GENDER AND CULTURAL IDENTITY NEGOTIATION OF EDUCATED SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN MOTHERS NOT PURSUING CAREERS

by

RAEESA MAHOMED

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Study Leader:
DR NASIMA M.H. CARRIM

Date
SEPTEMBER 2013

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"I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not ended." (Mandela, 1995, p. 625)

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents,

Ebrahim and Shameela Mahomed, who have supported, encouraged, motivated and challenged me to complete this thesis, and have afforded me the opportunity to gain knowledge. I also would like to thank them for loving me unconditionally and for sharing both the joys and frustrations throughout this journey. May Allah (S.W.T.) reward them both in this year and in the years after.

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for making it possible for me to complete this thesis

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the factors that have an impact on the decisions of educated Indian mothers in South Africa who are not pursuing careers and answers the on-going questions about why Indian women pursue tertiary education but do not pursue careers. Secondly, this study also helps to understand the identity negotiation that these mothers go through – how they negotiate their various identities and the intersection of their gender and cultural identities that affect their decision not to pursue a career. The research aims to emphasise the extent and impact of the cultural roles that educated Indian mothers have to deal with. This study makes a theoretical contribution and conveys pioneering knowledge to assist top management to understand the skills shortage of this minority group and create an understanding of the reasons why Indian women decide not to pursue careers, and of their identity negotiation in the process.

A qualitative research approach, using in-depth, semi-structured life story interviews, was used in the study to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons why educated Indian women are not pursuing careers. A non-probability sampling strategy (snowball and purposive sampling) was used, and therefore a total of 17 Muslim and Hindu participants were interviewed in the main study. Content analysis was used to analyse the data with the Atlas-Ti programme.

The results exemplify that an individual's identity is formed by the cultural context and that Indian gender identities were instilled in these women from a young age. The women in the study highlighted that motherhood and family obligations take precedence over any other identity they possess. At first the women seemed despondent with the decision to leave their careers. However, as time went by they felt that cultural obligations were more important and accepted their cultural identity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

GENDER AND CULTURAL IDENTITY NEGOTIATION OF EDUCATED SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN MOTHERS NOT PURSUING CAREERS

CHAPTER 1:
INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

Imagine waking up and deciding to bake a cake. So you climb out of bed, get dressed, drive to the store and start your shopping. You walk through the aisles, filling your basket with the necessary items, pay for them, drive home, unpack and... finally decide not to bake the cake. The question asked is what was the point of all that exhaustion in the first place? Similarly, why do Indian women put so much time and effort into pursuing tertiary education, but then do not enter the workforce. A typical example of this would be an Indian woman – wife, mother and daughter-in-law. Her impressive résumé reads as follows: BA degree, Higher Education Diploma, Diploma in Horticulture, Honours in Psychology and B Psych. Yet she sits at home. I ask myself why, with all her qualifications, is she not working? What makes someone with all the necessary qualifications to have a lasting impact on our world give up the life that could have been?

1.1   BACKGROUND

The Society of Human Resource Management (2009) states that, traditionally, girls who came from Indian culture did not have proper opportunities to pursue an education, but over time their literacy level was increased and women gradually began to attend universities. Furthermore, The Society of Human Resource Management (2009) states that these changes came from the major cultural shift in parental perspective that has approved giving their women an education and allowed them the opportunity to work, make a contribution to the family and even pursue a career. Globalisation, the liberalisation, individualisation and urbanisation of the economy, the IT revolution, the success of the global Indian movement, the assertion of religious identities and the reaffirmation of prehistoric world views, reinterpretations of history, new media and global mega gurus, and new political views all signify some of the processes that have brought about some of these dramatic changes (Jacobsen, 2009). The change in individual roles

and perceptions that recently has dominated our existence has been dubbed Modernisation (Nilsson, 2004). The dramatic changes and paradigm shifts that have occurred over the years can be seen as modernisation and are described by Nilsson (2004) as trends leading to social change, as in new identities, roles and attitudes. Martinussen, a well-known economist (1997, p. 56), defines modernisation as a process that is "…concerned primarily with how traditional values, attitudes, practices and social structures break down, and are replaced with modern ones". One result of modernisation is that it is now more acceptable for women to further their education and pursue careers. Nilsson (2004) states that research indicate that the level of educated women is significant not only for development purposes, but beneficial for the entire society. She further states that the education of women has several effects that will initiate numerous benefits at various levels.

A point to be noted is how women in Indian culture are becoming more accepted in the workforce due to economic reforms. Interestingly enough, aspects such as social, legal, and economic reforms have assisted women to join the workforce in Indian culture, while the on-going monotony of normative attitudes and values has prevented them from altering the perceptions of society, as well as their own, regarding their sex-roles (Buddhapriya, 2009).Therefore many educated Indian women are not entering the workforce, because these cultural restrictions limit them. This will be discussed briefly to provide a glimpse of the study.

For many years, women in South Africa have endured cultural discrimination and this served as an obstacle to and hampered their full integration into the workforce. After 1994, with the end of apartheid, the government introduced constitutional changes to ensure the fair access to and equality of women in the workforce (Van der Westhuizen, Goga & Oosthuizen, 2007). Laws were also enacted to usher in equity in the way women are treated in the labour market (Bhorat, Leibbrandt, Maziya, Van der Berg & Woolard, 2001), such as the Employment Equity Act of 1998 and the Skills Development Act of 1998.

The evolving gender dynamics after apartheid also affected the labour market situation in South Africa (Floro & Komatsu, 2011). Casale (2004) argues that the increase in female control of households and the erosion of male income support assist in explaining the

significant rise in women's labour force participation, which is a key factor driving the high female unemployment rate.

South Africa's female labour force participation (FLFP) has increased substantially over the past two decades (Ntuli, 2004). Female labour force participation is a primary sign of the extent to which women participate in the economic activities of any country (Stats SA, 2011 & Yakubu, 2010). Figure 1.1 illustrates the low rates of Indian women in the workforce.

Figure 1.1: Indian women not working
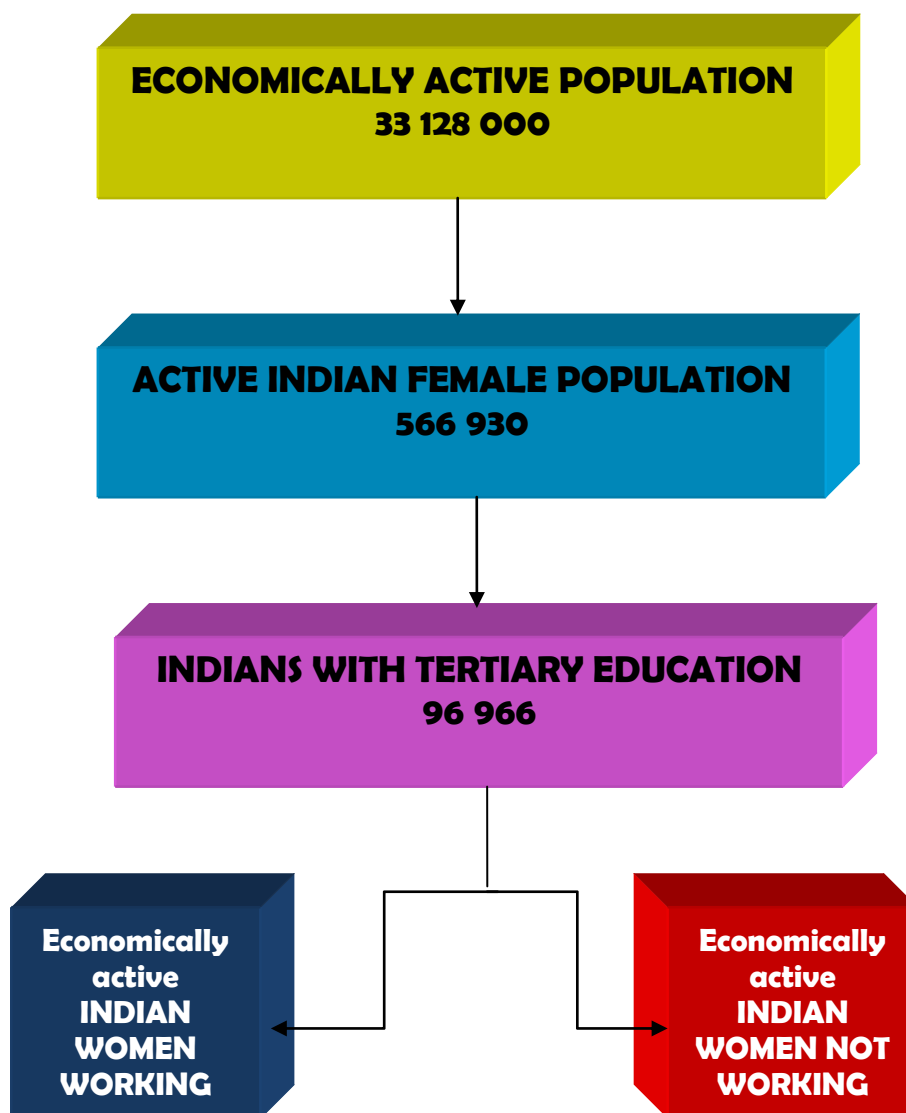
Source: Census 2011, STATS SA 2011, Carrim,2013

Statistics reveal that South Africa has an economically active population of 33 128 000 (see Table 1.1), therefore we can deduce that 13 577 000 of this population is employed and 18 078 000 are part of the labour force.

Table 1.1: Economically active population

	Oct-Dec 2011	Jul-Sep 2012	Oct-Dec 2012
	Thousand		
Population aged 15–64 yrs	32 670	33 018	33 128
Labour force	17 741	18 313	18 078
Employed	13 497	13 645	13 577
Formal sector (non-agricultural)	9 616	9 663	9 611
Informal sector (non-agricultural)	2 134	2 197	2 205
Agricultural	630	661	685
Private households	1 118	1 124	1 076

Source: Stats SA (2011)

However, according to the figures from the 2011 census, the economically active Indian female population in South Africa amounts to 566 390, only 96 969 have tertiary qualifications, while 17 227 have no schooling at all (Stats SA, 2011). Of the 96 969 professionally qualified Indian women, only 42 941 are in the workplace (Stats SA, 2011).

A total of 42 941 Indian females in the workplace do not have professional qualifications. This implies that most Indian women who have obtained tertiary qualifications do not pursue careers. As reported in Census 2011 (Stats SA, 2011), the recorded number of Indian women who currently are working is 43.9% (42 941), and this implies that an alarming 53.1% (54 025) of the Indian women are either not working or looking for employment.

