assign an auditor for checking the studies’ dependability. The researcher describes the changes that occur in the setting that affects the researcher’s approach to the study (Trochim, 2006). In the proposed study on the factors influencing the willingness of the Indian parents to allow their daughters to work and/or study, the researcher ensured that records of all transcripts and interviews, and also the documents where themes were extracted, were kept.

2.5.7.4 Confirmability

The fourth criterion refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others. There are a number of strategies for enhancing confirmability. The researcher can document the procedures by reviewing and monitoring the data throughout the study. Another researcher can play a "devil's advocate" role in respect of the results, and the process can be documented. The researcher can actively search for negative instances that contradict prior observations. After the completion of the study, the researcher can conduct a data audit that examines the data collected. Thereafter the researcher can analyse the procedures and recommend any bias or distortion (Trochim, 2006). The researcher achieved confirmability by another researcher being given the transcripts of the interviews. The result was that the researcher had a face-to-face session with the other researcher and compared themes. The other researcher also obtained the same themes, which enhanced the credibility of the writer's research.

2.5.8 Applicable Reporting Style

For the proposed study on factors influencing the willingness of Indian parents in South Africa, the researcher used the **impressionist tales** as a writing method. When writing qualitative research, it was vital that the language used was not a barrier in terms of communication. The impressionist tales genre was appropriate for the proposed study, as the separation of the researcher and the researched was blurred in this genre and the story was told through the chronology of fieldwork events, drawing attention to the culture under study, but also to the fieldwork experiences that were pivotal to the cultural description and interpretation. An idea of what it was like to be a participant in the study and ensuring that the most important information was conveyed, was also gained.

2.6 Ethical Considerations Applied

According to Creswell (2003), the following ethical issues were considered when collecting data:

- Participation should be voluntary.
- Participants should not be put at risk.
- Informed consent – this is also referred to as “the right to full disclosure regarding the research.”
- A consent form should be completed by the participants.
- The objective of the study should be known to the participants in order for them to understand the nature of the research and the impact it will have on them.
- Participants are free to ask questions and obtain a copy of the results studied, and be assured that all information will be treated confidentially.
- The procedure of the research should be made clear to the participants so that they know what to expect.
- Gaining the permission of individuals in authority to provide access to the researcher at the research site.
- Researchers need to respect research sites so that sites are left undistributed after research.

Beale et al (2003) posit that there are three ethical principles in qualitative research. These are:

- Mutual respect - deals with researchers opening their perspectives to understand the point of view of others and provide a rationale for their actions.
- Non-coercion - ensures that participants agree freely to participate in the research.
- Non-manipulation - deals with informing participants fully about the purpose of the study and research procedures.

These ethical principles improve research relationships.

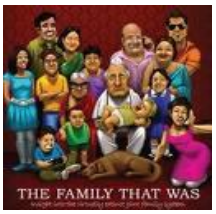
In the proposed study, the researcher firstly explained to Indian parents what the study entailed, how their input would assist in highlighting the issues and thereafter seeking their permission to interview them by completing a consent form. Confidentiality of each participant was assured and maintained;

participants were also informed that they are allowed to retract their consent at any point in the research.

2.7 Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher firstly described the research design and research methodology which forms the foundation of the research. The ontological and epistemological stance were also stated, and it was discussed how the life-story interviews contributed to the study. Content analysis was used to identify themes from the in-depth interviews. The ethical issues were added and its impact on the study was elaborated upon.

CHAPTER 3



INDIAN CULTURE AND FAMILY

3. Introduction

This chapter outlines the cross-cultural psychology theory, including the concepts such as acculturation, assimilation, integration and marginalisation, Indian culture and the social position of Indian women. The two well-known South African Indian religions, Islam and Hinduism will firstly be discussed, outlining an Indian woman's role in the two religions respectively. Included in this chapter is the discussion about the different types of family in the Indian community, and parenting styles. The reasons of Indian parents selecting different schools when it comes to educating their daughters will also be discussed. The factors that are influencing Indian parents' willingness to allow their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers and the social factors will thereafter be outlined and discussed in detail.

3.1 Cross-cultural Psychology Theory – Acculturation, Assimilation, Integration and Marginalisation

In the following definition, cross-cultural psychology is signified by the term "change" (which often results from contact between cultures). Cross-cultural psychology is the study of similarities and differences in the individual's psychological functioning (Berry, 2002). The aim of cross-cultural psychologists is to identify the ways in which culture impacts people's behaviour, family life, education, social experiences and other areas (Lonner, 2000). With cross-cultural psychology, important links between cultural context and individual behavioural development are demonstrated. A cross-cultural relationship investigates what happens to individuals developed in

one-cultural context when attempting to re-establish their lives in another one (Berry, 1997). This type of adaptation is currently occurring amongst the Indians. The culture once strictly followed and practiced is now moving gradually into the Western culture. In essence, individuals generally act in ways that correspond to cultural influences and expectations (Berry, Poortinga, Segall & Dasen, 1992).

During acculturation, groups of people engage in intercultural contact in order to achieve outcomes that are adaptive to both parties. In this case, Indian parents still have a challenge to integrate the two different cultural beliefs into one. It therefore creates conflict between the parents and their children. There is a large group of individual differences in how people (in both groups in contact) go about their acculturation in terms of integration, assimilation and marginalised strategies. Basically it means the amount of stress Indians experience with regards to the change and the way they adapt psychologically and socioculturally. Generally, people pursuing the integration strategy experience less stress and achieve better adaptations than those pursuing marginalisation, whereas the outcomes for those pursuing assimilation experience intermediate levels of stress and adaptation. It is evident that Indian parents go through tremendous stress when it comes to adapting to the new way of thinking.

Many theoretical perspectives have been studied during cultural transitions. The definition of *acculturation* was defined by Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936): *"*acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups". Although acculturation is a neutral term in principle (that is, change may take place in either or both groups), in practice, however, it tends to bring about more change in one of the groups than in the other (Berry, 1990). With immigration, many societies contain members of more than one race. That is, people of many cultural backgrounds come to live together in a diverse society. In many cases they form cultural groups that are not equal in power (numerical, economic, or political), giving rise to popular terms such as

"mainstream", "minority", "ethnic group," etc. Many types of cultural groups may exist in plural societies primarily, due to three factors: *voluntaries, mobility,* and *permanence.* Some groups have entered into the acculturation process voluntarily (e.g. immigrants), while others experience acculturation without having to search (e.g. refugees, indigenous peoples). Other groups of people are in contact because they have migrated to a new location (e.g. immigrants and refugees), while others have had the new culture brought to them (e.g. indigenous peoples and "national minorities"). Among those who have migrated, some are relatively permanently settled into the process (e.g. immigrants), while for others the situation is a temporary one (e.g. sojourners, such as international students and guest workers). It can therefore be concluded that Indian parents have now adapted to the new culture, as the changes have been made and they have noticed the changes and accepted them. One of the conclusions that have been reached is that the basic *process* of adaptation appears to be common to all these groups (Berry & Sam, 1996). The course, the level of difficulty and the eventual outcome of acculturation all contribute to this variation (Berry, 1997). *Adaptation* refers to changes in individuals or groups in response to environmental demands. People can adapt immediately, or extended over a longer period. Short-term changes during acculturation are negative at times and disruptive in character. However, for most acculturating individuals, positive adaptation to the new cultural context usually occurs after a period of time (Beiser et al., 1988). In other cases *marginalisation* occurs where some people have lost their ability to maintain their original culture and developed a better understanding with other cultures (Berry, 1997).

Cross-cultural psychology reflects a general process of globalisation in the social sciences that seeks to purify specific areas of research. The theory of cross-cultural psychology is therefore applicable in the study; because Indian parents' behaviour and the way they perceive the changes taking place from the apartheid era to the present situation has a high influence on the decisions made in terms of allowing their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers. In many Indian families there is currently an interest in both religious and Western culture. Parents are upholding their primitive

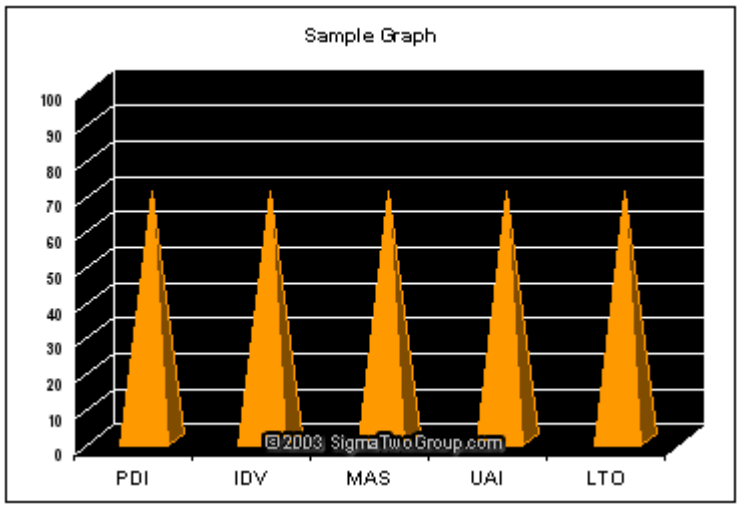
culture and at the same time interact with other groups of people as an integral part of the community. Today, psychologists investigate the different behaviours among various cultures throughout the world. In Cape Town there is an International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP) that aims to facilitate communication among people interested in a diverse range of issues involving the intersection of culture and psychology.

3.1.1 The Indian culture

Culture refers to a socially-transmitted set of behavioural standards. Hofstede (1991) defines culture as the "software of the mind," guiding individuals in their daily engagements. He believes that culture is always a collective phenomenon, where people within the same social environment share what they have learnt. Schein (1993), on the other hand defines culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned and has to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in connection to solving problems. In other words, as groups evolve over time, they face two basic challenges: *integrating individuals into an effective whole*, and *adapting effectively to the external environment in order to survive*. As groups find solutions to these problems over time, they engage in a form of collective learning that creates a set of shared assumptions and beliefs called "culture" (Schein, 1993).

Morgan (1997), on the other hand, describes culture as "an active living phenomenon through which people jointly create and recreate the worlds in which they live." In other words, culture serves as a basic framework for social interaction among the individual members of a society. The Indian culture has influenced South African lives in many ways. Today the Indians occupy top professional positions and are renowned entrepreneurs who know how to drive a hard bargain, and their food is loved by most South Africans (Anonymous, 2010).

Hofstede (2004) states five Cultural Dimensions, namely:



Power Distance Index (PDI) is the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This suggests that a society's level of inequality is endorsed by the followers as much as by the leaders. Anybody with some experience will be aware that 'all societies are unequal' (Hofstede, 2004).

Individualism (IDV) versus Collectivism is the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. On the individualist side everyone is expected to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family. On the collectivist side, people are from birth integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families (with uncles, aunts and grandparents) that continually protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty (Hofstede, 2004).

Masculinity (MAS) versus Femininity refers to the distribution of roles between the genders, which is another fundamental issue for any society. The IBM studies revealed that (a) women's values differ less among societies than men's values; (b) men's values contain a dimension from very assertive and competitive and ultimately differs from women's values, to a more modest and caring role (Hofstede, 2004).

Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI) deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity; it ultimately refers to man's search for Truth. Uncertainty in avoiding cultures try to minimise the possibility of such situations by strict laws and rules, safety and security measures by a belief in absolute Truth; 'there can only be one Truth and we have it'. People avoiding uncertain situations are also more emotional, and motivated (Hofstede, 2004).

Long-term Orientation (LTO) **versus Short-term Orientation**: deals with virtue, regardless of Truth. The values linked with long-term orientation are thrift and perseverance; values linked with short-term orientation are respect for tradition, fulfilling social obligations, and protecting one's 'face' (Hofstede, 2004).

According to Triandis (1978), there is a strong tendency in a collectivist culture whereby a person within a group will sacrifice his/her personal goals to ensure that the group goals are achieved. In collectivist cultures it's vital for people to belong to a group. In exchange for the group's loyalty, group members are provided with protection and security by the group (Triandis, 1995).

Triandis (1995) mentions two types of collectivism, horizontal and vertical collectivism. Horizontal collectivism is when an individual within the group joins with other members of the group; these members are similar to each other. Vertical collectivism is when an individual within the group recognises himself/herself as playing a specific role within the group, and the members of the group are different from each other, some having more recognition and status than others. In the Indian culture it is common to find vertical collectivism, the reason being that many Indian parents have been brought up in different backgrounds, had experiences with different cultural beliefs (Hindu and Muslim) and are concentrated more on traditional in-groups (parents, family, neighbours, and friends). There will therefore be different perceptions of their willingness to allow their daughters to study or work. Triandis (1995) postulates that the cultural characteristics of individualism-collectivism are the

consequences of a number of different influences – affluence, family structure, cultural complexity and demographic factors.

A study done in an Indian scenario showed findings that indicated concerns for family or family members evoked purely collectivist behaviour (Jai *et al*. 2004). In some circumstances personal needs and goals of individuals within the family can clash with the famliy goals, which can lead to a combination of individualist and collectivist behaviour and intentions. In this study the Indian participants' education had a significant impact, including other background variables, i.e. culture, social network and religion (Jai et al., 2004).

Another significant study that was done that clearly links to Indian families is the distinct and intimate relationship between Chinese culture, family and student achievement. The aim of this study was to describe the impact of culture and family influences on Chinese student achievement. The findings of this study suggested that parents' encouragement of their children; saving family 'face' by studying and having a home study environment affect Chinese student achievement (Braxton, 1999). Keeping the above-mentioned study in mind, research findings have also indicated that there is a comparison between Chinese and Indian culture. The Indian culture is therefore looked at as a collectivist culture, the reason being that the same principle applies to Indian culture. "Family face" is viewed the primary influence of student achievement. Indian parents usually stress the importance of "saving face" and have a great influence on their children's achievement and future, just as the Chinese do. Farkas (1996) contends that family is the primary vehicle of cultural transmission. Furthermore, Farkas (1996) emphasises that the influence of culture is passed from parent to child through certain skills, habits and styles that increase their child's cognitive abilities. Lockhead, Fuller and Nyirango (1989) suggest students' family history contributes significantly to educational attainment and achievement.

The social position of Indian women in South Africa has been a tradition which early immigrants have inherited from India (Pillay, 1972). Whether the women were Muslim or Hindu, they were all influenced by the Indian culture. The

cultural beliefs were all focused on the traditional role of women being homemakers and being obedient to their husbands. When an Indian female is young, her father cares for her. If her father has passed on, her brother would take care of her. When she is older she would be married off. In her old age her son cares for her. According to the Indian tradition, the ideal woman is one who plays the noble and important role of a good wife and a good mother. There is no mention of a woman going to work and earning for herself (Pillay, 1972). When an Indian woman is employed, the money she earns provides for the maintenance of the household, she has no control over the money she earns. It is therefore important to note that in the Indian culture, women devote their time, money and life to their families. Men, however, can spend their money on other activities outside the household; they have more freedom when it comes to their earnings. Indian women contribute a higher share of their money to the family and less on themselves (Hussain, 2010). In order to obtain a holistic view of an Indian female, one has to take into account the religious viewpoints that have had an influence on these women's lives as well. Next we turn to Islam and Hinduism.