Figure 1.2: Labour absorption

	Black African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White		Total
■ Men	40,8	52,0	64,9	75,7		46,0
☐ Women	28,8	42,3	43,9	62,5		33,6
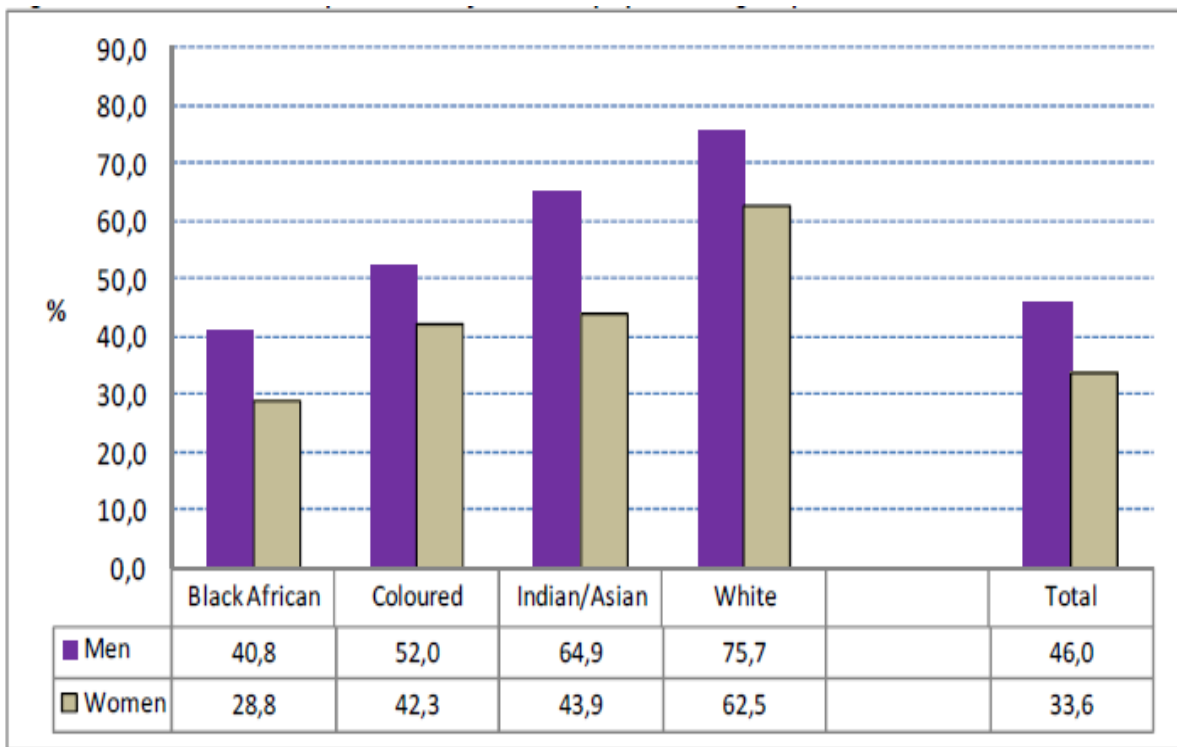
Source: Stats SA (2011)

Therefore, it is apparent that more than half of the Indian women who have obtained tertiary education have not entered the labour force, although gender equality and employment equity have removed the barriers to women's employment in post-apartheid South Africa. One reason for this low percentage of women who have not entered corporate South Africa could be that they are in the informal sector or married soon after completing their schooling and/or tertiary education (Carrim, 2013). The statistics provided above highlight a need for research to be conducted on the low entrance of educated Indian women into the workforce and form the basis of the current research study.

Although literature on the obstacles to Indian women's career advancement in western countries and in India abounds, not much research has been conducted on the factors that influence Indian women in their decisions not to pursue careers in other contexts, and how the intersectionality of their gender and cultural identities is negotiated (Buddhapriya, 2009; Mehta, 2009). Minimal research has been conducted on the African continent about why minority groups, such as Indian women, do not pursue careers after completing their tertiary education and how they negotiate the intersectionality of their gender and cultural identities.

In the well-known book, *Work and family – Allies or enemies*, Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) state that work and family conflict has serious consequences, as this ultimately will have an influence on the quality of family life and career achievement for both men and women. The authors further state that, specifically for women, there are several factors involved, such as limitations on career choice, opportunities for career development and achievement in their work role, and they will have to choose between two clearly opposite roles that might have an impact on educated women's decisions not to pursue careers. This is because career women have commitments and responsibilities to their family (Buddhapriya, 2009).

Previous research has addressed several factors that impact on educated Indian women's decisions not to pursue careers, and has also indicated how they have been a stumbling block for women in the Indian culture pursuing careers. According to research on Indian traditions, families are mostly patriarchal, with a joint family setup where mothers, grandparents and elders play an important role in the socialisation of daughters into culturally accepted behaviours (Inman, Howard & Beaumont, 2007). According to Walby (1990), the term patriarchy can be defined as a system of social formation and practice, in which the males totally control, overpower and take advantage of women. Although women in Indian culture are becoming more empowered, adjustment problems still exist in the minds of Indian men. Mathur (1996) says that the theory of patriarchal control states that husbands in the household develop standards of satisfaction for wholly controlling their spouse (wives) and children. Patriarchy has an impact on the family structure, and on the career aims and motivation of Indian women relating to work (Buddhapriya, 2009). Women in Indian culture will be more likely to enforce limits on their career ambitions or personal attainment for the sake of their families (Desai, 1996).

Traditional Indian culture has always been hierarchically structured and these hierarchies can include those in the family unit (i.e. of age, gender, hierarchy/ordinal position) and within the community (i.e. of class, ancestry, affluence, learning, career), and have been upheld by "a complex combination of custom, functionality and religious belief" (Chitnis, 1988, p. 83). The hierarchies can be based on factors within families (including age, gender and ordinal position) and within communities (for example lineage, wealth, learning, occupation). Indian society can be defined as a community in which the individual lives by "ascribed" instead of "achieved" statuses (Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000).

Therefore, if one does not conform to these expectations it is perceived as a disappointment and disgrace within the Indian community and/or family (Abraham, 1998; Rastogi & Therly, 2006).

In the traditional mind-set, the "ascribed" status implies gender roles that emphasise specific areas of influence for women and men, where women should be based in the home and men should work outside the home (Duncan, Peterson & Winter, 1997). Indian women have their roles set out within Indian culture, with the roles of wife and mother taking superiority over all other roles (Nangalia & Billet, 2009). Similarly there is the conception that the husband should support and secure the wife, while the role of a women as a mother and home maker is an essential mark of a good spouse (Goel, 2005). In Indian society, where there is low gender equality, spousal support is vital for women (Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999). Likewise, Rajadhyaksha and Bhatnagar (2000) state that males are more devoted to their jobs or having a career than women, and that they have specific role expectations and gender-based socialisation that make men reconcile themselves with working roles, whereas women reconcile themselves with family responsibility. Women are also normally identified through their family and household responsibility and obligations, and as a result will devote extra time, energy and resources to improve their performance in that role (Nangalia & Billet, 2009). Nanaglia and Billet (2009) say that, in the Indian culture, education is not seen as very important because it influences family roles, traditions and culture. For Indian women, their intention to continue their education depends on the course, attention, scope of commitment to studying and social support that will assist them to be motivated to engage purposefully in continuing their studies (Searle, Billett, & Behrens, 2005).

Indian women are not likely to sacrifice relationship for career, nor will they have long-term career goals, since they have family commitments (Egan, 2001, cited in Nangalia & Billet, 2009). Also, continuing to pursue careers could involve these women in troubled and opposed relationships with their families and workplaces, because they might have to divert their time, hard work and energy away from their family roles when they aspire toward managerial roles in organisations (Nangalia & Billet, 2009). A study conducted by Buddhapriya (2009) shows that the majority of women professionals state that family responsibility would influence their career decisions. Furthermore, Buddhapriya (2009) states that women cannot exploit their full potential and at times have to make career

trade-offs due to responsibilities and obligations towards the family. Therefore Indian women with careers will experience disapproval and rejection if they put their careers before their families.

Indian women also have various roles that may oppose each other. McCall and Simmons (1978) state that the significance family of negotiation in working out the difference in performance, relationships, and interconnections of roles within a group or interaction context. Also, every role has to function right, and must be able to rely on the reciprocity and exchange relation with various other roles that one might have (Stets & Burke, 2000). Stets and Burke state (2000) further that having a specific role identity means acting to accomplish the expectations of the role, organising and negotiating interaction with role partners, and manipulating the environment to control the resources for which the role has responsibility. Therefore this could have an impact on women's decisions when they need to negotiate factors such as pursuing a career or staying at home and looking after children, because that is what they are expected to do from their cultural and family perspectives. Punia (2005) states that, many studies have found that women admit that household factors make it complicated for them to move forward in their careers. Studies that were done among working mothers found that there is immense difficulty in combining the roles of being a career women and mother, and this often affects career growth (Buddhapriya, 2009; Knight, 1994).

Research done previously shows that Indian women's lives and their daily responsibilities of work and family problems are unlike those reported in Western societies (Sekaran, 1992). The consequences that women have to face include grave limitations on occupation, restricted opportunities for career progression and accomplishment in their work role, and the need to choose between these two opposing roles of having an active and rewarding profession, or marriage, children and a content family life (Buddhapriya, 2009). Geographical movement also is hazardous for career development and for family balance, and many women prefer to stay at one place due to family obligations (Bielby & Bielby, 1992). A key responsibility for women comprises their concern for the dependent members of the family unit and the community in which they stay (Wirth, 2001). Similarly, Abraham (1998) states that: the Indian concept of 'woman' varies according to region, religion, class and ethnic group, but that the chief identity of woman as wife and mother is fairly unified. However, families placed much stress on what the wife is expected to do in

order to satisfy her husband and believe that, if the wife adheres to the traditional female gender expectations, then the husband would be happy. Therefore the emphasis is on what 'she' should be, not on what 'he' should be (Mehta, 2009).

Many cultural studies theorists have stated that identity is problematic (Ang, 2001; Brah, 1996; Hall, 1989). Identity is a vague concept because it is in a constant state of negotiation and interpretation (Diggins, 2010). Therefore one can further state that it is "through intersectionality that we may be able to consider our inter subjectivities; that the categories through which we are defined are interlocked in constant negotiation; and that who we are is never a pre-given reality, but constructed, performed, enacted, and filtered through structured broad formations" (Diggins, 2010, p. 1). The expectation of mothers comes from external and inner sources. Barbara Welter in her article The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860 provides a range of virtues women should have: "The attributes of True Womanhood, by which a woman judged herself and was judged by her husband, her neighbours and society could be divided into four cardinal virtues - piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" (Welter, p. 152).

The number of mothers who have been employed in the last few years has increased significantly, and the role of women as employees has been transformed. However, it appears that the responsibility of being a mother and wife has not altered. Also, women's roles remain unchanged and they are still expected by their husbands to take responsibility for all household chores, consequently putting strain on the time that they have to themselves (Perkins & DeMeis, 1996). Mederer (1993) states that women's perception of the roles they have still affect how they feel about society's expectations, as well as their obligations towards their children and their homes.

According to Zambrana, Hurst, Hite and Faap (1979), working during the first years of a child's life (except due to financial reasons) is viewed negatively. Similarly, a mother who works out of choice and not necessity during the first few years of a child's life is considered to have failed not only her child (Fraiberg, 1977), but also herself (Zambrana et al., 1979). A lot of women leave their jobs when they become mothers because they feel guilty about going back to work (Zanella, 2010). Motherhood includes normative beliefs of culturally assigned roles and how mothers should act, which eventually will have an impact on maternal labour force participation (LFP), which forms the basis of this study.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study will aim to answer the question why Indian women pursue tertiary education but do not pursue careers thereafter, and how they negotiate the intersection of their gender and cultural identities. In many societies, work-life conflict seems to be relatively high, especially in the case of mothers in Indian culture (Buddhapriya, 2009). Various studies show evidence that women experience work-family conflicts for the reason that, because of their involvement with their family, it is very risky and challenging for educated women, particularly Indian women, to pursue careers (Buddhapriya, 2009). This study will focus on the cultural restraints and responsibilities that the Indian tradition places on women, and the reasons why educated Indian women, particularly mothers in South Africa, pursue tertiary education but do not enter the workforce. This study will also aim to show how educated Indian mothers who are not working negotiate their gender and cultural identities. This study therefore will aim to address those issues that were not taken into account previously.

1.3   PURPOSE STATEMENT

The main purpose of this study was to determine the factors that have an impact on the decisions of educated Indian women in South Africa who are not pursuing careers and how they negotiate the intersection of their gender and cultural identities in the process.

1.4   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study will aim to achieve the following specific research objectives:

- To ascertain the reasons why Indian women are allowed to pursue tertiary education.
- To investigate if husbands play a role in the decision of educated Indian women not to pursue a career.
- To investigate if fathers play a role in the decision of educated Indian women not to pursue a career.
- To investigate the role of extended family (uncles, aunties, in-laws) in the decision of educated Indian women not to pursue a career.

- To investigate the role of the community in the decision of educated Indian women not to pursue a career.
- To identify traditional gender role expectations of women in the Indian culture and their impact on women's career decisions.
- To understand the impact that family responsibilities have on educated Indian women's decision not to pursue a career.
- To understand how Indian women negotiate the intersection of their gender, cultural and religious identities and settle down in traditional roles.

1.5   METHODOLOGY

Methodology refers to the means by which data is collected and organised in the course of a research study (Mouton, 1996; Polit & Hungler, 1999). It is also known as the blueprint for conducting the study (Burns & Grove, 1998).

This research study used qualitative research, which was useful in developing explanations of social phenomena and assisted me in understanding the world in which we live and why things are the way they are – therefore to understand the reasons why educated Indian women are not pursuing careers (Hancock, 1998). Hancock (1998, p. 2) states that qualitative research has to do with the social aspects of our world and tries to find to answer questions about:

- The reason behind people's behaviour.
- The driving force behind people's attitudes.
- The impact of a person's immediate environment.
- The development of culture.
- The variations amongst social groups

I used an epistemological interpretive approach that will give deep insight into "the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). Therefore I presume that reality is socially created and that I am the vehicle, through which this reality is discovered, namely the reasons why Indian women are not pursuing careers (Cavana, Delahaye, & Sekaran, 2001; Walsham, 1995). Specifically, I will use the life story approach.

Life stories are a biographical technique used to "examine how experience is assigned meaning" (Wallace, 1994, p. 137). Life stories generally cover a person's entire life and will assist me to get a holistic view of the individual that is being studied (Wallace, 1994). The life story approach is practical in obtaining knowledge about educated Indian women in order to gain a better perspective of how they view themselves. The life story approach also is also helpful in identifying cultural patterns that may have influenced educated Indian throughout their lives and which govern various decisions they have made (Atkinson, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

The study was separated into two parts. The first part was the pilot study, which informed the rest of the study.

In the course of the pilot study, the women alluded extensively to their cultural backgrounds. This allowed me to generate questions relating to the cultural, family and religious backgrounds of educated Indian women not pursuing careers. The pilot study also allowed me to gain an understanding of the significance of Indian culture, values and traditions in the lives of educated Indian women.

In the second part of the study, life story interviews were conducted with educated Indian women not pursuing careers.

The interview approach allowed the women to tell their life stories, and helped to provide an understanding of the backgrounds of these women and their decisions that led them to give up their careers.

1.6   ACADEMIC VALUE AND INTENDED CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

While extensive research has been undertaken on Indian women, the existing literature focuses mainly on the barriers that affect the career advancement of Indian women. Little research has been conducted on the reasons why Indian women pursue tertiary education but do not enter the workforce and how they negotiate the intersection of their gender, cultural and religious identities. Therefore, this study makes a theoretical contribution and conveys new knowledge by identifying factors that inhibit Indian women from pursuing

careers, and elements of their identity negotiation in the process. The research project also aimed to emphasise the extent and impact of the cultural and gender roles that educated Indian women have to deal with. This will benefit future researchers, the state as well as other organisations by helping them to understand that, even though Indian women have obtained tertiary qualifications, it is still difficult for organisations to fill the quotas that are required by the Employment Equity Act due to the barriers that face educated Indian women. This study will also assist top management in understanding the skills shortage of this minority group and create a better understanding of the reasons why Indian women decide not to pursue careers.

1.7   LIMITATIONS

The study has numerous limitations that are associated with the background, constructs and theoretical perspectives of the study. Firstly, the study was limited to educated Indian women in South Africa currently not pursuing careers; other races of educated women who are not pursuing careers will not be studied. The study focused on educated Muslim and Hindu women who are not pursuing careers, as these subgroups are in the majority compared to other religious groups. Also, the study focused on self-reported reasons why educated Indian women are not pursuing careers and excluded the opinions of other role players, such as fathers, husbands, mothers-in-law, etc. The study also focused only on educated Indian women who have completed their tertiary education. Hence, those who dropped out of tertiary education were not studied. Finally, only factors that inhibit educated Indian women from pursuing careers were consulted; other factors, such as the glass ceiling, sexual harassment and organisational culture, which are organisational barriers to women's advancement, were not investigated.

1.8   ASSUMPTIONS

This study makes certain assumptions about the reasons why educated Indian women are not pursuing careers, and these are discussed below:

- Indian culture has an impact on Indian women's decisions not to pursue careers.
- Traditional gender roles are one reason why educated Indian women do not pursue careers.

- Taking care of children is a reason why educated Indian women do not pursue careers.
- Religion will have an impact on women's decisions not to pursue careers.
- Family structures can have an impact on Indian women's decisions not to pursue careers.
- Identity negotiation takes place in relation to gender, cultural and religious identities. Work-life conflict will have an impact on Indian women not pursuing careers.

1.9   DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Below is a list of terms and their definitions as they are related to the study. These will be discussed further in the literature review in the next section.

1.9.1   Culture

Hofstede (1980, pp. 21-23) considers culture to be the agreed upon behaviour of certain groups, and examines the ways in which these behaviours are passed on from generation to generation. Culture is constantly in flux, as it is constantly being reinvented by the existing members of that group (Hall, 1976, p. 16).

1.9.2   Religion

Religion thrives in social surroundings and is a form of representation that imposes both negative and positive emotions and states of mind on the group (Durkheim, 1954).

1.9.3   Joint families

Joint families are traditional families that are living jointly and inclusive of members of various generations (Bahadur & Dhawan, 2008, p.11).

1.9.4   Nuclear family

A nuclear family is a family that consists of a man, his wife and their children, and in these types of families the concept of " 'me, my wife and my children' with no place for others is alarming" (Bahadur & Dhawan, 2008, p.75).

1.9.5 Patriarchy

Patriarchy is a system of social structures and practice in which men totally control, overpower and take advantage of women (Walby, 1990).

1.9.6 Egalitarianism

Egalitarianism is "the belief that all people are of equal worth and should be treated equally in society" (Schwartz, 2001, p. 65).

1.9.7 Identity

Alvesson et al.'s (2008, p. 5) definition of identity is adopted in this study. They state that "identity refers to subjective meanings and experience, to our ongoing efforts to address the twin questions, 'Who am I?' and – by implication – 'how should I act?'"

1.9.8 Identity work

According to Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003, p. 1165), identity work occurs when individuals are "engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness".

1.9.9 Intersectionaility

The term "intersectionality" was coined by Crenshaw (1989) to illustrate how race and gender intersect and may result in the oppression of black women.

1.10 OVERVIEW OF THESIS

The structure of the rest of the study is set out below:

Chapter 2 consists of the literature review.

Chapter 3 describes the research method used in the study and the methodological choices made to pursue the research questions.

Chapter 4 is the heartbeat of the study, and contains the findings of the research.

Chapter 5 this chapter discusses the key results of the study in comparison with prior literature.

Chapter 6 this chapter discusses the significance and contribution of the current study. It also suggests what the implications of the study may be for future research.

In **Chapter 7** I reflect upon my experiences and the journey towards compiling my thesis.

CHAPTER 2:
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The new and independent roles of women have been placed in the spotlight over the past few years. The place of women has always been questioned in terms of their purpose and natures; however, many of the existing presumptions regarding women have been frequently frowned upon by feminists (Goldstien, 1972, cited in Dhawan, 2005). As a result of this new-found retaliation, countries such as India have altered their laws, attitudes, roles, developments in society and statutes regarding woman. Basharat (2009) further states that the position of the typical Indian woman has been revitalised due to certain entities, namely those belonging to the various facets of the country.