3.1.1 Religion in the South African Indian Community

Due to the cultural heterogeneity of the Indian population, it is difficult to make a generalisation. Just as they are economically and educationally diversified, Indians are highly diversified religiously as well. In terms of religion and culture, the Indian community is diverse in religious aspects, but have a common culture due to their heritage. However, differences due to religious aspects do exist to a certain extent within the culture. Two major world religions, namely Islam and Hinduism are represented within this culture and will be focused on in this study (Hofmeyer & Oosthuizen, 1981). Thus, the best and most appropriate method of understanding these religions would be to understand the authentic sources, such as the holy book of Islam - the Glorious Qur'an, and the holy book of Hinduism - the Bhagvad Gita.

Within South Africa, approximately twenty percent of Indians are Muslim, seventy percent are Hindus and ten percent belong to smaller religious

denominations (Moodley in Arkin et al., 1989). A brief discussion of the two religious faiths in the Indian community in South Africa follows:

3.1.2 Islam

Islam like some forms of Christianity is ordered and prescriptive, resulting in its structure and theological tenets being easily accessible to all its followers. Islam as practiced in South Africa is continuously facing forces of secularisation, which is due to westernisation (Pillay, Naidoo & Dangor in Arkin et al., 1989). There is thus constant tension, especially among the youth, between modernisation and traditionalism. On the whole, South African Muslims have adapted Western values in dress and lifestyle only to the extent that these do not influence religious principles (Syed, 2000).

A stable family unit that offers peace and security is greatly valued in Islamic society. There are no homes for the elderly, as taking care of one's parents is seen as an honour and a blessing. Children are treasured, and live at home until they get married (Husain, 1984).

3.1.2.1 Women in Islam

Women's status in Islam is one of the most controversial and serious issues of our time. Islam is defined by Islamic texts, history and culture. The relationship between Muslim men and women are as follows: the Qur'an says that woman is biological social beings. The woman's right to seek education or learning is basic and is also guaranteed by Islamic teachings. The woman is also required to perform religious ordinances and forms of worship the way the men do (Al Qaradawy, 2002). On the other hand, "Men are the managers of women for that God has preferred in bounty one of them over another, and for that they have expended of their property" (Sura al-Nisa´ p.34). The Qur'an explains it clearly that Muslim men and women are equal (Dagher, 1997).

It is the husband's responsibility to take care of his wife financially according to his environment, conditions and income. Muslim women are liberated from social, political and economic obligations. They are basically freed from all these burdens to enjoy the joys of being a housewife and taking care of their children. Today Muslim women are moving away from the secure domains of their homes and facing challenges in their lives (Al Qaradawy, 2002).

3.1.2.2 Muslim Women in South Africa

Twenty years ago, Muslim women in South Africa worked out of necessity (poverty). Muslim women who stay at home and are obedient and do not receive higher education are regarded as pious and good women (Husain, 1984). Although Indian Muslim females have been given freedom in choosing their careers, most are from a patriarchal background that does not encourage women pursuing a career at the expense of her family. Akhmat (2005) maintains that women who are educated, and who work, are confident, not shy to speak in public, and have the ability to express themselves more than those who are at home. Muslim women in South Africa are accustomed to be quiet, apathetic and in the background due to the lack of education. Most Muslim women who do not work do not improve and develop themselves (Akhmat, 2005).

Today, most Muslim women disobey their Islamic values, i.e. not taking time off to attend Friday prayers, adopting a non-Islamic dress code, intermarriage (is allowed in Islam as long as it is another Muslim), travelling alone and not practicing their religion to the fullest. This means that women not conforming to wear the appropriate Islamic dress code were regarded as disobeying their Islamic values. Men and society view these women as losing their Islamic values and identity, because in the world of work women are not allowed to dress in their traditional Islamic gear (Akhmat, 2005). Today, with the emergence of Islamic schools and colleges, more Muslim women are receiving secular education, resulting in more Muslim women in the workplace (Husain, 1984). Women are therefore allowed to practice Islam more freely in

the South African workplace due to the South African Constitution (Syed, 2000).

3.1.2.3 Islam and Muslim Females' Education

Educated Muslim women take advantage of opportunities that could benefit them and their families (Roudi-Fahimi & Moghadam, 2003). When it comes to Muslim women's education, it can mainly be referred to as Islamic education by the Muslim community in order to educate and carry on the heritage of knowledge to their children (Douglass & Shaikh, 2004). Islamic education places no barrier on Muslim women's learning, and between "religious" and "secular" learning. Today, islamically-educated Muslim women practice the original sources of the Qur'an together with the Islamic disciplines. With this they follow the duties of faith, and act according to its principles. Through ethical and moral teaching, educated Muslim women contribute to their community and surroundings the skills and knowledge they have acquired (Douglass & Shaikh, 2004).

In addition, Roudi-Fahimi and Moghadam (2003) highlighted the benefits of female education, as mentioned below:

- As female education develops, fertility, infant and child mortality fall and family health improves.
- Children — especially daughters — of educated mothers are more likely to be enrolled in school and to have higher educational levels.
- Educated women are politically more active and better informed about their legal rights and how to exercise them.

In the increasingly open global economy, educated Muslim women are challenging the status quo, demanding equality in the family and society by encouraging women empowerment. Families are now becoming dependent on their daughters and wives to provide an additional income (Roudi-Fahimi & Moghadam, 2003).

3.1.3 Hinduism

Hinduism is one of the oldest and largest living natural religions in the world. It is a religion and a way of life. Hinduism functions in a patriarchal system, where the father has the final say. In South Africa, Hindus are the largest religious group, consisting of 70% of the Indian population. The Hindus are divided into two major groups: The Northern-speaking Hindus (who speak Hindi and Gujarati) and the Southern-speaking Hindus (who speak Tamil and Telugu) (Anonymous, 2010).

Ritualistic Hinduism represents a systemised devotional ethos and its crystallised patterns of worship and ceremonial orders have until lately been resistant to change or adaptation (Pillay et al., Arkin et al., 1989). The girls of India were given education related to household chores only (Naik, 2007). Hindus in South Africa have the least knowledge of their religion, the main reason being the process of secularisation, which is accompanied by socio-economic development and the imposition of a Western-oriented education. Hindus have placed high value on Western education, including more freedom for the Hindu female in terms of career choice and career development, which implies less of an indication towards their cultural traditions (Oosthuizen & Hofmeyer, 1981).

3.1.3.1 Women in Hinduism

The role of **women in Hinduism** is often argued. The status of women in Hinduism is dependent on the specific context. According to Jayaram (2000), women have made rapid strides in every aspect of modern life and adapted to the changes in society. Today Indian women are voicing their opinions in public and joining with other women in the local community, having the opportunities to make bold decisions. Undoubtedly Hindu women today enjoy more growth, better status and freedom than in the past.

3.1.3.2 Hindu Women and Employment in South Africa

In South Africa, on the other hand, many Hindu women are protected and dominated by men. A high level of Western education for girls was not favoured in the past. These days, Hindu females are pursuing higher education (Pillay, 1972). Sivananda (1961) argued that Hindu women should receive the kind of training that would make them ideal wives and mothers and not ideal job seekers who will be in competition with men. Hindu females also come from a patriarchal society where the women were not allowed to pursue higher education and seek employment.

Educated Hindu women generally want smaller families and make better use of health- and family-planning information and services in achieving their desired family size and healthier families. Hindu women with some secondary education have as many children as women with no education (Roudi-Fahimi & Moghadam, 2003).

Today, Hindu women should be able to achieve their goals outside their homes, to benefit themselves, their families, and country (Roudi-Fahimi & Moghadam, 2003). Many educated Hindu women have entered the job market. However, their participation in the workplace remains low due to the lack of educational qualifications. Thus, improving the quality of education can be achieved by providing more vocational training and available job-creating programmes that can help alleviate the high rate of female unemployment (Roudi-Fahimi & Moghadam, 2003). With all this in mind, by researching female education, this will enhance the country's economic and social development (Roudi-Fahimi & Moghadam, 2003).

3.2 The Family System

Steyn et al. (1987) define "family" as a socially-acceptable and approved relationship between two people of the opposite sex who share a home. A family requires structure and the ability to function. According to Smith (1995), structure refers to the number of members of the family. On the other hand, function refers to manners in which families' needs are considered by having

the ability to survive and maintain those needs. Knox (1988:14) adds that the spouses share economic responsibilities (work and money) in raising children. People inherit beliefs, goals, values, behaviours, attitudes and dreams from their families. This inheritance greatly affects the individual's career choice (Christen, 2009). The basic unit of both Islam and Hindu is the family. In almost all Indian families the father is financially responsible for his family and is obliged to cater for their well-being.

Steyn, Van Wyk and Le Roux (1987:40) emphasise the following features that characterise the establishment of a family:

- it is a socially-acceptable sexual relationship between two members of the opposite sex who share a common dwelling;
- reproduction;
- economic cooperation; and
- nurturing and caring for a new generation.

3.2.1 Types of Family

There are two common basic family types that can be identified in an Indian family in South Africa:

- **The Nuclear family**

The most basic type of family is the nuclear family (or core family). The marital bond is of primary importance in this family. In essence, the nuclear family comprises a man and his wife and any immediate offspring (Steyn et al., 1990:43). Popenoe (1991:338) describes the functions of the nuclear family as socialisation, love and companionship, sexual regulation and economic cooperation. The structure of this family is dynamic because the children are growing up and are continually in changing development phases (Pretorius, 1982:46).

Bengtson (2004) suggested three reasons that are more important in the 21st century:

(a) the demographic changes, “longer years of shared lives” between generations;

(b) the increasing importance of grandparents;

(c) the strength and resilience of intergenerational solidarity over time.

Socialisation within Nuclear Family

The majority of Indian families in South Africa are nuclear families. Indian families are bound by marriage. The father is seen as financially responsible for his family, and is obliged to cater for their well-being (Anonymous, 2010). Socialisation begins at home; parents communicate with their children on a daily basis, they teach them about their culture, lifestyles, the expectations of life and acceptable behaviour towards others in society. Indian parents closely watch their children’s progress and adjustments to their behaviour (Anonymous, 2010). Furthermore, Indian parents are usually well-motivated to socialise their offspring. Viewing their children as biological and social extensions of themselves, Indian parents have a strong emotional stake in child-rearing. In the family context, the child is taught the life skills that will, to a large extent, affect the quality of relationships entered into in their later life. Indian parents teach their children certain values and norms such as prayer time, fasting, eating the correct foods, respecting the elders, helping the less fortunate, working hard to maintain a good life, support each other and protect one another within the family context (Anonymous, 2010).

According to Pretorius (1990:37), the essence of the nuclear family is that family members live together to ‘fulfil each others’ needs. These needs include:

- provision of personal warmth and optimal opportunities for I-you relationships;
- mutual provision of physical needs;
- a socialising function;
- assimilation of a broader community function; and

- supporting the development of children towards independence within the family.

❖ **The Extended/Complex family**

In the case of the extended family, more than two families are combined (Knox, 1988:15). A *joint family* (or extended family) can also be known as a complex family. The parents, their children and other family live under a single roof. This type of family includes multiple generations of members of the family (Anonymous, 2010).

Some Indian families in South Africa still prefer this type of structure. They have a very close-knit relationship with each family member. This family is common in both Hindu and Muslim families. In both religions, these people occasionally feel a greater sense of security and belonging than any other type of family. This is an advantage of Indian extended families, because the family contains more family members to share their experiences in any crisis situation. They serve as role models for portraying the family values and behaviour. Most decisions are discussed as a family and parents are much more protective over their children. The women are housewives, taking care of the entire family. However, it is a challenge for a daughter coming from this type of family to have a social life, pursue a career or become independent.

3.2.2 Ways in which Families Function

❖ **The Patriarchal family**

Patriarchy is a andocentric social system. The role of the father is central to the family, and holds authority over women, children and property (Anonymous, 2010). Whyte's (1978) study examined 52 indicators of patriarchy, whereby ten independent dimensions were discovered. Just to name a few dimensions:

- Women having no control over any property,

- lack of power of women in kinship contexts;
- no support towards women and their lives;
- fewer women appointed in the workforce;
- women's lives are controlled by elderly family members; and
- gender inequality in work, and community decision-making.

This family is usually a closed family, which forms a separate productive unit. Extended families, as well as nuclear families, often function along these lines (Witt & Booysen, 1995).

Many Muslim and Hindu families in South Africa are patriarchal. The patriarch may be an elderly man in an extended family, or the father in a nuclear family. The father has the final say in family decisions – where his family will live, how its goods will be used, whom the children will marry, more specifically their daughters' or granddaughters' education and future.

❖ **The Egalitarian family**

This family is a new pattern that has emerged in modern society. This is a family where the man and wife enjoy equal authority and privileges. Popenoe (1995) regards the egalitarian family as a consequence of industrialisation.

Today's younger Indian parents who marry at a very early age function as an egalitarian family. Here Indian men spend eight to twelve hours a day working outside the home and tends to erode their authority in the home. At the same time the Indian women are entering the labour market in increasing numbers, hence they are financially less dependent on their husbands. These changes place men and women on an equal footing. These types of parents therefore tend to be moderate (Witt & Booysen, 1995).

❖ **The Closed family**

This family concentrates on its 'own privacy' and offers its members a form of escape from the rush of everyday life. Family life often revolves around the particular family's religious norms and value systems (Witts & Booysen, 1995).

This family is mostly the religious Indian families. The Indian parents educate their children in the manner and etiquette demanded by religion and society. These children are more involved in religious education and attend home schooling, compared to other children who attend public or private schools, or tertiary institutions. Indian parents refrain from exposing their children to the Western culture and keep them intact within their cultural values and beliefs. Thus, these Indian parents are conservative.

- **The Open family in an open community**

This family tries to accommodate the demands of the community, while also providing optimal opportunities for family interaction. There is openness towards the community; the family is involved with various institutions such as the church, the school and community organisations.

Many Indian families in South Africa are involved in community activities and at the same time spend quality time with each family member. The bond between each other is strong and the family is flexible. The Indian parents therefore serve as good role models to their children, as well as to other children. This type of family encourages other families to make contributions to the community and creates healthy relationships amongst family members.

3.2.3 Parental Authority in Modern Families

Discipline is fundamental to the upbringing of young children. Parents apply discipline to control the child's behaviour so that she will eventually be able to discipline herself. External discipline is applied to establish eventual self-discipline. Discipline should make allowances for the personalities of the child and its parents (Witts & Booysen, 1995).

Indian parents teach their children from a young age to exercise self-discipline and responsibility, as well as to take care of others, more specifically sons should take care of their sisters. Indian parents who are uncertain about discipline often try to rear their daughters 'by the book.' However, there is no book that will solve the problems of all parents. Thus, every Indian parent has

a unique style of discipline that characterises his/her way of exercising authority. This style of discipline influences the child, since it reflects a certain attitude towards her. This attitude will therefore affect the daughter's self-image. The styles are positioned on a continuum. Depending on the situation, any Indian parent will sometimes be permissive and at other times authoritarian (Witts & Booysen, 1995).