Consequently, the desire for independence has increased and the cliché title of homemaker and budding wife has departed, opening up the new empowered role of career woman, and thus contributing to her role as patriotic citizen (Liddle & Joshi, 1986). As women continue to push forward into the world of work, there is little research regarding the impact of this on women's behaviour, values or attitudes and identities (Johnson, 1992, cited in Dhawan, 2005). However, as a result of the Employment Equity Act of 1988, preference has been given to those who were previously undermined (April & Dreyer, 2005).

Thus a lot of educated Indian women are not entering the workforce because of these cultural restrictions that limit them. The above presents a platform from which the topic has been viewed previously and places emphasis on various factors identified from several sources in the literature that have an impact on educated women's decisions not to pursue careers. Each aspect will be discussed in detail. Figure 2.1 displays factors at various levels that have an impact on women's decisions.

Figure 2.1: Factors impacting on women's decisions not to pursue careers.

2.2   MACRO-LEVEL – EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Currently the representation of South African black society, especially women of all races, is sitting at a dismally low stance as a result of the country's past rules of segregation (Kgapola, 2008). Similarly, Ntuli (2007) states that black South African women have suffered greatly at the hands of this system and have consequently been disadvantaged in terms of the labour market. Mello and Phago (2007) further state that, due to the stigma of the past race and gender classifications, women have been defined as inferior to men, are considered the minority, and have been marginalised and treated with contempt. To prove the authenticity of this notion, the findings in a report by the Commission on Gender Equality (2000) in South Africa indicate that, between 1994 and 1999, South African society has usually favoured men, and wanted women to "be subordinate to men, have less power, less opportunities, less access to resources than men" (cited in Mello &

Phago, 2007). However, within the legislative context, the Employment Equity Act of 1988 has provided a platform from which access to opportunities in the workplace has been in favour of those who were formerly disadvantaged (April and Dreyer, 2005).

Since 1994 and the collapse of apartheid, South Africa has been focused on the elimination of discrimination (Greeff & Nel, 2003; Thomas, 2003), and the constitutional government brought in fundamental constitutional changes to increase women's access to the labour market and to make sure that there are equal opportunities for the female demographic (Ntuli, 2003; Van der Westhuizen et al., 2007).

To facilitate this process, various laws have been passed, particularly those addressing various inequalities that existed in education and in the workplace (Esterhuizen, 2008). The various laws that have been implemented on a macro-level are the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, the Employment Equity Act no 5 of 1998, the Skills Development Act of 1998, the Promotion of Equity and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act no 4 of 2000, the Preferential Procurement Act no 5 of 2000, and the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003 (Esterhuizen, 2008). For the purpose of this study, the Employment Equity Act no 5 of 1998 will be looked at in further detail because the most significant of these legislations in the workplace (Greeff & Nel, 2003; Portnoi, 2003).

Previously, South African women of all races were excluded from reaching their full economic potential because of legislative discrimination (James et al., 2006). Despite the advancements in female literacy, the growth in the economy and the growing diligence of women, the ratio of men to women still exceeds the appropriate level (Yakubu, 2010). Laws were also introduced to guide how women should be treated in the labour market (Bhorat et al., 2001), such as the Employment Equity Act of 1998. The term 'employment equity' has always dominated the business arena (Erasmus, Loedolff, Mda & Nel, 2007). These laws were implemented to restore human dignity in the world of work.

The Employment Equity Act (1998) deals with the "promotion of equal opportunity, fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination; and implementation of a affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups, in order to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce" (Jongens, 2006).

These strategies assisted in driving the process of enhanced integration of women into the labour market after apartheid in South Africa (Posel & Casale, 2003).

It is therefore important for organisations to comply with the regulations of this act, otherwise penalties for non-compliance, such as fines, will be levied (Employment Equity Report, 2003; Maritz, 2002; Pela, 2002; Wadula, 2004). So organisations are continuously trying to achieve equitable representation of the designated groups in all occupational categories specified by the labour legislation, such as by the Employment Equity Act no 55 of 1998 (Cilliers & Stone, 2005; Human, 1996; Mdladlana, 2000; Pandor, 2005). Reports point out that the progress in achieving employment equity has been extremely slow and several organisations in South Africa have not achieved their targets (Employment Equity Report, 2003; Healy, 2004; Cilliers & Stone, 2005; Human, 1996; Mdladlana, 2000; Pandor, 2005).

In relation to this study on how organisations will reach their targets if many Indian women pursue tertiary education and do not go into workplace, a great deal of legislation has been implemented to protect women from discrimination and encourage them to work. But if Indian women are not going into the workplace, it is not clear how this will help organisations achieve their numerical targets.

2.3   CULTURE, VALUES AND RELIGIONS

Weaver (1999) culture is like an iceberg. The tip of the iceberg is the smallest part and most of the iceberg is submerged and the same is true for a culture. The author uses this comparison as he believes that the intrapersonal features of a person's culture – all those innate features conditioned into them through family and external influences – are often unseen by outsiders. These external facets include the person's way of thinking and perceiving, as well as his/her values and beliefs that are learned automatically while growing up in a particular culture (see Figure 2.2). These values and beliefs determine most behaviour. Therefore, in this section, I will discuss culture, values and traditions that might be factors inhibiting educated Indian women from pursuing careers.

Figure 2.2: Iceberg
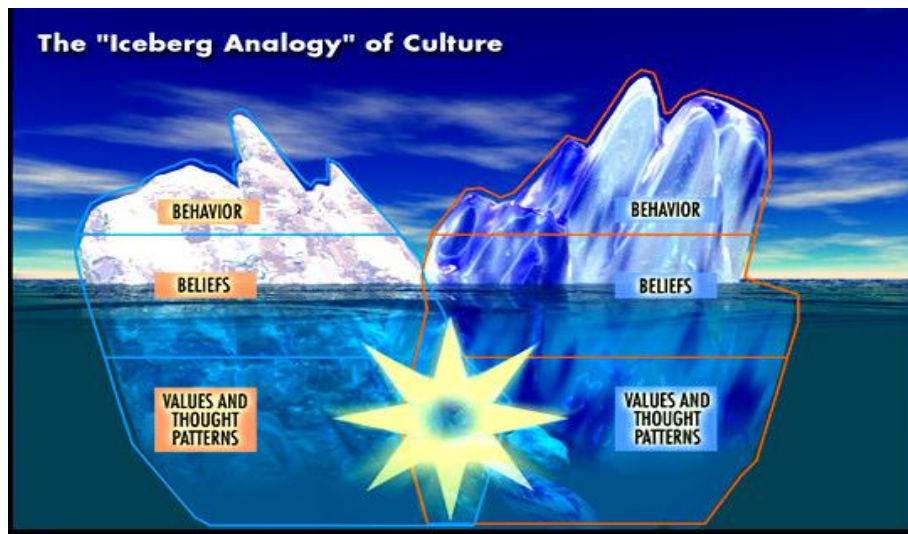
Source: Weaver, 1999

2.3.1   Culture

"In principle ... there is a generalized framework that underlies the more apparent and striking facts of cultural relativity. All cultures constitute so many somewhat distinct answers to essentially the same questions posed by human biology and by the generalities of the human situation.... Every society's patterns for living must provide approved and sanctioned ways for dealing with such universal circumstances as the existence of two sexes; the helplessness of infants; the need for satisfaction of the elementary biological requirements such as food, warmth, and sex; the presence of individuals of different ages and of differing physical and other capacities" (Kluckhohn, 1962, p. 317-318).

In the 1870s, Edward Tylor first described culture as a holistic knowledge unit that contained man's numerous weapons for survival as a social affiliate. Hofstede (2009) states that: culture is the joint indoctrination of a group of people who acquire certain mannerisms that differentiate them from other groups. He further states that it is always a combined phenomenon, but it can be connected to unlike collectives.

Hofstede (1980) states that there are various factors in terms of which cultures of diverse countries differ; these are collectivism-individualism, power distance, masculinity-femininity and uncertainty avoidance. The Indian cultures prove to be the most complex,

as there tends to be much disunity regarding specific beliefs and practices. However, the idea of family and its importance is maintained in all of them (Adams, 2009; Hill, 2003).

For the purpose of this study, the Indian women are living in South Africa, but are strongly embedded in cultural and religious values.

Hofstede's dimensions will be explained below (Soares et al., 2006, p. 280).

Power distance – is the acceptance by less prominent members of the institute or workplace establishment (like the family) that power is dispersed disproportionately. It suggests that a society's level of disparity is permitted by the group as much as by those that lead. It influences the ordinal positions in the family, as well as being in a dependent relationship in the family. Therefore, in Indian culture, power distance is an important aspect that arises from family structures that can be a major factor for women.

Individualism vs. collectivism – refers to the way in which relationships have been designed according to the expectations of a culture. The trend in individualistic societies is that the individual only concentrates his/her efforts on the protection of oneself and his/her close family. In collectivistic cultures, individuals are part of clusters that take care of each other in exchange for devotion and loyalty towards the group. In the Indian culture, joint or extended families continue to protect each other in exchange for wholehearted loyalty. Therefore this dimension is a tremendously important one, regarding all cultures. Traditionally, Indian culture is a collective and high-context culture in which a women's role is to stay home and take responsibility for nurturing the children while men work outside the house.

Masculinity and femininity – relates to the division of responsibility between the genders, which is an important issue in any society. Adams (2009) states that mothers in Indian culture are seen as the nurturing parents, while the male figure, which is either the father or grandfather, is the dominating figure in the household who needs to be obeyed. This could influence women not to pursue careers because they have predefined roles.

Uncertainty avoidance – deals with a society's lenience for uncertainty and ambiguity; it ultimately refers to man's search for truth (Hofstede, 1991). These types of cultures try to

eliminate the possibility of this occurrence and thus make use of rigid rules and regulations, and security and safety initiatives, and, on the idealistic and religious level, of a belief in absolute Truth: "there can only be one Truth and we have it" (Jha, 2010). In Indian culture, the two subgroups of religion could also oppose women entering the labour market because of laws and rules for women in the specific religion.

Therefore these differences in the different dimensions can be inhibiting factors for Indian mothers.

2.3.2 Indian values

Values are the guiding principles of life that contribute to the all-round development of an individual (Shelly & Jain, 2012). Values also add a good quality to life and should also contribute to the welfare of the family, the community and the nation (Pathania, 2011). Values are described as ideals upon which silent consent from the group has been reached, which have been practiced for years and which guide the group towards what is right and acceptable (Mead, 1994, p. 7). Hill (2003) states that the values and norms of a culture do not come about in a perfectly constructed manner, but are rather the outcome of various factors, namely political and economic philosophy, the social structure of a country, religious beliefs, language and level of education over time (see Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3 Culture norm and value system
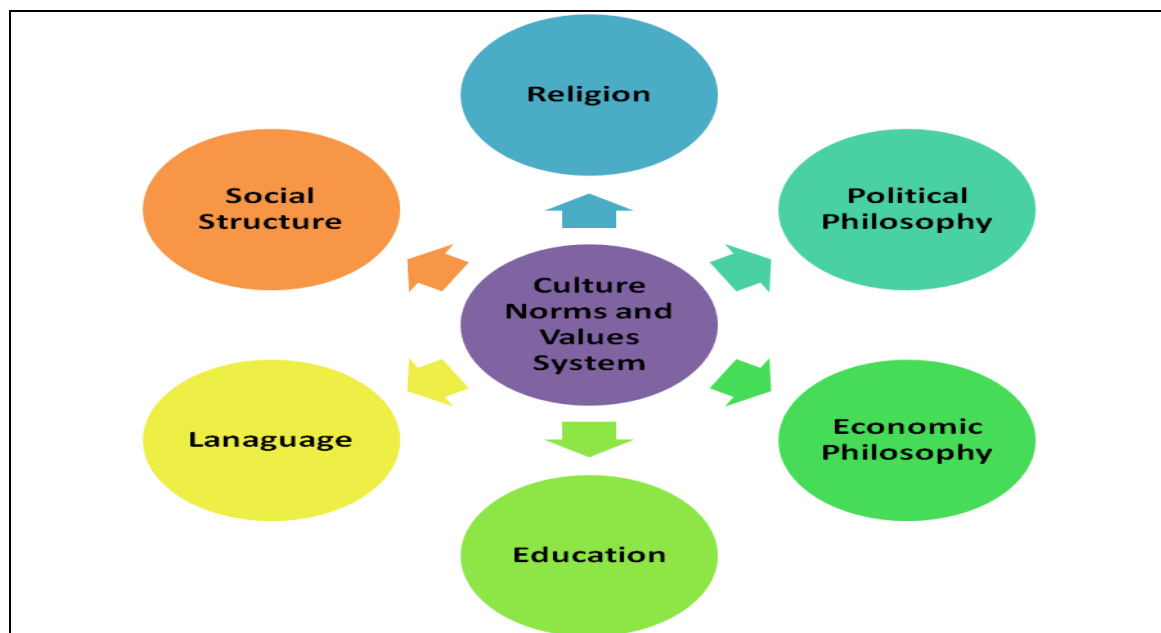
Source: Hill (2003, p. 91)

The study of culture is concerned with a comprehensive examination of factors such as the language, religion, knowledge, laws, art, music, work patterns, social customs, food, etc. of a society. In fact, culture includes everything that reflects the society's personality. Therefore, culture is learned as a result of social experiences. In the course of growing up, children acquire culture through formal, informal and technical learning of a set of beliefs, values, norms and customs. In culture, the values that are the cultural values are enduring beliefs that a given behaviour is desired or good. Value system refers to the total set of values and the relative importance culture places on them. Values assist us in understanding the reasons behind certain social behaviours (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). Due to the close association between values and behaviour, Sinha (1990) states that operative values are close to social norms

Indian values and enduring beliefs serve as a standard that guide behaviour across situations and over time (Joshi & Gupta, 2012). Joshi & Gupta (2012) state that values are so ingrained that most people are not aware of them and individuals often have difficulty describing them. The Indian value system refers to the total set of values and the importance placed on relatives by the culture (Joshi & Gupta, 2012).

Traditionally, families in the Indian culture have largely been influenced by patriarchal structures and family systems, with parents and elders in the family playing an essential role in moulding young children to adhere to culturally expected behaviours. Within the Indian culture, the parents play the role of dictator who stresses academic achievement and the rearing of offspring who acknowledge and appreciate their family bonds. In addition, group affiliations should be considered in this culture (Jambunathan & Counselman, 2002; Tewari, Inman, & Sandhu, 2003).

Schwartz (2005) states that values, particularly in the Indian culture, include the following:

- **Values are accompanied by change.**
- **Values refer to desirable goals that motivate action**.
- **Values surpass defined** circumstances (e.g. submission and truthfulness are values that are relevant to all aspects of one's life).
- **Values serve as a guideline that assists people in their daily evaluations.**

- **Values are ordered by importance** relative to one another to form a system of priorities. This hierarchical feature also distinguishes values from norms and attitudes.
- **Values show members what is expected of them** (Schwartz, 1992, 1996; Tetlock, 1986).

The relationship between mother and child constructs bonds and attachment that encourage other relationships that the child has with its father and his or her siblings (Bailur, 2006, p. 1). These attachments develop throughout one's life, and tight family relationship greatly influence the child's external relationships. Therefore Bailur (2006) states that parents are the ones responsible for primarily developing the traits of a child that eventually will affect his/her relationships with others. Durvasula and Mylvaganam (1994, p. 99) state that, within the Indian culture, "the goal of parenting is not to provide the children with sufficient skills to leave the family but to instill a sense of obligation and duty" to the family.

Women in particular are reliant and dependent at every step of the way during their life – firstly, before marriage on her father, after marriage on her husband, and lastly on her son (Segal, 1998). Before birth the role a child is required to play is already defined for him/her, therefore the notion of "needing to find one's self" is a foreign entity (Ahmed, 1999). An Indian woman's gender role as homemaker, wife, mother and daughter is therefore culturally constructed and predetermined (Merali, 2008). Women are conditioned from birth to fulfil designated roles, including that of being the obedient wife, submissive daughter-in-law and affectionate mother, as well as happily compliant with being asked to live with her in-laws (Choudhry, 2001). Within the Indian culture, these assigned roles become part of the parents' gender and cultural identities, which they impart on future generations (Tajfel, 1981).

Cultural values (e.g. autonomy, affluence, safety) form the foundations that are used to notify us about what is right and what is wrong in various situations (Schwartz, 1999, p. 25). Schwartz (1999) states that: the hierarchy of social institutions (e.g. the relatives, edification, monetary, secular, spiritual systems) and their degrees of preference express the priorities for each culture.

2.3.3 Religion

"Indians generally see themselves as a single unit within a broad SA context - as they have done historically during apartheid - and this is primarily because of apartheid - for no other cultural reason. They however, do not see themselves as a single unit within their own community. For instance an Indian will often describe another Indian in conversation as a Muslim, Gujerati or Hindi person. There are very clear groupings and while there is intermingling, there is still a very clear level of separation on a social level" (Jenkins, 2007, p. 1).

Traditional beliefs have their origins in Hinduism, and the culture pervades across Indians irrespective of families' and communities' current religious faith. In sum, the societal context that influences the thinking on the role of Indian women goes beyond religion and geography and is closely linked to Hinduism (Nangalia & Billet, 2009). Indian culture is influenced by many other cultures and draws from all facets of the country's diversity. Even amongst Hindus there are several sects, and culture is not uniform, as only the better portion of the culture is being broadcast while the minorities are neglected. Religion, especially Hinduism, has had a major impact on Indian society and culture and currently the ideals of the Hindu sect dominate the landscape of Indian culture (Ibrahim, Ohnishi, & Sandhu, 1997). We are constantly being bombarded by religious beliefs. Therefore the role it plays in our lives can never be underestimated (Hommel & Colzato, 2010, p. 596). Hommel and Colzato (2010, p.597) further states that, from a psychological point of view, the relationship between religion and the individual raises a lot of questions, such as why so many people are interested in having and sharing particular religious beliefs, assumptions, and opinions, and how these affect one's views and day-to-day decision making.

South Africa is indeed a rainbow nation that enjoys the fruits of numerous cultural roots and that has, without a shadow of doubt, paved the way towards a more prosperous and optimistic platform for its citizens since 1994 (Anonymous). Similarly, Das (2006) states that these various groups are what contribute towards the major sources of cultural diversity. Muslims and Hindus are studied for the purpose of this research, as they are the major religious group after Christianity in South Africa, and therefore these two sub-groups will be the participants for the proposed study.

Even today it can be deduced that religion plays a prominent role in the lives of many individuals across the globe. Unfortunately, however, in many a religion, woman are still oppressed and have not experienced the same religious rights as that of men (Shukla-Bhatt, 2008). Naik (n.d) states that being a mere observer of a religion is not sufficient, as one may miss out on many of the crucial pinnacles of the religion, as in many instances even stern observers are oblivious to certain practices pertaining to their religion. The most credible source for understanding any religion would therefore be their prescribed scriptures, which in this instance would be the Glorious Qur'aan, belonging to the Muslim religion, and the Bhagvad Gita, belonging to the Hindu religion (Naik, n.d).

Basharat (2009) states that, although women, both Muslim and Hindu, have endured numerous difficulties while in the presence of their male counterparts, Muslim women in Islam have had the privilege of a special ruling regarding the maintenance of their virtue, rights and status

2.3.3.1   *Hindu women*

"Her father protects (her) in childhood, her husband protects (her) in youth and sons protect (her) in old age, a woman is never fit for independence" (Manusmriti, 9.3)

Hinduism is considerably old and dates back some 5 000 years (Sunderlall, 2005, p. 4). Hindus believe God to be formless but adored in every form, whilst Islam adheres strictly to the form (Ravishankar, 2002, p. 1-2).

Hindus regard the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Itihaas, Bhagvad Gita, Mahâbhârata, Râmâyana, Âgamasand and the Puranas as sacred and authentic. Scholars of Hinduism refer to adherents as Sanatana Dharma, which means 'eternal religion', or Vedic Dharma, meaning 'religion of the Vedas'. The underlying presupposition in Hinduism is the presence of God in nature. Since everything is a manifestation of the divine, it is left to a particular society or individual to select a preferred god. This explains the boundless tolerance that Hinduism shows towards every conceivable form of religious belief and practice (Griswold, 1912, pp. 166-167).

2.3.3.2 _Women in Hindu religion_

Hinduism is a complex religion that is meant to consume the very being belonging to it. Women are given a special status, as they are viewed as the people who keep the family afloat – a concept that is imperative to this religion (Van Ham, 2008). According to Jayaram (2000), in today's rapidly changing environment the Hindu society is trying to redefine the roles of the family and society. He further states that a lot needs to be done economically and socially, because women in Hindu culture suffer from gender role bias.