Common styles of parenting regarding Indian Parents:

- **The Authoritarian parent**

These Indian parents make unilateral decisions on what is right or wrong, and they are not open to any persuasion. They expect their daughters to be meek and submissive at all times, to refrain from questioning anything and to do exactly as they say. Thus, if a daughter wishes to pursue a career, the parents will usually reprimand, threaten or punish her to stop her from choosing a career. The parents make most of the decisions, leaving the daughter with no say – she is allowed only limited opportunities to voice her opinions. These Indian parents are more religious and old-fashioned in their approach (Witts & Booysen, 1995).

- **The Permissive parent**

These types of Indian parents are more liberal towards their daughters. The daughter is allowed to do as she pleases, and the parents are inclined to let things slide. Thus, if the daughter would like to choose a career and pursue tertiary education in another country or city, she is totally 'free' to pursue her dreams. The parents approve of everything that the daughter does – no limits are set; and the parents make no decisions on the daughter's behalf and allow her to do as she likes (Witts & Booysen, 1995).

- **The Democratic parent**

This style is common in today's Indian community, where the parent tries to understand and accept the daughter's views, emotions and behaviour. In other words, this parent tries to understand and accept the daughter with all

her talents and limitations. Thus, if the daughter wants to pursue a career and tertiary education, it is acceptable to her parents'. The parents try to understand her behaviour and respect her, and take the trouble to discuss everyday issues and to listen carefully to their daughter's reaction. This parent tries to disengage himself/herself systematically so that the daughter can grow toward independence and responsibility (Witts & Booysen, 1995).

3.3.1 The Differences between Islamic/Hindu School and Public School

Indian families have fought the battle of raising their children in an Islamic or Hindu household and then sending them to local public or private schools. This seems to be a good example of how the two opposite institutions could coexist (Syed, 2000). These children adapt to their culture easily, as they are influenced to pray, study their holy books and interact with children of the same religion. The children will have less exposure to sex, drugs and violence. Therefore, an Islamic/Hindu school is an educational environment that continuously assists the Islam/Hindu children to build their identity and security. It provides students with a sense of self-worth, pride, confidence and discipline, which is not usually possible in a public school (Siddiqui, 2000).

Parents are aware of the influence of Western norms bombarding their children on a daily basis. It is not enough that they learn traditional norms and values at home. In order to ensure cultural and religious values are ingrained in children, parents choose Hindu/Muslim schools. This has a great influence on the Muslims/Hindus in South Africa, including the children (Syed, 2000).

Previous research has indicated that parents are facing the challenge of choosing the right type of school for their daughters, i.e. Islamic/Hindu school or public school, the reason being that in today's world, schools are teaching children, especially young Indian ladies, to become more open-minded in the decisions they make for their future. This allows them to make their own decisions and reason them out. The Indian parents are therefore very precise on the school their daughters will attend and should consider possible rejections. It is a known fact that Indian parents want to send their daughters to a school that promotes academic excellence (Syed, 2000).

3.3.2 "All girls" non-Muslim and Hindu High Schools

In this study the importance of family is very evident. Indian girls who attend Western all-girl private schools are encouraged by their parents to do well, and to hold a professional job after graduating from a tertiary institution. Even though these Indian daughters attend a school with a diverse group of girls, they work hard and are disciplined. Their parents communicate extensively to them about performing well at school. They stress that a good education leads to a professional career (Farkas, 1996).

A girls-only private school has a diverse group of students of all nationalities. The school's purpose is to ensure that young girls grow into young professional and educated ladies. Traditional subjects are taught to the girls, such as home economics, biology, mathematics, science, history and art (Wikipedia, 2010). Indian daughters attending a girls-only private school will have a different perspective on life, be exposed to different cultures and people. This type of school will build her confidence more easily, moving her from her comfort zone and enable her to interact easily with different people and respect others.

Rumberger, Ghatak, Poulus, and Dornbusch (1990) identified four ways whereby family influence the performance in a Western all-girls school:

- Indian parents from a high socio-economic background are more involved in their daughter's education.
- Indian parents spend more time with their daughters to improve their academic achievement.
- Indian parents also transmit appropriate values, aspirations and motives required to succeed in school.
- Finally, the communication Indian parents have with their daughters will promote responsible behaviour and also influence the achievement of their daughters.

Bowen (1999) believes that educated Indian parents influence their daughter's attitudes, values and decisions about school and tertiary institutions. Indian

parents modelled this behaviour by remaining involved in their daughter's education.

3.3.3 Home Schooling

Preiss (1989) defined home schooling as "the educational alternative in which parents are responsible for teaching their children." Home schooling allows the parent to identify the gaps where the child needs improvement.

A variety of reasons why home schooling exists:

- The safest place for a child to be educated.
- Home schooling requires a very small number of children.
- Parents need to be motivated and qualified.
- Parents should be trained and willing to devote long hours every day.
- Parents should teach both 'religious' and 'secular' education
- Home schooling is as thorough as the parent wants it to be for his/her child.
- No available or affordable local full-time religious school.
- Public school classroom materials may be negative to religious values and parental authority.

When it comes to their daughters, some Indian parents believe in home schooling. Many parents for example, still live in areas where schools are not readily available, and others are anxious about the physical well-being of their daughters in an increasingly more exposed school setting. Other parents prefer home schooling for their daughters, which is an easier way of focusing on improving their daughter's education.

<u>Home-schooled versus Public School</u>

Home-schooled children behave more appropriate than public schooled children. Home-schooled children develop a strong sense of self, whereas public-school children are exposed to drugs and alcohol and physical intimacy with the opposite sex. They can neglect their studies, all of which have a major impact on a child's thinking patterns and personality.

According to Mayberry (1991), two groups of parents choose home school primarily for visionary speculation:

- Religious parents
- Liberal parents

Mayberry concluded a survey on 1600 home-schooling Oregon families and obtained a 35% response rate to the questions. Their responses concluded that the two groups perceived home schooling as an activity that provided them with a way to represent their "way-of-life" by controlling the content of their children's education (Mayberry, 1991).

At this point, more research on home schooling is necessary. The success or failure of the home schooling experience therefore depends inevitably on the success or failure of the family's interpersonal relationships. Home schooling is a complex issue. It represents a tremendous commitment on the part of the parents – the father functions as the sole breadwinner, and the mother spends most of her time teaching her children (Preiss, 1989).

3.4 Influential Factors Contributing to Indian Parents' Perception

In the twentieth century, both Muslim and Hindu parents' views have changed concerning their daughters pursuing careers. After much research, the "*changing in generation"* outlined that Indian daughters of today think differently from a mother of tomorrow (Niehaus, 2008). In other words, Indian mothers still believe that there are limited opportunities for their daughters when making career choices today, and because the level of education for Indian mothers used to be limited, it therefore influenced their perceptions. However, Indian daughters differ in this understanding, as the Western culture has influenced their thinking and educational level when compared to their mothers' (Husain, 1984). Indian mothers' attitudes are therefore influenced in terms of their daughters being career women or full-time wives. Having a common understanding with their daughters in pursuing their careers has become a challenge in the Indian community. In other words, Indian mothers are concerned about their daughters' future including their cultural beliefs and

values (Niehaus, 2008). When a daughter gets divorced, for example the mother will question whether the daughter will be able to play the role of mother and father, and whether she will be strong enough to stand on her own. Influential factors will be discussed next.

3.4.1 Community Pressure

The local community culture also asserts huge influence on career choice. Indian daughters experience enormous pressure when it comes to pursuing careers and tertiary education, and their future. Indian parents encourage their daughters to pursue a career by ensuring that their daughter's career choice is acceptable in their culture and would benefit them in the long run. It can be said that the career choice of the daughter is a reflection of the mother's 'wish career,' whereby the mother will direct and encourage her daughter to follow the career path which the mother would have followed if she had the opportunity (Anderson, 2000). Today the community encourages Indian parents to allow their daughters to pursue a career in ways like vacation work during school holidays, competition among relatives and friends, and the community offering scholarships and bursaries for tertiary education. However, some Indian parents conform to the traditional norms and pressurise their daughters to do what is expected of them. Pursuing a career is not one of them, as it influences her against following the traditional rituals and customs (Jameelah, 2000). These parents are thus authoritarian and will make decisions about their daughter's future, i.e. getting married at a very early age and taking care of their children.

3.4.2 Financial Status

Another concern would be the influence of Indian parents based on the *financial status* of the family. The question Indian parents ask is whether they can afford to pay for their daughter's education, or whether she will have to go work after her schooling. This is a huge challenge in many Indian homes, as Indian parents have to be realistic when making this decision, and of course all parents want the best for their children. It is therefore important to be financially stable (Jameelah, 2000). Most Indian parents are encouraging their

daughters to pursue a career or work for a living so they can become independent and responsible, i.e. paying for their own studies or car. Today, some parents still come from poor socio-economic backgrounds and cannot provide financially for their daughters to pursue a career, or even be properly educated, whereas a large number of girls come from families who rely on social grants, i.e. bursaries, sponsorship and personal loans (Marriah, 2009). However, it also depends on the parents, their affordability and their style of bringing up their children (Jameelah, 2000). These are other challenges that arise in the Indian community.

3.4.3 Movement and Travelling

With local employment opportunities lacking, parents will have to decide whether they will allow their daughters to live near by or move away. The disadvantage is when parents often make decisions with not enough information about the organisation and job options their daughters qualify for. Parents consider culture as a huge aspect in their daughters lives, and will therefore influence the choice of career on behalf of their daughters (Christen, 2009). Today, Indian daughters are pursuing careers which require them *to move abroad* and for that to happen, their parents' consent is needed. This is not acceptable to Indian parents and they refuse to support their daughters. Indian parents restrict this, because they believe that their daughters are exposed to a different environment outside their home (Husain, 1984). Parents feel that the social environment will have an opposite effect to what an Indian daughter is taught at home. With this in mind, daughters are finding it a challenge to adjust and accept, this "release and tighten" effect. Indian parents are concerned about their daughters' safety and the influence of other people from different cultures. They'll only allow their daughters to travel if it is safe, with preferred family members, or to travel by plane, on the condition that their daughter will be met upon arrival (Anonymous, 2010). Indian mothers and daughters have a close-knit relationship and for a daughter to move abroad is a rare case in the Indian community, unless the parents move with their daughters (Sachs, 1998).

Occasionally Indian parents allow their daughters to study away from home. If they are willing to send their daughters, it's usually to where there are close relatives staying in the area where the daughters wish to study to ensure their safety. Many Indian parents are not willing to allow their daughters to study away from home, or stay in a university residence on campus. Indian parents feel it could be dangerous, there is no self-discipline, and the environment could have an influence on their daughter's mindset. The friends they interact with could interfere with their cultural and moral beliefs. However, there are Indian parents wiling to allow their daughters to study away from home and live on their own on campus. The reason could be that those Indian parents come from an area that does not have any tertiary institutions, for example Polokwane. These parents encourage their daughters to pursue their careers and support them in their further studies.

3.4.4 Limit to Freedom and Effective Communication

With all of the above in mind, the *freedom of Indian daughters* goes hand in hand with the "release and tighten" effect. Today, the level of release of their daughters is questioned (Sachs, 1998). In other words, will Indian parents accept their daughters to pursue a career that requires her to travel at night and over long distances? In such a case, Indian fathers are not too keen on the travelling part and will refuse such a career choice. The importance of safety and having someone trustworthy with their daughters can be acceptable, but it seldom happens (Sachs, 1998). Again the question is asked why Indian parents are so overprotective of their daughters.

In the past, through effective communication, Indian parents learnt to know and love their child in a continuously growing and deepening relationship. When the communication between the parent and child is ineffective, upbringing is also ineffective, and as a result the child's psychological development is thwarted (Witt & Booysen, 1995). According to Gordon (1975), the secret of communication lies in the unconditional acceptance of a child. A child's body language, tone of voice and gestures can influence the approval or disapproval of his/her career choice (Christen, 2009). Indian parents need

to pay attention to what they say, the behaviours portrayed and choice of words when communicating with their children.

3.4.5 Cultural Influence on Career Selection

Culture is known as the customs, social and religious institutions and achievements of a particular nation or people (Christen, 2009). Culture is the actions people take in order to create and present reality. Parents provide the tools that reflect the actions by helping children form values to make judgements about the reality (Christen, 2009).

A typical influential cultural factor would be the dress code of Indian daughters. “Hijab” is the required Muslims dress, whereas a “sari or punjab” is the required Hindu dress. This dress code relates to behaving modestly and ensuring that women do not expose any part of their body (Dagher, 1997). Indian parents have disciplined their daughters to dress appropriate at all times and present their religion in a respectable way. By dressing correctly it also shows respect for their elders. Today many Indian girls are choosing a career that requires them to expose a bit of her body, i.e. acting, modelling, singing, etc. She is not going against her cultural values, but her parents, however, may not approve because it is unacceptable in terms of their principles and beliefs.

3.4.6 Indian Parents’ Perception on Pressure for Achievement

A common phenomenon is that many parents overlook the fact that their daughter’s dignity is not entirely dependent on achievements in all sorts of areas. It is important for a parent to have high expectations for their daughters, but any expectations that do not involve their daughters healthy progress toward adulthood are undesirable (Van Niekerk, 1982:18).

Today, there is a *huge transition* Indian parents supporting their daughters choice of career and education. This mostly comes into existence for Indian parents who have careers and are encouraging their daughters to study further. Marriage is no more a “must”; Indian parents have now focused their

daughters to pursue a career that would be an investment later in their lives, rather than on the choice of their future son in laws. Parents who bring up their children with such unique sacrifices naturally have certain expectations of them. They want them to be successful, obedient and devoted, in accordance with their own thinking and attitudes, and the upholders of their own religious and cultural values. Their dreams come true when they see their children treading the path of their choice, and when they find them reaching towards the climax of greatness and piety; there is no instrument yet invented to gauge their pride and pleasure. It is only the parents who wish to see their children surpass them in every field of life (Husain, 1984).

Although there is much to be said for optimal stimulation at an early age, it is obvious that this could cause a great deal of stress for a daughter. These parents emphasise mental development and superior or physical skills. According to Brenner (1984), the normal stress associated with growing up and developing is raised to unnecessarily high levels when parents prematurely pressure their daughters into adult behaviour and responsibility. Many Indian parents have a constant drive to encourage their daughters to excel in all they do. Indian parents teach their daughters to always give their best and always make use of the opportunities available, as they never had that chance. Thus, daughters would like to please and respect their parents' wishes, but at the same time it feels as if they are living the lives of their parents and not their own (Witts & Booysen, 1995).

3.4.7 Mother-Daughter Relationship

Mothers encourage assimilative and communion-enhancing patterns in their children, and acknowledge their children's contributions in conversation (Anonymous, 2010). When it comes to educating the child, the mother plays an important role in this process. In this regard, the mother contributes a bigger share than the father, and in the very early stages the mother plays the best role in training and educating her daughter. It is also a fact that a mother makes more sacrifices and endures greater hardships than a father while bringing up the children. Many daughters whose fathers passed on before

they were born, turned out to be the best people and became an asset to humanity due to their mothers' nurturing and training (Husain, 1985).