Women are considered to possess contrasting personalities that feature as both positive and negative qualities. Therefore "the male controls the female; Nature is controlled by Culture" (Wadley, 1977, pp. 115-116). According to Van Ham (2008, p. 20), nature is governed by culture or society in exactly the same way men attempt to overpower women. It is said that, before marriage, the female is controlled by her father, and when she is married she is controlled by her spouse.

Women's roles are well defined in Hindu law books such as the Dharma-Sastras, however basic rules of women are in the in the Laws of Manu (200 C.E.) In Hinduism, the duty of culturally educating women and enduring childbirth becomes the duty of the mother (Van Ham, 2008). It is also stated in Hindu culture that women are regarded with the highest esteem in their roles as wives and mothers. In addition, the duties attached to being a wife becomes the very essence of her being (Rambachan, 2001). According to the Laws of Manu, "In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons: a woman must never be independent….Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure (elsewhere), or devoid of good qualities, (yet) a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife…" (Basharat, 2009, p. 243). The stages of a Hindu woman's life revolve around being of a marriageable age, married life and widowhood (Young, 1994, p. 69).

In an attempt to maintain control, the Hindu man insists that the woman keep track of the home, which he has established and upholds. In Hindu scriptures, the description of a good wife is as follows: a female whose mind, speech and body are kept in helplessness, acquires high notoriety in this world, and, in the next, the same abode with her husband (David & Vera, 1960). Hindu women are subjected to numerous roles, which are both of a

positive and negative nature. On the one hand they are viewed as fertile, compassionate caregivers, yet on the other hand they can be viewed as aggressive, cruel destroyers (Wadley, 1977).

According to the Laws of Manu, the duties and obligations of women are (Rambachan, 2001, p. 18):

- No matter her age, she will never be given authority in the household.
- During the various stages of her life she is either dominated by her father, husband or sons.
- Nothing can be done without her husband's permission and the more she submits to him, the higher her abode in the Hereafter.

The Laws of Manu further state that,

"*Day and night, women must be kept in dependency by the males of their (families), and if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept under one's control….Through their passion for men, through their mutable temper, through their natural heartlessness, they become disloyal towards their husbands, however carefully they are guarded in this world. Knowing their disposition, which the Lord of creatures laid in them at the creation, to be such, (every) man should most strenuously exert him to guard them*" (Basharat, 2000, p.243).

Furthermore, in the Vedic scripture, Hindu women are placed in extremely precarious positions, as they could be replaced at any time and in this sense possess no form of real security. Thus, a Hindu woman is inevitably under the control of her husband or male relatives, but has to show poise, as this is considered the epitome of womanhood (Basharat, 2000).

2.3.4   Islam

Islam originated in Saudi Arabia in the sixth century. Islam is a word of Arabic origin, namely 'Salm', which means peace and submitting your will to Allah – the Almighty God. In short, Islam means peace acquired by submitting your will to Allah (SWT) (Naik, 2007).

The sacred book for Muslims is the , and the Qur'aan is unequivocally accepted by Muslims as the final message of God, which contains a socio-political, economic and legal system based on canonical (Shariah) prescriptions to guide human behaviour at the micro-, meso- and macro-levels of society (Khan, 2013).

2.3.4.1   *Muslim women*

The first group of women to receive an eminent position are those belonging to the Muslim religion. The Qur'aan, their prescribed book, lists many rules and instances through which women should be honoured. The exact verses of the sacred Qur'aan deal will males and females, with either their bodily differences or the role that they have in society safeguarding the moral fibre of Islam. Aquil (2011) states that, in Islam, women are given rights of inheritance, property ownership, divorce and even education, thereby, elevating their status. Even in the early days of Islam, women practised their rights with encouragement from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

According to Mejia (2007), the rights of Muslim women have been the topic of discussion and debate over the past few eras, and with good reason. She states that Islamic law (*Shariah*) is considered by a lot of people to be patriarchal and particularly oppressive to women, and yet there many Muslim women who have defended their religion by claiming that Islam is the guarantor par excellence of women's rights. Explaining the status and the role of women, the Glorious Qur'aan elaborates on three aspects – individual, familial and social.

Islam tries to ensure equality amongst all, which includes the following aspects: (Burghul, 2010, p. 8):

- **Right to life:** The Most High says: "When the baby girl buried alive is asked for what sins he was killed"
- **Right to self-determination:** The Commander of the Faithful (PBUH) says there is no difference between men and women, "There is no slave but you and God has made you free".
- **Right to knowledge:** A hadith of the Prophet of God (PBUH) accepted by all Muslims says, "Acquiring knowledge is the duty of all Muslims, both men and women".

- **Right to work:** In the Holy Qur'aan, the Most High says, "Do not covet what God has given to some of you more than others – men have the portion they have earned; and women the portion they have earned – you should rather ask God for some of His bounty: He has full knowledge of everything".

2.3.4.2 *Muslim women's rights to employment*

Costa (2005) states that there is no firm resolution or confirmation that forbids a woman from seeking employment, especially if she will be considered an asset to her society. Similarly, Islam secures women's rights in education and work (Osaman, n.d). Also, there is no restriction in Islam on benefitting from woman's exceptional talent in any field (Costa, 2005, p. 19).

Islam does not prohibit women from working outside the home, so long as her external work does not interfere with her household chores and obligations, nor lower her dignity (Jawad, 1998). Stowasser (1994, p. 61) states that a Muslim woman working outside her home is religiously acceptable: "This Qur'anic story, then here serves as scripturalistic proof that Muslim women's work outside of the home is religiously acceptable only as long as it is truly unavoidable and does not entail association with strangers (that is, non-related males)."

Throughout the ages, Muslim women have been represented in all areas; they were scholars, rulers, doctors, writers and poets, and it is not strange that education is important in Muslim women's' lives (Aquil, 2009). A reviewer of the Qur'aan, historian and jurist al-Tabari (d. 923), as well as the stupendous jurist of al-AndalusIbn-Hazm (d. 1064) cited in Osman(n.d), states that a women can be a judge if she is experienced for the position, and Muslim history has witnessed many women who were noteworthy and/or occupied leading positions. There are several cases of well-known women in Muslim history, such as Shajarat al-Durr, who ruled Egypt in 1250, and Labna of Cordoba, who was a well-known mathematician in the 10th century (Al-Hassani, 2010).

Furthermore, the religion does not force women into accepting the role of primary caregiver, despite her natural instinct to do so. Islam does not limit the role of parenthood to mothers only, but places emphasis on both men's and women's responsibility to provide

and care for their families (Aquil, 2011). Aquil (2011) states that Islam reveres the biological function of mothering as a distinction between men and women, but characterises this as a psychological and social limitation for women, and since not all women will get married or have children, to impound a women to this purpose would be unreasonable. The misconception that Islam oppresses women, especially in terms of work and home, stems mainly from the lack of research pertaining to the role of women. Fadlallah (cited in Burghul, 2010, p.9) says

In this way, we see how the Qur'aan talks both positively and negatively about men and women in their active lives (without considering fatherhood, motherhood and marriage) without giving men a more important or more critical role than women. Neither of them is relieved of the responsibilities which arise from the performance of their private roles, namely motherhood, fatherhood and matrimony. It is perhaps their public roles which give their private roles their human or epistolary content by positive affecting human thinking and the soul. This then spreads to the practical reality with full force and conviction.

2.4 TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLES

What are some of the characteristics of women as our society defines them? Do they seem right? How might some of these characteristics limit a woman's opportunities? What are some of our society's expectations of men? Do they seem right? How might these expectations limit a man's choices? (Commission Equality, 2000)

In Indian culture, many working women view participation in continuing education as risk-filled and challenging (Nangalia & Billet, 2009). This is because continuing education is not seen as a priority that can contribute to the family role that tradition expects of them. In the Indian culture, women have their roles strongly set out, with the roles of wife and mother taking superiority over all other roles (Nangalia & Billet, 2009). Traditionally, girls have been at a disadvantage in most parts of the globe and they continue to be so even today (Jha & Kelleher, 2006). Gender disparity in education is an age-old phenomenon, and continuous exposure to strongly differentiated gender roles is likely to shape students' beliefs about how well men and women perform across a variety of domains (Kumar &

Debjani, 2013). Generalisations and the labels created by society are usually the driving force that places people into specific categories and defines their roles and expected behaviours, regardless of whether they fit in with the norms of society or not (Prentice & Carranza, 2002).

The expectations from a women within the Indian culture is a subservient wife, a enduring mother, a open-handed sister and a loyal mistress accounts for her conservative behaviour (Kaur, 2005). Rajadhakshya and Bhatnagar (2000) state that, in Indian culture, women and the roles allocated to them by their gender and society have already predetermined the idea that men are the breadwinners and women are the care givers. Woman are therefore subjected and confined to their family roles. Education is also seen as a means to increase the social status of women to find a more desirable spouse (Abraham 1998; Bacon, 1996, Dasgupta & Warrier, 1996; Goel, 2005; Mehta, 2009, p. 3). Kaur (2005) further states males constitute and govern the rules, woman accepted them for her own survival and for the survival of her home and family.

Traditionally, Indian culture is a collective and high-context culture in which women's roles are often to be a homemaker and to take responsibility for nurturing children, while men work outside the house (Kaifi & Mujtaba, 2011). Gender can be described as a psychological construct of what is expected, allowed and valued for a man or woman in a given context (Encyclopedia Britannica). Similarly, the Women's Information Centre (2005) considers gender to simply be a set of characteristics, roles, and behaviour patterns that distinguish women from men in various aspects of life, i.e. socially, culturally, as well as in terms of the power between them. However, the above mentioned aspects are in flux, as they are constantly changing due to the on-going reinterpretation of cultural and subjective meanings of gender (Hirut, 2004). A health survey done in Ethiopia (Ethiopian Society of Population Studies, 2005) shows that, because of the difference in power relations between men and women, their gender roles and social roles differ, as do the characteristics of what is socially appropriate for them, and the way in which they behave is specific. According to Mikkola and Miles (2007), gender inequality is caused by hierarchical gender relations, with men above women, and women therefore are regarded as being inferior and less valuable only by virtue of their sex (see Table 2.1). Aspects such as family relationships, inheritance laws and customs, the valuation of women's work and

its general invisibility, decision making, the family, workplace, religious and other cultural situations affect the position of a woman (Mikkola & Miles, 2007, p. 6).

Table 2.1: Masculine vs. feminine

Masculine	Feminine
Active	Affectionate
Adventurous	Domestic
Ambitious emotions	Easily expressive
Athletic	Flexible
Courageous	Feminine
Independent	Graceful
Masculine	Nice
Strong personality	Quiet

Source: Basu, 2010

Buddhapriya (2009, p. 34) states that "the internalization of the belief that roles are gender specific prescribes different life-options for men and women. For men, this life option implies prioritization of work over family, whereas for women, it implies prioritization of family over work".

Kishor (2006) states three different definitions of gender, and these will be discussed below:

- Gender tends not be value neutral. Apart from comprising of different entities, the opportunity for inequality exists, as the roles and rights of men still overshadow those of women.
- The idea of gender boils down to the notion of power relations, particularly the power of men over women. This notion extends to many facets of life, including legal and informal rights, access to resources, the acquisition of knowledge and

- 34 -

goals, and behavioural patterns in the family, culture and institutional domains. It also refers to control over societal and household resources and decisions, cultural and religious ideology, and one's own and others' bodies.

- Gender is not motionless or unchallengeable. Therefore, socially constructed gender roles, rights and expectations can change over time and across geographical space, as societal needs, opportunities and customs change.

Kishor further adds that this lack of gender equilibrium exists in most cultures, especially Indian culture. This could also be a reason why Indian women do not go into the workplace, because Indian women are expected to be family orientated and therefore to invest more time and energy in enhancing their performance in this role. Nangalia and Billet (2009) state that, over time, these inequalities have become perpetuated without being questioned sufficiently as to their appropriateness for society and as a result of modernisation. However, these authors further state that patterns changed with the entry of women into the workforce, although less so in the more traditional cultures that still exist.

Amartya Sen, famous Indian author and Nobel Prize winner, touches on gender inequality in his book, *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity.* He highlights that the social movement for Indian women has been – until lately – principally focusing on the achievement of improved conduct towards women and their welfare. He also states that, in

> *In the course of the course of the evolution of women's movement […] women are not passive recipients of welfare-enhancing help brought about by society, but are active promoters and facilitators of social transformations. Such transformations influence the lives and well-being of women, but also those of men and children – boys as well as girls. This is a momentous enrichment of the reach of women's movement* (Society of Human Resources, 2009, p.9).

In the next section I will discuss family structures, which are connected entities that can be added on to from any direction, regardless of the ideals and qualities of the household. An important aspect to take into account is the influence these structures have on a woman's independence.

2.5   FAMILY STRUCTURE

Figure 2.4: Family structure
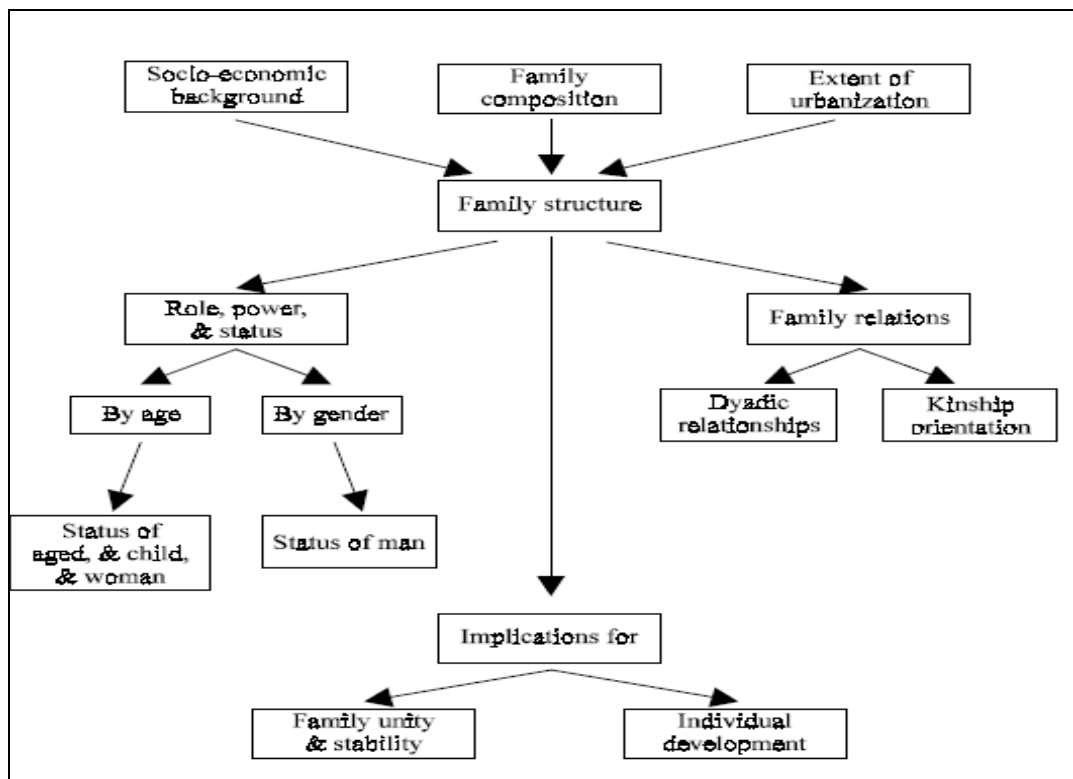
Source: Desai (1994, cited in Sonawat, 2001)

Family structure is considered to be the various roles within the family and the ways in which these roles interact and affect each other (Bahadur & Dhawan, 2008, p. 11). A family may generally be supposed to be a unit of two or more persons united by marriage, blood, adoption or consensual unions (Bahadur & Dhawan, 2008). Regardless of the background of a person, family plays an essential role in their daily life (Hartley, 1995). Sonawat (2001) states that: family is the connection that assists people in their daily survival, especially among dependants, as they rely on their caregivers for primary facilities. She further states that it is also the foundation upon which emotional and social bonding occurs that provides individuals with the assurance that they will always be given support and stability in times of need and when there are problems. Since olden times, family, caste and community have subjugated the whole texture of Indian society. However, family bonds have dominated the life of the individual and in the life of the community. In current times, however, families include both the old and new schools of thought (Bahadur & Dhawan, 2008) as seen in figure 2.4. As time has progressed, the

composition of families has evolved as a result of increased technological and economical structures. The Indian community's strong family bonds and kinship are among the principal features of Indian society (Verma, n.d.). Verma (n.d.) also states that "while it is good to hold and cherish the value of kinship, it causes enormous problems when the family relationships become defective or break down. Women are expected to withstand the abuse and violence of men and make the relationship work for the sake of their family and its' honour" (p. 1). In addition, in the Indian community, the idea of assisting others goes beyond the immediate family, as the culture accommodates all belonging to the sect (Shapiro, n.d.). Assisting only oneself is regarded as defamation to both one's self and society, and is usually frowned upon within this culture. Altruism – for the sake of the family and the larger society – is highly valued in the Indian culture (Shapiro, n.d., p. 2).

There are four main types of families in Indian society (Pinto & Sahur, 2001):

1. Traditional joint family: this includes the head of the household, which usually compromises a male figure, his extended family, his married brothers and their extended families.

2. Patriarchal extended family: this includes the male head of the household, his wife, his married sons and their wives and children.

3. Intermediate joint family: this comprises the male head of the household, his wife, unmarried children and one of his married sons' nuclear family.

4. Nuclear family: the male head of the household, his wife and unmarried offspring.

2.5.1   Joint families

Joint families are those families that contain more than one generation of people residing in the same household (Bahadur & Dhawan, 2008, p. 11). However, Elliot and Gray (2000, p. 7) describe three or more generations living together and include vertical and lateral extensions, and a single line of authority, which can be either patrilineal or matrilineal. Patrilineal families consist of nuclear families in which the married sons and their families continue to live in their childhood house with their parents, and families in which the males dominate the household. Matrilineal families, in contrast, are nuclear families in which the

married daughters and their families continue to live at home even after marriage authority typically still resides with families.

A joint family is a group of people who generally live under one roof, eat cooked food from one stove/fireplace, have the same property, worship in one place and are related to each other as kin (Chadha, 1999). Families are the first social teachers a person encounters. Through their families, people are able to acquire many primary skills, and this task is made easier in a joint family where numerous members of the nuclear family are residing together (Chadha, 1999). In a joint family, all members of the family are taken care of, especially during times of hardship; provides security and a sense of support and togetherness (Chekki, 1996; Sethi, 1989).

According to Sarshar (2010, p. 11), in "the traditional Indian home, it was assumed that the son upon marrying would bring his bride to live in his parents' home in the joint family set-up. In fact, when the parents wanted to arrange a match for their son, one of the prime qualities they sought in their future daughter-in-law was her ability to adjust 'into the family' and was ubiquitous in describing the merits of a 'good girl'."

The Indian family is regarded as being sturdy, unwavering, secure, durable, and permanent (Mullatti, 1995). Individuals belonging to joint families are far more socialised and can tolerate the idea of team work (Chadha, 1999).

Young people who live with older family members from the time that they are born will grow up to appreciate, admire and love them (Chadha, 1999). A degree of flexibility also exists amongst family members that allow them to accommodate many taxing family situations. Therefore, going out to work would not display these ideals, and this could be another aspect why Indian women do not enter the workforce.

2.5.2   Nuclear families

The nuclear type of family consists of a man, his wife and their children, and in these types of families the concept is" 'me, my wife and my children' with no place for others…" (Bahadur & Dhawan, 2008, p.11), which is alarming. Modernisation, the 21st century and the rise of individualism have set the scene for new attitudes, behaviours and values; extended families have become nuclear, and people have shifted from rural to urban

environments (Nilsson, 2004). Bahadur and Dhawan (2008) similarly state that, due to the amalgamation of modern and traditional trends, reformed personalities and values have begun to influence people in terms of their family lives. They simply break structurally, whereas the functions and sentimentality of individual units continue to form part of the joint family, and all members uphold jointness in terms of family loyalty (Bahadur & Dhawan, 2008, p.11).

Indian families will still maintain 'togetherness', even in a nuclear family structure, because of the emotional bond between kith and kin (Chadha,1999). The nuclear family structure is appropriate for the sharing of roles, rather than a typical hierarchical structuring of roles, open-minded rather than traditional attitudes, and role diffusion and equality rather than a conventional outlook (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987, Triandis, 1994).