Usually the father mostly remains in the background on account of economic and other important pursuits. Particularly in this highly competitive and busy world of today, men still spend most of their time outside the home, consequently a man cannot devote himself to look after his daughter properly. Naturally, in these circumstances, the mother finds ample opportunity to care for her daughter, as she remains indoors nearly all the time. The mother is attached to her daughter. Her daughter is open towards her and thus all her likes and dislikes, capabilities and drawbacks are known to the mother. Moreover, daughters usually react abnormally to the 'strict treatment' which a father metes out. They become insolent, rebellious and wayward by the behaviour of the father who, due to the perplexities of life, becomes easily irritated with them. On the other hand the mother, who is given remarkable patience and forbearance by nature, brings them around with love, tolerance and affection. The daughter therefore responds to her more properly than to her father. She is more attached to her mother and confides her best secrets and problems, which the mother can redirect into healthier channels and therefore lighten the burdens in the heart of her daughter. The mother can best help her daughter form healthier and proper habits and attitudes, which are in tune with time and circumstances (Husain, 1985).

As mentioned above, a mother's role has a great influence on her daughter's life. As a child her daughter will have a career dream of what she would like to become when she gets older. Indian mothers observe as their daughters grow older and show certain interests, i.e. toys they play with, type of clothes they wear and hobbies. It is from here that Indian mothers begin to encourage and motivate their daughters to follow their career dream which they can see their daughters pursue later in life (Husain, 1984). On the other hand, if the mother realises that her daughter has a career dream that is not beneficial, she could help her daughter restructure her career dream. For example, an Indian daughter has a career dream to be a waiter. Her mother could discover that being a waiter is not a good career choice and might discourage her daughter.

However, once the daughter has become an adult and is still interested in being a waiter, she will discuss her career choice with her mother and build her future upon that, as it is her interest and passion. This could mean that her career dream becomes a reality that she now channels her dream into owning a restaurant or food shop. With all this in mind, it can be said that the mother's role is to influence her daughter's choices in life; more specifically her career dream, which is not guaranteed and can be modified as the daughter becomes an adult (Niehaus, 2000).

Another example would be Indian mothers who are career women. They observe their daughters' talents and help modify their career dreams to understand it better by encouraging their daughters to develop into their career choice (Sachs, 1998). If the daughter's career choice is in a challenging environment i.e. mines, an Indian mothers will influence her daughter's way of thinking, as she may have an idea of or experienced, the risks involved in her daughter's career choice. There are also Indian mothers who contribute to their community. Their daughters learn to do good deeds and assist the needy and sick people, and would also get involved, as she is influenced by her mother's contributions and successes in the community (Witts & Booysen, 1995).

In essence, the bond between an Indian mother and daughter was and will always be very special and strong. In addition to this, grandmothers also instil the traditions, moral values and customs in their daughters, granddaughters and even daughters- in-law.

3.4.8 Father-Daughter Relationship

A father is known as the man who exercises paternal care over other people. He is naturally protective, supportive and responsible. Fathers are involved in their childrens' lives and make educational provisions throughout their childrens' life cycles (Anonymous, 2010). In the Indian community, it seems surprising that the father fulfils the maintenance of his children with pleasure and magnanimity. He wants to provide for all the needs of his children to the best of his ability, and feels extreme sorrow and gloom when he is unable to

do this. He dedicates his whole life to earn and spend for the necessities and comfort of his children. He is the only man on earth who sincerely wants to see his children better off than him (Husain, 1984). However, the role of the father in the family has changed. Fathers are becoming more involved with their children. With this role shift, mothers are faced with the job of supporting and often mediating the involvement of the father. Families have adopted different methods of parenting (Witts & Booysen, 1995).

It's also important to note that, in the absence of a good father-child relationship, school achievements can be negatively affected. This can influence the choice of occupation, preferred school subjects and role development of their children, especially their daughters (Husain, 1984). The most important role for fathers is, after all, to help their children gain self-esteem and self-discipline (Witts & Booysen, 1995).

3.5 Social Factors

3.5.1 The Feminist Movement

In recent times, the most fundamental movement revolutionising the whole social structure and changing the entire basis of human relationships is the feminist movement, also known as the drive for Women's Liberation (Jameelah, 2000). Indian women have outgrown slavery and have joined organisations (Jameelah, 2000). In the Indian community they deny that there is any inherent biological distinction between men and women. The wife remains the housewife and mother, whereas the husband plays the breadwinner and authoritarian of the family (Jameelah, 2000). In schools and tertiary institutions, Indian girls should be allowed to compete in all sports and physical exercises with boys at all ages (Jameelah, 2000).

3.5.2 The Role of Indian Women

In today's world, the status of women remains a paradox. This means that, on one side, women are climbing the corporate ladder, and on the other hand they are still battling to succeed due to the lack of support and

encouragement by family members. Women have accomplished a lot, but in reality they still have to travel a long way. In Tehran, in a more fashionable and urban lifestyle, the women spend their time socialising with other people, and becoming involved in recreational and philanthropic activities (Jameelah, 2000). Indian women are also becoming exposed to many events, including an interest in cultural and charitable work (Jameelah, 2000). The women have moved away from their homes and are now facing the battlefield of their lives. They have proven themselves and their talent, but there are still a limited number of modernised Indian women striving for the Western lifestyle, i.e. pursuing a career and attending tertiary institutions. Today Indian women are actors, singers, corporate divas, social saints and beauty queens.

The desire of Indian women can be best summed up in the following lines of 'Song of an African Women:'

I have only one request.
I do not ask for money
Although I have need of it,
I do not ask for meat . . .
I have only one request,

And all I ask is
That you remove
The road block
From my path.

3.5.3 Indian Women's Education and Empowerment

"If you women only realize your dignity and privilege, and make full sense of it for mankind, you will make it much better than it is."

-Mahatma Gandhi-

In the past there were many barriers to women education. Velkoff (1998) states that a typical barrier was poverty. Poor Indian families kept girls at

home to care for younger siblings or work in the family business. Typically in an Indian family the son is educated and not the daughter, because of financial restrictions. Since society had accepted men being the breadwinner and securing the family financially, there was no such acceptance for an Indian woman to work or be educated; her life was at home.

Velkoff (1998) mentions that parents' attitudes towards educating their daughters were negative and became a barrier to the girls' education. With this in mind, Indian parents felt that educating their daughters was a waste of money, as they would be married off soon. The daughter would be part of the husband's family and therefore the parents would not benefit from her education. However, today this perception has changed. Indian families are determined to get both son and daughter educated equally. They have realised that their daughters can achieve more with all the opportunities being available in the country and give them the support they need to accomplish their goals. Another reason could also be the of divorce rate among young Indian couples. This has caused an enormous change in Indian parents' minds regarding early marriage. Indian parents are instead focusing more on providing a better and quality education for their daughters, making a better life for themselves and not thinking that marriage is the best way out. Women's attendance at high schools and tertiary institutions has increased over the years, particularly in developing countries. Women have studied and are qualified into professional careers, receiving better-paying salaries.

In the 1970s South African Indian women had no power of authority, decisions were made on their behalf, and permission was required from their fathers, brothers or husbands for each and every issue (Anonymous, 2010). This all has changed over the years. According to Gangrade (2010), empowerment means equal status to women so they can develop themselves. Men should give women the opportunity and freedom to develop. The objectivity of empowerment of women was based upon Gandhi's vision: "the welfare of all through cooperation and trusteeship in the economic sphere, equal participation in the political sphere, and mutual aid in the social sphere without regard to caste, or class or gender." With this

vision Gandhi married at the age of thirteen; his wife was his active partner and supporter in all his activities.

Gangrade (2010) furthermore mentions that Gandhi introduced three distinct levels of women's participation:

1) Firstly, women had family responsibilities, such as the care of children.
2) Secondly, women sacrificed their life and enjoyed the pleasure of house-keeping and child caring.
3) Thirdly, women who worked full-time were expected to stay single and dedicate themselves to the struggle for independence.

Today, more Indian women are excelling in every field, from social work to visiting a space station. They are receiving proper education and are now encouraged and motivated to study and work further to develop themselves and become independent in their community. Men have accepted their women earning a salary and improving their knowledge. Indian women are more empowered every day and serve as good role models for their community and the world they live in. It has been a journey to achieve the cherished goal to empower Indian women, due to influential factors such as culture and religion. However, these factors are not seen as major barriers any longer. Indian women understand their role, their religion and culture, thus being educated makes her follow her rituals, as well as being career orientated with the support from her community. Indian women are now recognising their true potential.

3.5.4 Indian Women's Employment in South Africa

The Indian society is extremely hierarchical, with virtually everyone ranked relative to others according to their caste (or caste-like group), class, wealth, and power. Though specific customs vary from region to region within the country, there are different standards of behaviour for men and women in the work environment. Women are expected not to compete with men and remain modest (Hussain, 2010). Culturally, Indian women can be regarded as the most subjected group of women in South Africa. Both the Hindu and Muslim

religions sanctioned an extreme form of submission and passivity among women. Prejudice from within the Indian community against women participating in any form of activity outside the home was deeply rooted (Walker, 1991), the reason being because Indian women were acting in defence of their religion and their domestic role (Hussain, 2010).

Today, companies are introducing more Indian women into the workplace. They contribute to the economy in one form or another and some are entrepreneurs owning their own businesses without the help of Indian men. In the corporate environment, many Indian women are empowered and at managerial levels. There may be many challenges Indian women face, but they are well on the way to leading the world with their competencies, skills and talents.

3.5.5 Economic Recession in South Africa

With regard to the economic recession in South Africa, the cost of living has increased enormously, thus Indian parents are pressurising their daughters to work and pursue a career at a later stage. The income their daughters receive after their matriculation or during their final year of schooling can be used to pay off their tuition fees when they enroll in a tertiary institution. However, this is a challenge, as some Indian parents feel that they cannot afford their daughter to pursue a career, and prefer them to work only to assist them with financial obligations (Jameelah, 2000). On the other hand, wealthy Indian parents from certain areas, such as Lenasia, Johannesburg and Pretoria send their daughters to the best private schools and well-recognised tertiary institutions (UP, UNISA, UJ, WITS) to pursue a higher education. However, not all their daughters complete their degrees or diplomas successfully. The reason for this is that they are not interested, playful, over-confident, early marriage, pregnancy and dependent on their parents, because they are spoilt. Not all Indian females therefore end up in the workforce, due to the reasons mentioned above. It could also be caused by their parents' backgrounds. If their parents were not taught to do things for themselves to become independent, the same situation will recur when they raise their children (Jameelah, 2000). With all this in mind, the recession period could have

tremendous influence on Indian parents and their willingness to allow their daughters to pursue a career and tertiary education. Indian daughter's on the other hand, will feel much more pressurised and probably give up their goals in order to fulfil their parents' expectations.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the cross-cultural psychology theory that is applicable to this study was explained. The Indian culture and two Indian religions, Islam and Hinduism were scrutinised. The role of Indian women in their respective religions, Islam and Hinduism, was discussed and their education and employment background outlined. Thereafter, the different and various types of families and their functions were described. The factors influencing Indian parents' perception were added; which will provide a clearer picture about their decision whether to allow their daughters to study and/or work. Lastly, the social factors regarding Indian women and their social position in South Africa where discussed in detail.

CHAPTER 4

PARENTS' VIEWS OF DAUGHTERS STUDYING AND WORKING

4. Introduction

When the study was initiated, the thought was that the schools parents send their daughters to might have had an influence on parents wanting daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers. The type of school their daughters attend is not related to parents' perceptions of daughters pursuing tertiary education and careers. In the Indian culture, a pivotal role is played by parents in connection to the socialisation of their children, especially daughters; they actively encourage and support them (Abbas, 2003). Daughters are more controlled and have less decision-making powers compared to sons, and this is a critical cultural value lived and believed by their parents (Lee & Johnson, 2007). Indian parents influence the decisions of their unmarried daughters in all spheres of life. The daughters in this study are no exception. The interest in investigating the views of parents towards their daughters studying and pursuing careers was to understand the multitude of factors that influenced their decisions. In order to understand parents' decisions relating to their daughters pursuing tertiary education and careers, their early lives were probed into ascertain the belief systems regarding women being educated and pursuing careers they were raised with, as well as the opportunities women had within the social and historical context in which parents were raised in South Africa. The researcher specifically wanted to know more about the Indian cultural perspective on educating females; parents' early socialisation within their respective families relating to female education; their educational level, their adherence to religious precepts relating to female education and the educational and career opportunities they had during apartheid. In doing so, the life-story approach is used to obtain a

holistic view of how parents were influenced by various factors relating to female education and career prescriptions.

The participants in this study have shared their life stories with the researcher. At certain times the discussion brought emotional discomfort to the researcher and the participants. The researcher realises that her own subjectivity in this interpretation will permeate the understanding she is about to share.

4.1 Feedback from the Pilot Study

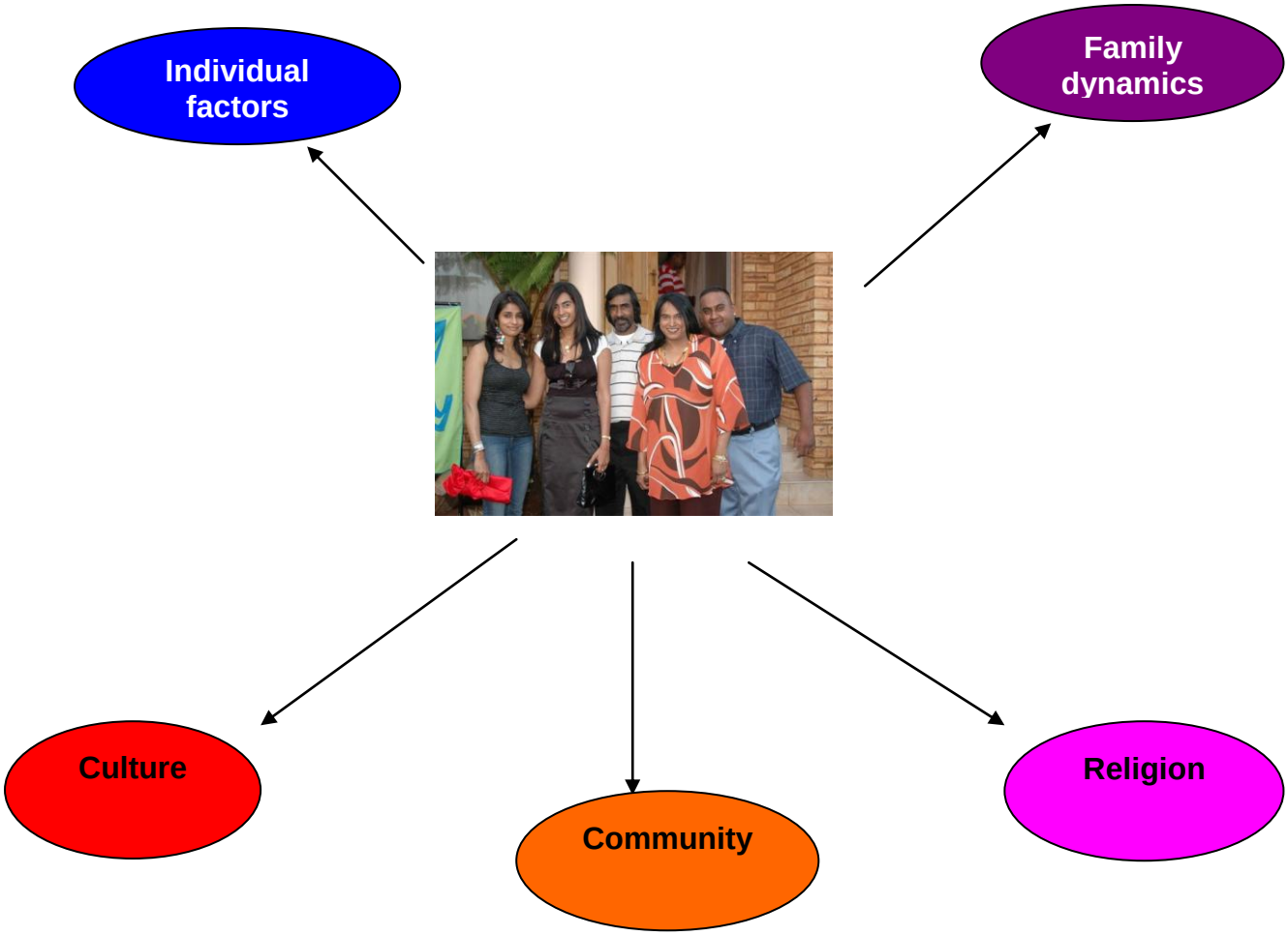
For the pilot study, six (6) sets of Indian parents whose daughters were in their final year of schooling were interviewed. Three sets of parents were Muslim and the rest Hindu. Parents were raised in the apartheid era and raised daughters during the post-apartheid period, where greater gender equality exists in the South African constitution relating to educational and career opportunities for women. The researcher was interested in exploring parents' cultural, community, family and educational backgrounds that could have had an impact on their willingness to allow their daughters to pursue careers and education. A small amount of information relating to the childhood experiences of the Indian parents and the significance of religion and culture in the pilot study was received as the interviews were approximately an hour long. In the final study the life stories of thirteen (13) sets of both Muslim and Hindu Indian parents were explored in more detail. This was done by probing deeper into their childhood socialisation relating to women's educational and career opportunities, the community views and the extent to which they internalised religious views relating to women studying and pursuing professions. By exploring these elements more in-depth, the researcher was provided with insightful views outlining the complexity of the various factors influencing their lives.

4.2 Outline of Study

The analysis describes the cultural, religious, community and macro environment within which the parents in the current study were raised and how these factors impacted the educational and career opportunities available

to Indian women, and the current perception of parents relating to their daughters' tertiary education and careers. In order to understand the current views of Indian parents toward their daughters studying and pursuing careers, their gender role socialisation relating to women's educational and career opportunities in the Indian culture, community, family and religion is fully explored. The era in which parents were raised, namely during apartheid, is also explored to understand the educational and career opportunities available to women in the past, as well as in the post-apartheid era.

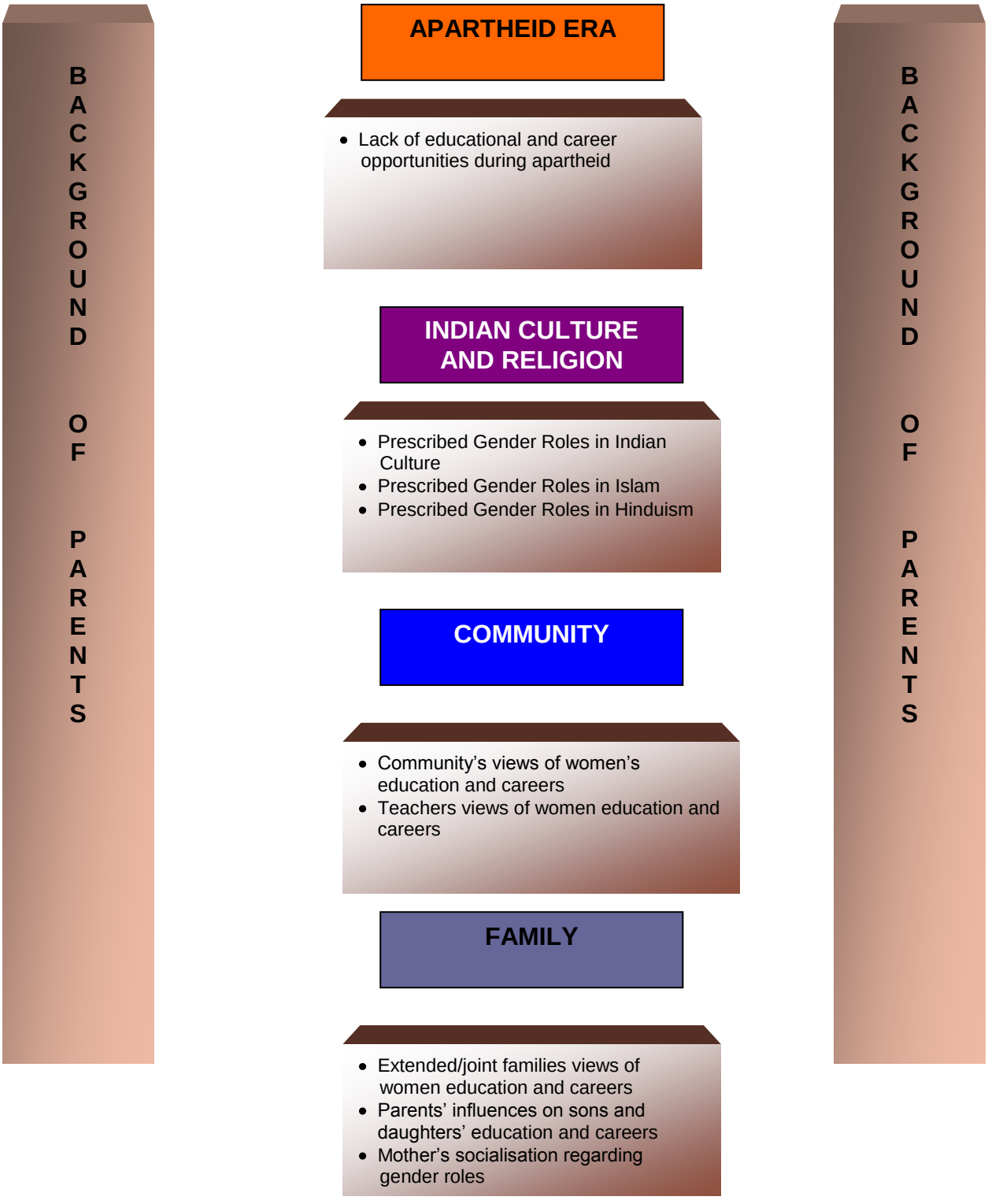
Figure 4.1 Factors influencing parents' perceptions



In understanding the perceptions of parents relating to their daughters studying and working, the study was unfolded in two parts:

1. Parents' background.
2. Current views of parents relating to daughters being educated and pursuing careers.

Figure 4.2 Socialisation and current views of parents relating to daughters' tertiary education and careers



4.3 Parents' Background

In this section, the background of parents will be unfolded and the aspects that had a major impact on women being educated and pursuing careers when the parents in the study were growing up will be discussed. The aspects that will be focused on is how the apartheid era impacted on tertiary education and career opportunities for Indian women; the Indian cultural perspective on educating females; religious precepts relating to female education; influence of the community relating to women's higher education and careers and parents' early socialisation within their respective families relating to female education and careers.

4.3.1 Lack of Educational and Career Opportunities during Apartheid

The mothers in the study mentioned that, during the apartheid era women in South Africa were regarded as minors and they were, for example, not allowed to conclude contracts or own property. Parents stated that apartheid was a barrier, not only for Indian women, but for Indian men as well. Indians had to live in segregated townships; they had to attend poorly-equipped Indian schools and do trading in their designated areas only. Parents also complained that the apartheid government had made the school syllabus very difficult, and while most of the mothers in the study had completed schooling, they did not qualify for university entrance. When parents were growing up there were minimal choices of universities they could attend. Parents mentioned that enrolment at South African universities depended on obtaining permission from the Government. The University of Westville, which was a higher education institution for Indian students only, was one option. Parents in the study mentioned that two multiracial universities (The University of the Witwatersrand and University of Cape Town) were other options. These two universities worked according to a quota system, where only the very best Indian students were eligible to attend. At the same time the career opportunities for Indian women in the job market were minimal, and they were assigned to lower level positions. Even pursuing tertiary education would not have guaranteed good jobs, as these were reserved for whites only. Parents

also pointed out that very few multinational organisations provided bursaries for South African black pupils in the Engineering, HR, Finance and IT fields, but these were allocated to pupils whose parents worked in these workplaces. Since the majority of Indians did not work in multinational organisations and none of the mothers in this study had family members working in such organisations, their chances of obtaining such bursaries were slim. In addition, although most of the mothers in the study performed well at school, they were not high flyers and these bursaries were only allocated to high performers. Since they did not pursue tertiary education, as apartheid laws restricted them in careers, they ended up earning minimal salaries or working in their family businesses. The fathers in the study agreed with the comments of the mothers and stated that apartheid restricted all South African Indian women in their pursuit of tertiary education and careers. Rashid laments over the limited education and career opportunities experienced by Indians in the study:

"It was apartheid at the time. There were opportunities, unfortunately not so many for Indians. Indians had to work with what they had. In those days attending school was an opportunity where we could learn to read and write. I think that was the most important thing. It was not easy for Indians to study further, but there were ways to get it done. However, there was not much encouragement, financial assistance or support. To study, well, you had to earn well and it was restricted at that time for anyone just to be educated."

Asogran points out the limited opportunities and ill-treatment of Indians in South Africa, which the other parents also complained about:

"During the apartheid era there were hardly any opportunities for Indians in SA, especially for women. They struggled and were treated like slaves. They were not well-educated, did not earn well enough and there was no encouragement to send them to good schools, colleges and even universities. The reason was because we were non-white; we had no chance to go further. In fact, at Tukkies at that time it was accepted practice not to allow non whites.

The Indian culture and religion were central in the lives of parents while they were growing up and in their adult lives.

4.3.2 Indian Culture and Religion

The Indian culture influenced the lives of women when parents in the study were growing up, and determined whether they could study or not. The extent to which the Indian community and family subscribed to Islam and Hinduism determined the freedom given to women to study in the period when parents were growing up.

The next section will now focus on the gender roles as prescribed by the Indian culture. The role of religion relating to tertiary education and careers relating to Indian women will be discussed thereafter.

4.3.2.1 Prescribed Gender Roles in the Indian Culture

In this study the Indian culture helped to determine whether women could study and pursue careers. The parents in the study admitted that, while males were allowed to pursue careers and tertiary education, it was more difficult for women to do so. They mentioned that since the Indian culture is patriarchal, the prescribed role for women was that they should be homemakers, while men had to be breadwinners. The parents in the study pointed out that when they were growing up, women who worked outside the home were frowned upon, as only lower-class Indian women worked in that era. Women only worked when they were in dire straits, such as when their husbands were unable to support the family financially. Most of the women who were working at that time were employed in the informal sector. That is, they assisted their husbands in their businesses or sold food from their homes. The parents mentioned that the reason Indian women were employed in the informal sector was firstly that they could only get low-paying jobs during the apartheid era. Secondly, the Indian culture required women have to maintain their respectability. Working in the family business and operating businesses

allowed them an element of respectability, which they would not have enjoyed in the workplace, due to their race and gender. There they would have been degraded even further by being placed in menial jobs. The parents in the study mentioned that Indians were treated harshly by white South Africans, due to their second-class status, as they were ascribed a low status in the race hierarchy. The parents mentioned that men are the protectors of women in the Indian culture and resolve problems outside the home and do not allow women to be abused by outsiders. The abusive treatment against their wives, daughters and sisters by whites in the workplace would not have been tolerated by husbands, fathers and brothers. Indian women were therefore discouraged by the males in the home to work in South African organisations. They pointed out that women, in general, had a low status in the macro environment, but black women were regarded even lower than white women. The fear amongst the parents during that era was that the Indian women's respectability would be further compromised due to being a target for sexual harassment. In order to maintain the women's sexual purity and protect her dignity, women were not allowed to venture into the corporate environment. It is for these reasons that the parents in the study confirmed that the women did not study or pursue careers when they were growing up. Bibi mentioned the gender-role expectations of males and females in the Indian culture, which were shared among the other parents in the study:

"At that time it was highly emphasised that men were the breadwinners and women stayed at home to look after the children. Women were inferior to men. However, this was not necessarily the case if the man of the house could not maintain the household fully on his own. It was then acceptable for the woman to work to help support her husband. A woman was not allowed to work for pleasure, but if the need arose for women to work, it was not wrong."

The parents in the study also mentioned that while growing up, women were trained to be efficient housewives and were not motivated by their families to excel in school or to pursue a tertiary education. A reason for this was that the Indian culture encouraged early marriage for daughters, and that they should be efficient housewives who would take care of their homes and children. At

the end of her schooling career, Sadia, like the other mothers in the study, was not motivated to pursue tertiary education, but was moulded directly into a motherhood role:

"I had to look at my role in the Indian culture, where I'm supposed to take the role of a housewife and knowing that I will have my kids to educate and teach. And because of that I feel that's why I completed my schooling career, so that I could be competent enough to mould my kids for their future. My duty was to learn how to cook, be supportive to my husband and fulfil my family's needs. As far as I can remember, even the women around me discussed recipes and the latest gossip about neighbours. I can't remember talking about studies and schooling."

4.3.2.3 Prescribed Gender Roles in Islam

The parents in the study mentioned that Islam allows women the freedom to be educated and to pursue careers. According to all parents, women have in the past been forced to remain silent, apathetic and in the background. The parents in this study stated that this situation was aggravated by women not being able to attend good schools and being given the opportunity of mingling with other people due to apartheid, but could only focus on their religious teachings that were rooted in patriarchy, where parents curbed their daughters' freedom outside their homes. The parents mentioned that women were not aware of any opportunities that could change their restrictive situations; they had no proper guidance from women teachers, mothers and aunts, as these women were also restricted by the same rules that applied to the younger generation. Women did not have role models that could inform them regarding their right to be educated and to work. They pointed out that women had to respect, obey and practice their Islamic tenets, which were enforced by spiritual leaders. Upholding their religion and following the traditions and rituals defined the role of a woman as a homemaker, mother and wife. Haseena, like the other Muslim parents, shared her views regarding Islam's viewpoint relating to educating women:

"Islam allows Muslim women the freedom to be educated; it teaches a woman to carry herself with dignity and confidence. Therefore, with education, she can handle her decisions more wisely, especially when she is working and is fully aware that the choices she makes will have an impact on her religion, because her religion defines the person she is."

4.3.2.4 Prescribed Gender Roles in Hinduism

The Hindu parents in the study, on the other hand, mentioned that Hindu women are protected and dominated by men. When the Hindu parents in the study were growing up, education and careers for Hindu women were not encouraged. Hindu parents were focussed more on marriage and educating their daughters to become good housewives and less on studying further. The Hindu parents in the study mentioned that their parents strongly believed that Hindu women must understand their religion, so as to benefit themselves and their families by practicing and upholding their culture in their homes and community. Dinesh, like the other Hindu parents, highlighted the importance of religion to Hindu women:

"Hindu women learnt two aspects from their parents; one was religion and the other was preparation for marriage. Education was hardly mentioned, because culture and religion was important to men and men expected their women to always respect and uphold their Hindu cultural beliefs."

Asogran's beliefs are like the other Hindu parents, who maintain that religious practices should be foremost in a woman's life:

"Hinduism supports an Indian woman to work as long as she practices her religion by praying correctly, dress appropriately and respect her religion. She will then be supported by her family to work."

4.3.3 Community

When the parents in the study were growing up, the community were the caretakers of women and would monitor their behaviour and would approach parents if the daughters did not toe the line.

4.3.3.1 Community's Views on Women's Education and Careers

When the mothers in the study had completed their schooling, they found it difficult to pursue tertiary education, as the community believed women who attended university were out of line, since they had the freedom to mingle with male students. The Indian university (Durban Westville) which most Indian women attended during the apartheid era, would have encouraged the mothers in the study to stay away from home. This would have raised even more eyebrows in the community, and the mothers in the study and their families would have been ostracised. The fathers in the study also confirmed that the women in their families were discouraged from studying and pursuing careers for the same reasons. This pressure from the community was one of the reasons women did not study. Another reason that was mentioned was that the community encouraged men to take care of the financial needs of women. Rubina, like the other mothers, shared her views of the community's opinion of women who pursued further studies and careers in her youth:

"During the apartheid years, our community had very little encouragement regarding education and allowing women to study. As a young girl, I didn't feel the community was supportive or helpful enough to secure families financially. Jobs were very scarce, schools were very limited and there was nothing like pursuing a career for women to study at a tertiary institution. Men did not allow their daughters or wives to interact with other men besides their family members. As a young woman I had no choice but to work from a young age and support my parents with the basic necessities. I was brought up to believe that the men in the community will always protect and provide for their women. I also experienced the issue of not being equal with men, which held many of our Indian women back from opportunities."

4.3.3.2 Teachers' Encouragement of Females

The parents in the study pointed out that many male teachers valued the importance of education and felt women who did not study and pursue careers were wasting their talents, as most of the mothers in the study admitted that they outperformed the boys at school. Teachers did not subscribe to the narrow-minded views of the community and encouraged the mothers in this study to pursue tertiary education. While the mothers were at school teachers identified good performers among the young females and would call on their parents to discuss their performance and potential, giving the students their support and encouragement. However, because the mothers in this study had authoritarian parents, and were raised in a patriarchal society where males dominated, their voices were silent. Their parents were more religious and old-fashioned in their approach. The mothers mentioned that, since their fathers came from orthodox backgrounds, they did not need the advice of teachers and stopped their daughters from pursuing tertiary education. Ruweida, like the other mothers in the study, highlighted that she was a good performer in school and encouraged by her teachers:

"My teacher was a friend of my dad's; she used to encourage me to perform well, exceed in my work and make her and my family proud. My dad and teacher had many conversations about my education and I was highly motivated, because I was determined to complete my matric and study further. Many Indian females were only concerned about completing their matric and then stop there. That's where it ended! I think this concept was believed and lived by my father. My father ensured that religion and culture came first and as a young woman I had to prepare myself for marriage."

The fathers in the study also admitted that some of the girls in their class outperformed the boys, but were not allowed to pursue tertiary education or careers. In the study the fathers felt teachers supported the females in school, because attention was given to them, they were acknowledged for their performance and built close relationships with the teachers. Females were more involved in learning and reading; they would complete their homework,

ask questions when they did not understand their work and were diligent learners. Teachers recognised the interest the females took in their studies and the effort they made in performing well, and therefore teachers were determined to empower the females by inviting business people and career counsellors to the schools. Rashid witnessed as a young boy, just as many of the fathers in the study, the encouragement from teachers to empower the females:

"I know there were many teachers who encouraged females to complete their schooling. Teachers recognised potential in many females and encouraged them to study further. They had an opportunity to attend school where teachers taught them to always follow their dreams and be determined to work hard to become a successful person."

4.3.4 Family and Extended Family Influences

The attention will now be turned to the role of extended and immediate families and their views of Indian women being educated and pursuing careers.

4.3.4.1 Extended/Joint Family Views of Women's Education and Careers

Extended families also played a major role in the mothers not being able to study or pursue careers. Parents in this study came from extended/joint families; they had close-knit relationships with each family member. These parents admitted did not take unilateral decisions, as the extended family members also provided their input. They admitted that their parents' decisions were overruled by the elders in the home most of the time. Parents were pressurised into accepting the decision of grandfathers or the eldest brother who were the head of their respective joint family units. Halim, like the other parents, acknowledged that his extended family had a major influence on family decisions:

"My immediate and extended family were the orthodox type; it was made clear that our Indian women were not allowed to study or work. In fact, when my sister completed her standard 8 (grade 10), the teacher encouraged my late father to send her to college, because she was bright, she could learn and study to become a successful person. However at that time we were staying with my father's uncle, who was very old-fashioned. Because my father respected his uncle as a father, his uncle had the final word. My sister was therefore not allowed to go further, because her role was to cook, clean and take care of the children; the role of an Indian woman."

The parents in the study grew up in joint families that adhered to the patriarchal system where women should not be allowed to pursue tertiary education and careers. In the majority of cases families adhered to Indian cultural norms, where women were not encouraged to study. Mothers in the study had to take care of their families and focus on cooking, baking, cleaning and nurturing their children. Menagay emphasised the influence of her extended family, the same as was experienced by the other parents while they were growing up:

"I came from a joint family and the women in my family were not encouraged to study. They did not work, but were the solid homemakers of the household and supported their husbands. As a young girl my aunties and uncles taught me all the rituals, traditions and norms I had to know and portray as a house-wife."

4.3.4.2 Parents' Influence on Sons' and Daughters' Education and Careers

The mothers in the study pointed out that their fathers wanted them to focus more on their religious practices and stay indoors to uphold the family's reputation, while mothers socialised them into becoming proficient housewives. Mothers accepted the role of being housewives, because it was part of their Indian culture. Rashid shared his experience of the strictness of his father towards his two sisters, just like the other parents:

"My father was a strict man. He had forbidden my two sisters from talking to any boys or even hanging out with friends. He would not allow my sisters to go to school, he said my sisters must learn how to cook, clean and they must be able to look after children, as they will soon be married to men that must be able to look after them. That was my father's concept of thinking."

The parents in the study mentioned that their parents imposed stricter rules on daughters than on sons. While daughters were restricted from studying, sons were allowed to pursue tertiary education and careers. They further noted that daughters were not allowed to study, because their parents believed daughters will get married and move out of their natal homes. Parents would then not benefit from their additional income, whereas sons stayed with their parents and would financially support their parents in their old age. They pointed out that Indian women were raised in patriarchal family structures where fathers behaved in an authoritarian manner towards their children. Sadia, like the other mothers, expressed her views strongly regarding her parents' restriction on her studying

"My sisters and I were not encouraged to study, but only my one brother studied could study. We wanted to study further, but my parents refused. They had a philosophy that we had to stay at home and could only leave the house once we were married. My parents were set on that idea and were very over-protective. They were from a very religious background and my father believed that women don't need to study, it is a man's role. My father's way of thinking was to encourage my brother to study, because if anything happened to him, my brother would support the family financially."

The parents in the study admitted that due to financial difficulties, their mothers were forced to work in the informal sector. They had to find work at a young age to help secure their families financially. The words of Farzana capture the sacrifices made by her mother during apartheid:

"My mother did not complete her studies because she didn't come from a wealthy home. She left school at standard four because her father broke his leg in such a way that he could not work anymore. She was the third-born child, coming from a family of twelve children. She had to sacrifice her dreams and goals by doing the noble thing and leave school and start work to support all the children. Things were hard, my mother just had to become the breadwinner."

Another big challenge the parents highlighted was the affordability of education. During apartheid, Indian families struggled financially. While growing up the parents in the study felt the cost of tertiary education was too high and their parents did not earn much. This aggravated the position for daughters, as preference was given to their brothers' education. The parents said that Indian girls had to make sacrifices. They had to leave school at a young age, give up their dreams of pursuing tertiary education, work for a minimum wage and assist in taking care of their families. The focus was on obtaining the basic necessities for their families, i.e. food, clothing and shelter. Going on holidays, buying new cars, shopping at expensive malls or owning extravagant houses or businesses were the least of their options. The mothers in the study were accustomed to their mothers also working in order to make ends meet. Farzana, like all the other parents, expressed the difficulty of studying:

"We had an opportunity to attend school, but we were obliged at a very early age to support our parents, as we were not financially stable, and having an education cost money. My parents didn't earn well at that time, higher education was not even a thought. For us to actually study further was a problem, because we finished school and then we had to work so that we could maintain the family. Our parents were getting old and sickly, they just couldn't work. My mother had two jobs, therefore it was difficult for us to actually study further."

The parents in the study mentioned that when they were growing up, there were women in the Indian community who pursued tertiary education and

careers. However, these women were in the minority and they were outstanding pupils at school whose parents had the financial means to send them to universities. The women who pursued careers when the parents in the study were growing up were mainly in the medical field, as this was one option available to Indian women where they could uphold their dignity as they could work from home. It was also a career option available during the apartheid era. Moosa pointed out the career options for Indian women when he was growing up:

"I came from an educated family with a medical background. My mother's eldest sister attended university and graduated as a doctor. Her second eldest sister is an occupational therapist and my father's sister is a chemist, she works at the chemist in Laudium. I do believe these careers were the choices of the women and they were supported, because they could work from home, or at least close to home."

The mothers in the study mentioned that, when they were growing up, the norm was for women to get married when they were 13, 14 or 15 years old. The fathers confirmed this viewpoint, as the women in their families all got married at a young age. Rajen highlighted the young age at which girls in the Indian community married:

"My mother did not complete her schooling; she got married at a very early age, like most Indian women did. Studying was not encouraged much purely because of financial problems. She was taught by her mother to learn to take care of her children and husband first. She came from a family of four children, two brothers and a sister and was the first to get married when she was 13 years old. Education therefore wasn't a priority at that time for my mother."

The mothers in the study mentioned that since their parents did not complete their school careers, they did not comprehend the advantages of women having a tertiary education. Rajen strongly emphasised the lack of education

that has influenced parents' perception of women not being educated and working:

"During apartheid it was accepted that men only should work and study. Because they were poor, they were not very educated. They didn't earn that well. Women were also not educated. I grew up with my family experiencing the lack of education influencing my family and it is for this reason why we did not have many opportunities available to us, because we did not have a strong educational background."

The present situation regarding parents allowing their daughters to study and work will be discussed next. The reasons for parents having egalitarian views regarding their daughters' tertiary education and careers will be provided.

4.4 Current Situation with Parents

The situation of parents has definitely changed over the years and so has the thinking of parents today. Parents had to adjust to the new changes and ensure they portray and raise their daughters in the right way. A discussion on the new changes parents had to adjust to follows.

4.4.1. Modern World: Parents' New Way of Thinking

The parents in the study feel there are better opportunities available for their daughters in post-apartheid South Africa, such as better schools, and being able to enrol at universities of their choice. Parents no longer have to be concerned about sending their daughters to universities, as there are no restrictions to the universities Indians can enrol at. Daughters can study at universities and the most expensive schools, as there are options such as bursaries and loans that can assist parents to pay off their daughter's education. For instance, the University of Pretoria offers student loans with very low interest rates and employment as a student. A student can be rewarded by qualifying for a bursary or scholarship, and also have the opportunity to stay in the university residence to study and obtain a

qualification. Due to legislation in South Africa, such as the Employment Equity Act, affirmative action policies and, lately, gender equality policy in South Africa, women now have the same career opportunities as men. First preference is now given to women in the workplace and they can therefore pursue the highest levels at work. These days, universities and organisations are making room for women by setting targets to enrol and employ women, involving them in projects, provide assistance, have freedom of speech and create a feeling of comfort. Rajen supports the new developments in legislation for women in South Africa, as agreed to by the other parents in my study:

"Today South Africa has grown into a country of diversity, men and women are working together and women are given first preference for being managers, owning businesses and bringing new ideas that contribute to the country. I think with the development of gender equality, women can have the opportunity to climb the corporate ladder, to be innovative and make a difference, of course with the support from men. I'm proud of the way things have turned out, because I know for sure my daughter will be able to live her dream."

The parents mentioned that in the past seventeen years, with the demise of apartheid and Indians having greater opportunities in the workplace, there has also been a change in the outlook of the Indian community and cultural norms are no longer strictly adhered to. For example, there is no pressure from the extended family to get married at a young age; parents will provide more financial support and guidance to daughters growing up. In the study parents mentioned that they will allow their daughters to experience the feeling of travelling or relocating when the need arises to further their careers. Fathers are recognising that their daughters can now support their families. In the past seventeen years, with the demise of apartheid and greater opportunities for Indian women, the parents in the study mentioned that it is more acceptable for daughters to be educated and pursuing careers compared to when they were growing up. Since the demise of apartheid, schools have been encouraging women to pursue masculine subjects, which has resulted in

more Indian women pursuing careers in, for example, engineering. This was not the case during the apartheid era, when women were steered towards feminine careers. In this study, parents believe in the post-apartheid era where Indian women have a better chance of being employed into managerial positions. Uzair is a very optimistic father who wants his daughter to study, just like all the other parents in the study:

"The Indian community has moved to an era where there is more opportunities, more establishments on life, security and stability. We, as Indians, have found our way forward. We have learnt that education is what makes you a successful person, so educate your children. The dreams we once had we can now pursue, or we let our children follow their dreams. Our lifestyle has changed, we are no longer like our parents, strict and difficult; we are raising our children to the more liberal, especially our daughters. We allow our daughters to make the best of life, we allow them to study, travel, and work. As parents, we cannot hold our daughter back from what she wants to do and achieve. All we can do is support and guide her in the direction where she sees herself in. We have accepted that."

4.4.1.1 Parents' Perception of School Choice for their Daughters

When the parents in the study were growing up, they were confined to poorly-equipped Indian schools. In the post-apartheid era, with the wide choice of schools Indian women are able to attend, the parents in this study mentioned that they are encouraging their daughters to attend the most prestigious schools in South Africa in order to provide them with high-quality education. The reason they are doing this is that they are aware that networking for upward mobility in organisations starts at school and daughters have to start building their networks at an early age to get ahead in their careers. Shahid comments on the factors that are most common among the other parents regarding the ideals of a school for their daughter:

"Well, I want my daughter to receive the best education and grab all the opportunities that come her way. I don't have a problem with other schools, I

just feel that this school has a lot of benefits for her and it will allow her to see things from a different perspective. This school will allow her to participate with individuals from all races, learn how to network, and, you know, learn different cultures, become open-minded about the things around her. As her father I become more involved in her academic and social interests. Most importantly, I think all fathers would want this for their daughter. You know what I mean, that is for her to be independent."

Another reason for the parents in the study sending their daughters to prestigious schools is that they are not as exposed to sex, drugs, alcohol and violence. Parents' biggest fear is teenage pregnancy, and the choice of school will determine the way in which the female will grow into either a responsible and confident adult, or would make the wrong decisions and have no direction due to stubbornness and insecurity. As mentioned above, there are many valid reasons for their choice. Ranitha captures the essence of the choice of schools that are described by other mothers and fathers:

"I chose a well-organised school for my girls. This school firstly gives my daughter a different perspective on life, people and also education. She will become independent, disciplined and confident and she will also learn other girls' cultures and their way of life and be able to relate to it. It will also I think, add other benefits that will determine, or make her determined to study further and have good friends to support her in her choices."

It was found that the types of schools parents send their daughters to will definitely have an impact on parents' perceptions of daughters working and studying. However, in this study it had no impact.

4.4.1.2 Parents' Views on their Daughters' Education and Pursuit of Careers

Parents' views have changed, because educated women have the opportunities that will advance themselves and their families. Mothers and fathers said that education empowers their daughters to be independent, set

and achieve goals and take any opportunity that comes their way. In my study the parents are now more determined to encourage their daughters to study and to pursue a career than just settling down and having a family. This has a huge impact on the community.

The parents in this study are also more involved in their daughters' school work, future educational plans and choice of careers, compared to their parents. The parents have egalitarian relationships in their homes and have adopted a democratic approach towards their daughters, especially when discussing future education and career plans. The greatest fear parents in the study have is that their daughters might follow in their footsteps and not take advantage of the opportunities available. They are therefore encouraging their daughters to study hard, pursue careers to become successful and live a much better life by being financially secure, and to take every opportunity available to them. Menagay, like the other parents in the study, is concerned about her daughters' future:

"I personally feel that my daughters have much more opportunities than I had and as their mother I will encourage them to study and work, and live a better life. I will also remind them that they will be doing this for themselves and for their future. With us, it is a 'must' to have a discussion about their school every day, we have homework times and I assist where I can. They also have an exam time-table and methods that assist them with their exams, etc. My daughters are twins and in matric. You can pick up the differences and interests between them. I also know what they are going through so I will help them where I can. Soon we will also be going to visit the career counsellor at the university to enrol them for next year, which I'm looking forward to."

Abdul Kader highlights that Indian men have learnt to accept women's independence. The need for both spouses to have well-paying jobs is greater these days with the escalating cost of living:

"Men are very proud of their Indian women, they have become independent and career oriented. I think at first men didn't accept the idea of an Indian

female studying or working, but things have changed as the apartheid era faded away and they were given the opportunities. And with today's life, two people need to work in order to maintain a good and secured life."

With more Indian women entering professions these days, the parents mentioned that career-oriented women are no longer frowned upon. Haseena points out the support professional Indian women receive from the community regarding their careers:

"Both men and women are supporting each other, which they have to. Well, I feel that is important. In the Indian community men and women are working together and teaching each other. Many people also encourage women to study further and develop themselves in that which they do; it's surprising to know how much talent we have around here. I mean, some Indian women are actors, dancers and singers; they have the confidence in themselves, so it's highly encouraged. You know, you just see them around you, you just see where the talent lies."

The parents in the study commented that having professional Indian women has also proved to be a benefit to the community. The Indian community these days supports and encourages women education, regardless of their religious orientation, due to the community benefiting from their services. Asogran, like other parents, said proudly:

"Hindu women have proven that they can make a difference in our community by contributing to other people and helping the Indian community. Currently, many Hindu women are doctors, dentists and even beauticians, and some are even TV presenters and are very confident."

4.4.1.3 Modern Family Views Relating to Daughters Pursuing Education and Careers

Indian families have changed in the way they function. Today they prefer nuclear families and are no longer functioning in extended/joint families. The parents in the study have mentioned that they have moved from

extended/joint families into nuclear families, having egalitarian views of their daughters. The parents in this study mentioned that they no longer consult with elders in the extended family regarding the future educational prospects and careers of their daughters. This allows them greater freedom regarding their future. Since the parents in the study have egalitarian views regarding women being educated and pursuing careers, daughters in the current study will be allowed to study and enter professions. Compared to their parents, the parents in the study pay more attention to the emotional needs of, and communicate more openly with their daughters regarding their future career plans.

Dinesh, like the other parents, expressed his view regarding his family function:

"I play a role of a mentor, as my daughter is basically in an indecisive stage in her life, which can be very challenging for her to come to terms with her true being. I try to understand her needs and accept her views regarding to her education. Her mother and I give her the opportunity to reach her potential and achieve her goals. We have an open communication, have realistic discussions about her future and spend quality family time in advising her in a choice of friends and associates. As her parents, it is important to know this."

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter the study was unfolded into two parts:

1. Parents' background
2. Parents' views on daughters being educated and pursuing careers

The two parts were elaborated upon and sub-themes which support the two parts were described and identified. The Indian culture, religion, family and community play a major role in the parents' lives. While mothers and Indian women were not provided with tertiary educational and career opportunities in the past, the parents in the study mentioned that with the demise of apartheid and the opportunities available to women, more Indian females are entering

professions. The Indian community is also more accepting of women pursuing tertiary education and careers these days and the emphasis is less on early marriages. The rise in the cost of living and parents wanting their daughters to be financially secure are some of the reasons mentioned for wanting to educate daughters. The next chapter focuses on the main findings of this study, which will be compared with the available literature on the subject matter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5. Introduction

The research question pertaining to the current study became important to the researcher as she was one of the very few Indian girls whose parents had allowed her to pursue a tertiary education and career. Most of the Indian girls she went to school with had married immediately after they completed their education. The researcher was curious to find out the perception of parents toward their daughters who are pursuing tertiary education and careers as the majority of her Indian female friends became housewives. In this chapter the researcher hopes to answer this question in this chapter through relevant literature which was consulted, and therefore give an account on the key findings as found in chapter 4. In the course of interviewing the parents, she found that there has been a major shift in how the community and family perceived women pursuing tertiary education and careers in the past and the outlook towards daughters advancing in education and careers these days.

The next section focuses on what the Indian culture, community and family perceived to be the roles of women when the parents were growing up.

5.1 Indian Women's Position in the Past

In the analysis of the parents' childhood, it was found that patriarchy played a major role in the lives of parents. Women were not allowed to work, as the Indian culture and both Islam and Hinduism prescribed that it was the duty of men to financially support the family. The Indian community frowned upon men who sent women to work and the norm was that respectable women do not work outside their homes. Daughters usually married at an early age and

would live with their husbands and sometimes in-laws. The attitude men had at that time was not to allow their women to work and earn for themselves, as they wanted to control their movements and have authority over them. It was for this reason that women did not have female role models to inform them regarding their right to be educated and to work, as none of the women in their families were highly educated.

The Indian community in South Africa was traditional and tended to follow certain Indian cultural values that were not practiced in India. For example, women in India, such as Indhira Gandhi, were powerful political figures in the 1970s and 1980s when the majority of Indian women in South Africa were home-bound. One of the reasons the South African Indian community was traditional was because they lived in Indian townships. Deviating from Indian cultural norms would make one an outcast in the Indian society. Also, going back to India was not an option, as news of a deviance would reach family and friends abroad and one would be treated as an outcast.

Since Indians regarded South Africa as their home, they were, through community pressure, forced to abide to prescribed cultural norms. Women came from extended/joint families where the cultural beliefs were all focussed on the traditional role of women being homemakers and being obedient to their husbands. Sivananda (1961) concluded that women should receive the kind of training that will make them ideal wives and mothers and not ideal job seekers competing against men. Any decisions regarding the women were made by men. Akhmat (2005) highlighted that Indian women in South Africa had been accustomed to be quiet, apathetic and in the background. Women did not have freedom of choosing their careers, since most were from a patriarchal background that did not encourage women pursuing a career at the expense of her family. Women were not determined to study and were not confident enough, as they were living under their husbands' or fathers' authority. They did not have the opportunity to voice their opinions or express themselves even at home; they led their lives according to what they were told. Akhmat (2005) and Hofstede (2004) emphasised that women accepted the way things were done. They did not have any power over their lives, and it

was dictated by their families. The research discussed by Derne (1994) stated that female scholars have recognised that Indian women are disadvantaged by sharing gender ideologies that restricted women education and limited interactions with their husbands within the household (Liddleand Joshi 1986, Omwedt 1980, & Sharma 1978, 1980b).

In this analysis the researcher found that the parents have, in the past, believed that the sons in the family should be given first preference to study when they faced financial restrictions. Poor Indian families kept girls at home to care for younger siblings. Daughters were not sent to study, as it was regarded as a waste of money because they would soon be married off and the in-laws would benefit from their education.

Parents in this study mentioned that the majority of Indian families grew up poor. This was another reason why women did not pursue tertiary education in the past as parents could not afford to send them to study. The research discussed by Hoogeveen and Ozler (2005) emphasised that the economic inequalities of the apartheid era was commonly poverty. The narrow unemployment rate increased from 17% to 24% between 1995 and 1999, while the broad unemployment rate, which included the so-called “discouraged workers,” increased from 29% to 38% during the same period (Klasen & Woolard, 2000). According to Woolard (2002), poor women are, for example, women living in poor households. In reality, there may be many women that live in non-poor households, and should be counted as poor because of the inequalities in intra-household allocations. A household headed by a resident male has a 28% probability of being poor, whereas a household with a female head has a 48% chance of being poor and a household with a female head (because the nominal male head is absent) has a 53% chance of being poor. Female-headed households are mostly in the rural areas where poverty is intense. They tend to have fewer adults of working age, female unemployment rates are higher and the wage gap between male and female earnings persists. Carter and May (2001) found that poverty rates among the non-white population in Kwazulu-Natal increased from 27% to 43% between 1993 and 1998. Jameelah (2000),

Velkoff (1998), Witts and Booysen (1995), and Pillay (1972) proposed that poverty was one of the main barriers to female education.

This study indicates that marriage was a high priority among the women in the past. Young ladies of 16, 17 and 18 years of age were being prepared for marriage by their parents. Their parents wanted them to be married to men who will take care of their daughters and in return, they trained their daughters to respect, take care and support their husbands. In the past parents raised their children, especially their daughters, very conservatively. They avoided exposing them to the Western culture and insisted they follow the Indian cultural values and beliefs. Jameelah (2000) stated that parents conformed to the traditional norms and pressurised their daughters to follow Indian customs and norms. Education was not highly encouraged, as it would negatively impact on daughters following the traditional rituals and customs. In the past these parents were authoritarian and would make decisions for their daughter's future, i.e. getting married at a very early age and taking care of their children. Parents were strict disciplinarians in the past and would not allow daughters to deviate from expected cultural norms. Witts and Booysen (1995) indicated that Indian parents make unilateral decisions on what is right or wrong and are not open to any persuasion. They expect their daughters to be meek and submissive at all times, to refrain from questioning anything and to do exactly as they say. This study indicates that parents' involvement in their daughter's academic background in the past was slim. Rumberger, Ghatak, Poulus, and Dornbusch (1990) found in their study that Indian parents from a high socioeconomic background were more involved in their daughter's education. Velkoff (1998) also mentioned that parents' attitude toward educating their daughters was negative and hindered the girls' education.

The mothers and fathers in this study also mentioned that women were not encouraged to pursue tertiary education and careers during apartheid, as education for Indians was not compulsory. This had a negative impact due to the lack of education. The females attended Indian schools, and although the

teachers tried to encourage women to study, they were limited in the type of careers they could choose from due to skilled positions being reserved for white males. The literature supports the above-mentioned. During the researcher's analysis it was found that the legal position of South African women working and studying in the apartheid era was restricted. There were no effective initiatives from Government to encourage society to accept and allow women education. In the past there were no laws stipulated in legislation about women's rights, discrimination or gender equality. Fiske and Ladd (2004) focused more on the legislation regarding the education system. It was restricted and vocational opportunities were severely circumscribed for women in South Africa, as they were reminded daily that they were powerless.

This study revealed that parents mentioned that women were employed in lower positions during the apartheid era. Jobs for Indian women were scarce. In the literature, Hussain (2010) believed that women's participation in employment was regarded as 'slightly' appropriate, subtly wrong, and dangerous to their chastity and womanly virtue. In addition, Walker (1991) stated that prejudice from within the Indian community against women participating in any form of activity outside the home was deeply rooted.

These were some of the reasons parents mentioned why women did not pursue tertiary education and careers when they were growing up. The attention is now turned to the perception of parents relating to their daughters pursuing tertiary education and careers in the current era.

5.2 The Change in Views Today

During the analysis it was found that parents mentioned that the trend has changed in post-apartheid South Africa. They mentioned that through legislation, women are just as eligible as men for positions in organisations. Indian women are contributing to the economy in one form or the other and some women are entrepreneurs, owning their own businesses while others are in the corporate environment. According to Gangrade (2010), companies

have adopted affirmative action policies and the Employment Equity Act also favours previously disadvantaged groups such as Indian women. Zopedol (2008) stated that affirmative action ensures that qualified people who were restricted in designated groups (black people, women and people with disabilities) in the past now receive equal opportunities in the workplace. In addition, employment equity applies to all employers and staff by protecting workers from unfair discrimination as a framework for implementing affirmative action. The greatest development is providing quality education and training, particularly to Indian women in South Africa. Parents feel that their daughters have better opportunities today; they can build themselves up, have a better lifestyle and become successful in their choice of career. In addition parents are pleased that many universities are accepting and enrolling females of any age to study and build a brighter future for themselves. Data from the University of Pretoria (2009), for example, illustrates that the number of Indian females enrolled as full-time students are higher compared to the part-time Indian female students enrolled. It is clearly evident that many Indian females are enrolled at the University of Pretoria. 203 Indian females were enrolled in 2009, studying a specific career. There are more developmental areas for women whereby Goetz (2007) stated that there are more women in politics in South Africa today than in any developed democracy. This significant achievement is owed to explicit affirmative action interventions in favour of women's participation. Arnett (2002) stated that gender roles are undergoing dramatic changes, as young Indian women seek jobs outside their homes and native country. This emigration is usually temporary and regarded as an opportunity to earn a salary and increase the economic well-being of the family. Martineau (1997) mentioned that the Republic of South Africa's Department of Education (1995) notes that the government has the mandate to plan the development of education and training systems for all its people and redress educational inequalities, more particularly for women and girls. In addition to this, Flood, Hoosein and Primo (1997) emphasised that the legal position of South African women have changed dramatically following the new Constitution (108 of 1996), which guarantees citizens equality before the law, and emphasises the government's commitment to eradicate all forms of discrimination, including

discrimination based upon gender. The newly-elected South African government has been moving towards providing equal opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups, such as Indian women, in terms of education and jobs.

The study revealed that parents are encouraging their daughters to study and work. With the huge opportunities Indian women have in terms of pursuing tertiary education and careers, parents are encouraging their daughters to focus on their future and live a good and fulfilled life. The study also revealed that the size of traditional Indian households is shrinking, as more women are studying and working. Parents in the study revealed that more nuclear families exist today in South Africa today and parents take joint decisions with their daughters regarding their future careers. Popenoe (1995) regards the egalitarian family as the new pattern that has emerged in modern society, a family where the man and wife enjoy equal authority and privileges. Parents now have a direct impact on their daughter's life, with no influence from extended families. In nuclear families, parents can relate more easily to their daughters and understand their needs. The Indian cultural norms have become more liberal; today Indians are slowly moving from the traditional customs and rituals (Anonymous, 2010). Arnett (2002) emphasised that the values of the global culture often clashes with traditional cultural values. In this case, women are facing the challenge of adapting to both the global culture and their local culture, even as their local culture may be changing rapidly.

The study revealed that parents feel if they raise their daughters in the manner they were raised, they would always be working twice as hard to make ends meet. The study revealed that parents also felt daughters would end up not having sound education and good careers. According to Witts and Booysen (1995), many Indian parents have a constant drive to encourage their daughters to excel in all they do. Indian parents teach their daughters to always give their best and always make use of the opportunities available, as they themselves never had that chance. Thus, daughters would like to please and respect their parents' wishes, but at the same time it feels as if they are

living the lives of their parents and not their own. According to Brenner (1984), the normal stress associated with growing up and developing is raised to unnecessarily high levels when parents prematurely pressure their daughters into adult behaviour and responsibility.

The study revealed that the parents are determined to get both sons and daughters educated equally. They have realised that their daughters can achieve more with all the opportunities being available in the country and give them the support they need to accomplish their goals. The major influence on parents now being more liberal towards their daughters studying and working is due to globalisation. In the past women could not travel or stay away from home, but they are in demand more than ever before in today's world of work. Women are working and living in many different parts of the country and world, uplifting their careers and continuing to empower themselves and others. Parents are now appreciating the changes, rather than living the old traditional lifestyle with their children, and ensuring that their daughters are taking the opportunities offered to them in order to fit in with the world globally.

Another important fact is that parents' views have changed tremendously over the years, because they have become aware of the changes in the world. If parents therefore do not keep up with the changes, their daughters will have difficulty due to being backward and not having the ability to compete on an equal footing in the workplace.

Yeates (2002) emphasised that 'globalisation' is affecting our lives. Therefore, globalisation serves as a central point to many developmental successes, such as poverty reduction, increasing economic prosperity, better services and enhanced concern with human rights. With these major changes, parents are adapting more to the global culture than their own culture, thus changing their ways of raising their children, i.e. best schools, travelling and career choice. More employment is available to women in all fields of work, thus reducing women working in low-skilled jobs. They now have the courage to work with men on an equal level in many organisations throughout the world. Yeates (2002) also added that globalisation is helping us to make sense of

the dynamics and directions of social policy and finding solutions to the global trends in inequality, insecurity, and poverty. In addition, Arnett (2002) stated that globalisation gets young people to migrate to urban areas in search of work by pursuing personal goals in work, school and their social lives. Young females are now receiving a higher standard of quality education in diverse schools, with good discipline, becoming fully equipped and prepared for their future careers. According to Nsamenang (2002), schooling lasts longer for many young people than it did in the past, opening up many new work opportunities, especially for women, who are making up an increasing proportion of the work force.

This study revealed that parents said another reason was that the divorce rate among young Indian couples has increased since they were at school. This has led to Indian parents looking toward education and careers to secure the future of their daughters. The study also revealed that it is for this reason that many parents don't want their daughters to marry early, that they should focus on their careers. Husain (1984) concluded that marriage is an option for Indian women these days. Parents invest in their daughters' education and if their daughters want to get married, thereafter, parents encourage them to do so.

The study also revealed that the Indian community encourages and supports women's education and empowerment. According to King and Hill (1993), the more education a women has, the more likely she is to work in the workforce, given the husband's education and assets as a constant. Educated women marry later first focussing on uplifting their careers and lifestyle. Overall the women's education improves the community by reducing child mortality, enhanced child health, increased emphasis on schooling and a lower birth rate. Educated women will therefore increase their investment in the human capital of their own children. Indian parents appear to be adapting to the growing evidence that educated sons and daughters get much better jobs. In this way student loans and bursaries help the poor females to complete their studies successfully. In an educated community there will be a lower level of unemployment and more employment available to live a more comfortable

and free life. For years women have been kept in the dark, today the community has noticed their potential to study and work that contributes to the community.

The study revealed that fathers are now spending more time with their daughters. They are involved in their education, encouraging and motivating their daughters and wives to study and work. The reason is that parents are aspiring to a higher standard of living and encouraging the same for their daughters. Fathers in the study mentioned that they took care of their children while their wives are in the workplace. In the literature, Roudi-Fahimi and Moghadam (2003) emphasised that educated women generally want smaller families and make better use of health and family planning information and services in achieving their desired family size. Women should be able to achieve their goals outside their homes, to the benefit of themselves, their families, and country. This study reveals that parents are aware of many educated career women in their community who are independent and successful. Many of these women have good careers, for example they are doctors, lawyers, managers, pharmacists and accountants. Parents aspire that their daughters will emulate these women and also become successful career women. Elion and Strieman (2001) found that it is common in the Indian community today that many Indian women play a major role in the textile industry. Many fabric shops are owned by Indian people, especially Indian women. This is proof of the contribution this minority group has made in developing a multicultural South Africa, based on democracy and tolerance (Syed, 2000). Another important factor is that the focus now is for women to strike a balance between work and family life, as women play a role of being a wife, mother and career woman in the community. Jayaram (2000) also mentioned that women have made rapid strides in every aspect of modern life and adapted to the changes in society. Indian women are today voicing their opinions in public and joining with other women in the local community, having opportunities to make bold decisions. Educated women are now earning a better-paying salary and pursuing careers of their choice. Jameelah (2000) concluded that Indian women today are actors, singers, corporate divas,

social saints and beauty queens, as compared with the past. Indian women are now recognizing their true potential.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter provided some interesting new facts and also overlapped with the literature on many aspects relating to the perception of parents regarding their daughters pursuing tertiary education and careers. One aspect that is clear is that parents have changed their outlook relating to their daughters studying and pursuing careers. The next chapter focuses on the conclusions from the study, shortcomings relating to the study and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6. Introduction

This chapter concludes the dissertation relating to exploring the perceptions of Indian parents in South Africa in terms of allowing their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers. The lack of available research on this subject inspired the researcher to research this topic. The respondents' perceptions were investigated by making use of a qualitative, interpretivist approach with semi-structured interviews. A content analysis was done of the textual data. It was found that the influences that had a major impact on the parents allowing their daughters to study or work in the past were apartheid, culture, religion, the community and family. The perceptions of parents these days in relating to their daughters studying and working have changed compared to when they were growing up. In this chapter the researcher reflects on the main results of this research in terms of the research questions and also describes the limitations of this study, the practical implications and the recommendation for future research. Lastly a brief personal reflection of the researcher's personal journey is given.

6.1 Research Questions and Findings

In this section the main conclusions of this study are described in terms of the research questions. Chapter 4 focussed on answering the research questions posed in Chapter 1. A research question will be given, followed by the applicable answer based upon the results of the research. The aim of the study was not to focus on how apartheid influenced women pursuing tertiary education and careers when parents were growing up, it became an important

theme that all parents touched on during the interviews. It is for this reason that it was included it as one of the questions in the research.

1. **How did the apartheid era influence Indian women pursuing tertiary education and careers when parents were growing up?**

- ❖ Apartheid was a barrier for Indian women to pursue tertiary education and careers, as apartheid laws restricted them in having a career.
- ❖ There was a lack of educational and career opportunities for India women during apartheid. The apartheid government had made the school syllabus very difficult and while most of the mothers in the study had completed schooling, they did not qualify for university entrance.
- ❖ Indian women worked for minimal wage and were employed at the lowest levels. Good jobs were reserved for whites only.
- ❖ Due to financial difficulties, women were allowed to work in the informal sector to support their families financially. The cost of education was another factor that Indian families struggled with, as they did not earn much.

2. **What were the Indian cultural factors affecting women pursuing tertiary education and careers when parents were growing up?**

- ❖ It was more difficult for women to pursue careers and tertiary education than for men. The prescribed role for women was that they should be homemakers and men the breadwinners. They needed to maintain their respectability.
- ❖ Indian women only focused on their cultural teachings that were rooted in patriarchy, which were enforced by parents and the community.
- ❖ Indian women were not aware of any opportunities that could change their restrictive situations; they had no proper guidance from female teachers, mothers and aunts, as these women were also restricted by the Indian culture.
- ❖ Education and careers were not encouraged and motivated for Indian women. Parents were more focussed on marriage and educating their

daughters to become good housewives than allowing them to study further.

- ❖ Parents imposed stricter rules on their daughters than their sons. While daughters were restricted from studying, sons were allowed to pursue tertiary education and careers. Parents believed that daughters were not allowed to study, because their parents believed daughters will get married and move out of their natal homes and parents would then not benefit from their additional income.

3. Did Islam and Hinduism impact Indian women pursuing tertiary education and careers when parents were growing up?

- ❖ Yes it did, Indian women in South Africa had been accustomed to being quiet, apathetic and in the background. Due to the lack of education, these attitudes impacted the fundamental rights of Islam/Hindu women.
- ❖ Indian women had to respect, obey and practice their religious tenets, which were enforced by their parents and spiritual leaders.
- ❖ Indian women had to ensure that they understand their religion so to benefit themselves and their families by practicing and upholding their culture in their homes and community.
- ❖ Fathers wanted their daughters to focus more on their religious practices and stay indoors to uphold the family's reputation, while mothers socialised them into becoming respectable Indian women.
- ❖ Indian women were protected and dominated by men, as this was what Indian men felt were the religious doctrines. They were very obedient to their husbands and fathers.

4. How did the role of the community influence women pursuing tertiary education and careers when parents were growing up?

- ❖ Indian women could not attend university; it was not accepted by the community for women to mingle freely with male students. This had an impact on the women's reputation and families. Women had no

encouragement or support from the community to pursue tertiary education and careers.

- The community encouraged men to take care of the financial needs of women and their families.
- Male teachers, however, valued the importance of education and encouraged women to pursue tertiary education.
- Parents were called by teachers to discuss their daughters' performance and potential. However, this was ignored. Parents were authoritarian and believed that they didn't need the advice of teachers for pursuing tertiary education, as they came from an orthodox background.

5. What was the role of the family in influencing women pursuing tertiary education and careers when the women were growing up?

- Parents came from extended/joint families; they had close-knit relationships with each family member and influenced the choices women made in their lives.
- Parents' decisions were overruled by the elders in the home.
- Parents were pressurised into accepting the decision of grandfathers or the eldest brother - the head of their respective joint family units.
- Families adhered to the patriarchal system where women should not be allowed to pursue tertiary education and careers.

6. What are the factors of parents allowing daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers these days?

- Parents feel there are better opportunities available for their daughters in post-apartheid South Africa such as better schools and no restrictions on entering universities or organisations.
- Parents can enrol their daughters in the most expensive schools, as there are options such as bursaries and loans that can assist parents to pay for their daughter's education.
- The legislation in South Africa has changed tremendously. Organisations and Universities have adapted and implemented new

laws such as the Employment Equity Act, affirmative action policies and, lately, gender equality policies. Women now have the same career opportunities as men.

- Indian women have better opportunities in the workplace and the outlook of the Indian community has changed. The Indian cultural norms are no longer strictly adhered to.
- Fathers recognise that their daughters can now support their families; they have accepted their daughters being educated and pursuing careers of their own choice.
- Mothers and fathers believe these days that education empowers their daughters to be independent, set and achieve goals and take any opportunity that comes their way.
- Marriage is no longer a "must." Parents are more involved in their daughter's school work, future educational plans and choice of careers.
- Indian women who enter professions these days are supported, encouraged, motivated and inspired to be successful in their careers, and are highly contributing to the Indian community.
- Parents today are functioning as nuclear families and have egalitarian views of their daughters. Greater freedom allows women to pursue tertiary education and careers, paying more attention to the emotional needs and communicating more openly with their daughters regarding their future career plans.

6.2 Implications

The practical implication is that there will be an increased number of Indian women at tertiary institutions. The implications for corporate South Africa are that there will be an increased number of Indian women with tertiary qualifications entering the labour market. The current study adds to the literature on cross-cultural psychology, as it takes into account the life stories of parents and the position of Indian women then and how the situation has changed over the past twenty years. According to Ahmad (2001), her research explores the motivations and influences for entering higher education and the contribution it may make to the current conversations

surrounding Indian women. Ahmad (2001) suggests that higher education is viewed as a valuable asset in maintaining and gaining social prestige. This preliminary research indicates that young Indian women are continually negotiating and renegotiating their cultural, religious and personal identities to adapt to the global lifestyle. The current study also adds to the literature on cross-cultural psychology by focusing on the change within the political landscape and how this has impacted the perceptions of parents relating to daughters pursuing tertiary education and careers.

6.3 Limitations

The **limitations** of the study can be summarised as follows:

- The life-story interviews used for the data collection allowed the researcher to deepen her understanding of the respondents' perceptions with regard to Indian parents allowing their daughters to pursue tertiary education and careers. Interviewing did not however, enable her to investigate the perceptions of a large number of individuals and thus the results contained in this study could not be generalised to the general population (Indian parents in other Western countries), seeing that the perceptions of her respondents might not be relevant to the perceptions of other individuals.
- This study was done with a small sample group within a specific contextual situation. In her research, the researcher made use of the purposive sampling by focusing specifically on Muslim and Hindu parents and not other religions.
- Since the interviews had been conducted in a face-to-face manner, the respondents could not have been entirely comfortable, as we spoke often about sensitive subjects such as family background, educational level, financial status, culture and religion. In addition, the researcher's own educational level and religion could have hampered how open they were when answering sensitive questions.

Regardless of these limitations mentioned above, the researcher regards this study an attempt to gather the perceptions of respondents relating to Indian parents perceptions in terms of allowing their daughters to study and work. As mentioned earlier, there is very little research available that focuses on this topic, and she believes that the findings of this study have made worthy contributions to the field.

6.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Based upon the findings of this study, the following recommendations became evident:

- It was discovered that culture plays a role in the perceptions of parents who allow their daughters to study and work. It is advised that the topic of this study be explored further and with a bigger sample size. A survey could be used as a means of triangulation, which could enable researchers to generalise findings to the general working population.
- Future studies could also take into account daughters' perceptions of their parents allowing them to pursue tertiary education and careers.

6.5 Personal Reflections

When I started the research project I was very excited to explore a topic that I had some knowledge and experience of, since, as an Indian female, I could easily relate to it. I found it interesting to follow the qualitative research route in my study, because I was very interested to know what the reasons are why people say what they say, rather than looking at a few graphs and statistics to interpret and analyse in order to tell a story. The research gave me more insight about religion, culture and family background. Even though I am a young Indian lady, it was interesting to have more discussions with the elderly and their backgrounds, as well as the way they survived compared to nowadays where children and adults have a much more relaxed and comfortable life. I realised so many differences between now and then, and

must admit I looked at my own life in terms of my parents' allowing me to study and work. I'm very grateful that I had the opportunity to research a topic that made me feel closer to home and I've learnt so much about the Indian history, not only in South Africa, but around the world. I'm very proud of the Indian women in South Africa; they have inspired me to be the woman I am today.

6.6 Conclusion

This study was aimed to explore the views Indian parents had in terms of allowing their daughters studying and work.

I conclude this study by stating that Indian parents in South Africa are supporting and encouraging their daughters to study and work. Further research will be needed to add to my findings. I therefore hope the recommendations I mentioned above will be followed and that this topic will be given attention in the near future.

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