2.6   WAYS IN WHICH FAMILIES FUNCTION

Traditional Indian societies have always followed a structure of authority (Nangalia & Billet, 2009). These hierarchies comprise of those within the family (i.e. age, sexual category, ordinal position) and within the community (i.e. social group, ancestry, wealth, learning, profession), and are kept afloat by intricate webs of convention, functionality and dutiful belief (Chitnis, 1988 p. 83). Family structure is defined as the composition of responsibility, command and eminence, as well as relationships in the family (Bahadur & Dhawan, 2008). This research study will consider the patriarchal structure and egalitarianism structure, because these types of family structures could have an adverse impact on Indian women, causing them not to pursue careers. Indian families comprise of a number of family members whose roles include socialising the newer members of the family into the norms of the culture and encouraging them to appreciate the notion of family and unity. Ritual practice also puts emphasis on the roles of women as a loyal wife and devoted mother, thus enforcing patriarchy (Mohanty, 2004).

2.6.1   Patriarchal family structure

Patriarchy can be defined as families in which the father is regarded as the head of the household and dominates all the roles. In this way he is regarded as being superior to the

woman (Roy, unknown). Sylvia Walby, in *Theorising Patriarchy*, calls it a system of social structures and practices in which males dominate, subjugate and exploit women (Walby, 1990). Heywood (2003, p.248) further states: that "[p]atriarchal ideas blur the distinction between sex and gender and assume that all socio-economic and political distinctions between men and women are rooted in biology or anatomy". Johnson and Johnson (2001) state that patriarchy can be understood quite clearly when one examines the role of women.

Patriarchy engulfs all aspects of a person's life. Patriarchal structures are legitimised by religious values and practices that regard male authority as higher, and the laws and norms regarding aspects such family, marriage, divorce and inheritance are linked to patriarchal control over women (Sarshar, 2010). Patriarchy is further highlighted through representation and by which messages about the inadequacy of women and their self-sacrificing, self-effacing and pure image are portrayed. Ritual practice also put emphasis on the roles of women as loyal wife and devoted mother (Mohanty, 2004). According to the literature, in a patriarchal society women are viewed and treated as inferior to men (Frankl, 1986; Gangrade & Chander, 1991; India: Till death us do part, 1990; Narasimhan, 1994). Women are therefore dominated by men, and are ultimately financially dependent on men and have limited choices in various aspects of their lives (Miller, 1992). From birth until the day she dies, an Indian woman is expected to be under the control of a man and to serve him without question (Baig, 1988; Kelkar, 1992; Narasimhan, 1994).

Patriarchal societies thrive on the idea that being a mother confines a woman to the role of taking care of her offspring and family (Khan, 2013, p. 96). Khan (2013) states that the biological factor of having children is correlated with the social position of women's responsibilities of motherhood: nurturing, educating and raising children by devoting themselves to family. "Patriarchal ideas blur the distinction between sex and gender and assume that all socio-economic and political distinctions between men and women; are rooted in biology or anatomy" (Heywood, 2003, p. 248).

Similarly, the originally male-dominated roles within the Indian community have often paved the way for the currently existing behaviour of woman and their roles in society. Desai (1996) emphasises the strain of patriarchal structures on women, as their intended careers are now expected to take a back seat to make room for their more imperative

family roles. Desai (1996) further statesthat Indian women keep a low profile of one's career enables these women to be in both the worlds, i.e., work and family. Similarly, Sengupta and Johnnson (2006) state that the patriarchal family is the type with the utmost constraints on women's freedom, arising from control by other adults in the house.

Therefore one can assume that Indian women do not go into the working environment because their families are patriarchal in nature.

2.6.1.1   _Mothers-in-law_

"*If the sheer number of mother-in-law jokes and horror stories in circulation the world over is any indication, there is no caricature that people love to hate as much as that of the evil mother-in-law, except perhaps for the wicked stepmother! In many societies, however, the presence of a mother-in-law in the household is more than a mere topic of jokes; it is a matter with serious welfare implications, at least for the co-resident daughters-in-law'*" (Varghese, 2009, p. 3).

Males in Indian culture are given importance, and the influence of the all-powerful mother-in-law is felt in this area as well (Robitaille & Chatterjee, 2013). According to Robitaille and Chatterjee (2013), this could occur through the marriage market – with the mother-in-law choosing the bride to be based, notably, on her son's preference. It could also occur through the socialisation of the young bride in her marital family – as it is not unusual in India that women are married during their teenage years, if not during childhood, and hence an imperative part of the socialisation is done in the marital family rather than in the natal family. Finally, it could also occur through carrot-and-stick incentives put in place to bring the daughter-in-law to fit into her new marital family – through, for example, domestic violence, limited mobility and limited involvement in decision making. When moving into the groom's household, she becomes subservient to her new husband as well as her new in-laws (Sengupta & Johnson, 2006). Srivastava (1974) indicates that, in his fieldwork conducted in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh (states of central India), he found that mothers-in-law play a vital role in the governing of their daughter-in-law's life.

Sengupta and Johnson (2006) state that, when the Indian bride enters a patriarchal family through an arranged marriage, her mother-in-law holds back and monitors her access to

material resources as well as her external contacts. Also, staying with the mother-in-law in a vertically integrated, patriarchal joint family provides a young woman with the least amount of independence, compared to situations in which she is the head of the household or the spouse of the head (Bloom, Wypij, & Das Gupta, 2001; Cain, Khanam, & Nahar, 1979; Dyson & Moore, 1983), and this could have significant effects on her well-being (Varghese, 2009). In this regard, the finding of Rajan et al.'s Kerala Mental Health Survey (2004), that, for the married women of Kerala (the South Indian state well known for its gender equitable demographic outcomes), the mother-in-law is the major source of pressure, stress and psychological and physical violence, is enlightening (Varghese, 2009).

The senior females often feel that the younger brother is usually the cause of strain in the family, whereas the younger generation believe that it is in fact the older brothers who were far too overpowering and dictatorial (Madan, 1965). "The fact that the in-coming female comes from another group means that in some ways she is viewed as a threat: her behavior must be closely watched; she must be re-socialized so that she comes to identify her own interests with those of her husband's kin; senior family wives tend to dominate young in-marrying wives" (Dyson & Moore, 1983).

The mother-in-law has bad press in many societies, but her vilification seems particularly strong in Indian culture (Robitaille & Chatterjee, 2013). The mother-in-law greatly affects the life of the daughter-in-law, but very little research has been conducted in both this area as well as that of the influence that sisters-in-law have while living amongst one another (Sonowat, 2001).

There could also be mother-in-law daughter-in-law conflicts, and Sarshar (2010, p.11) states that "mother-in-law's ill-treatment of the daughter-in-law who was often relegated to taking care of the household drudgery and doing chores for the entire families was quite a usual thing in the ancient pretext". According to Choudhry (2001), women are mainly in charge of household responsibility, with or without the assistance of a domestic servant, although this depends on their socioeconomic status, and thus the mother-in-law remains the dominant force within the household structure. Subsequently, co-residence with in-laws is linked with lower scores on measures of young wives' autonomy and freedom (Balk, 1997; Jejeebhoy & Sathar, 2001). For Indian women this also could be a factor that inhibits them from pursuing careers.

2.6.2 Egalitarian family structure

Egalitarianism is "the belief that all people are of equal worth and should be treated equally in society" (Schwartz, 2001, p. 65). Vital ideals in egalitarian cultures include equality, considering the destitute, accountability, support and truthfulness, and consequently one can say that highly egalitarian societies are those that are defined by their values, as these constantly assist them in their daily lives and routines (Siegel, Licht & Schwartz, 2006).

The egalitarian family, in opposition to the traditional patriarchal family, sometimes is also called a symmetrical family, and this contributes to the crisis of patriarchal gender relations, as an egalitarian family is based on the equality of adult family members. In this instance, families attempt to find equilibrium between their professional and social lives. A number of researchers argue that, while this may appear doable in theory, practically it is a bit more daunting (Thornton & Young-DeMarco, 2001).

In societies, where there is low gender egalitarianism, such as the Indian culture, it is imperative that women get support from their spouses (Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999). Even though Indian husbands are understanding of their wives, and willing to allow their wives to play a part in the workforce, they are yet to take responsibility for sharing household chores (Ramu, 1989). In this study it was found that fathers and husbands allow women to go to work, but after marriage, when a woman has children, the men switch from an egalitarian approach and become patriarchal in nature, expecting that the women should stay at home and look after the children.

The next section is work–life balance, which has become an extremely daunting task, as both work and family fight for equal weightings in an individual's life (Coser, 1974). Work-life balance refers to the ability to juggle the demands of both one's work and family life (Reddy, Vranda, Ahmed, Nimala & Siddaramu, 2010). This contradiction is increased by the "cultural contradictions of motherhood", as women are expected to be both the empowered career woman as well as the doting, self-sacrificing mother (Reddy et al., 2010).

2.7   WORK FAMILY CONFLICT

Reddy et al. (2010) state that Indian families are being exposed to unfamiliar territory, due to the expanding rate of urbanisation and modernisation. They further state that women in the Indian culture are being exposed more and more to educational resources, and this proves to be quite refreshing as it contrasts with the trends of the past. This has opened new vistas and greatly emancipated the typical Indian woman in terms of her personal awareness, and has urged her to enter the work force.

The last three decades have seen a great deal of research being done on family issues, largely due to changing demographic structures and women entering the labour market (Rajadhyaksha & Velgach, 2009). Much of this research has found negative outcomes for individuals, organisations and society, resulting from the strain of balancing work and family roles (Rajadhyaksha & Velgach, 2009). Mostert (2009) states that working women have to deal with both work and family roles, and this added pressure results in these women dealing with and thus managing multiple roles. These multiple roles include the roles of being worker, wife and caretaker, and being members of extended families.

According to Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek and Rosenthal (1964), the instantaneous 'launching' of demands from the workplace and household may cause the individual to experience interference between the two roles or domains. Work-home interference is a process in which a worker's functions (behaviour) in one aspect (e.g. home) are subjected to negative load reactions that have built up in another aspect (e.g. work) (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003; Geurts, Kompier, Roxburgh & Houtman, 2003; Geurts et al., 2005; Van Hooff et al., 2005). Work-family conflict is also defined "as arising from simultaneous pressures from both work and family that are mutually incompatible in some respect" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77).

Mostert (2006) says that, although there is an increase in the number of women in the labour market, there is no change in the gender role expectations in society. In instances where both a man and a woman from the same household are employed, the work role is still regarded as the man's principal domain, whereas the woman is expected to be in charge of taking care of the home and the children (Doucete, 2000; Windebank, 2001).

Nangalia and Billet (2009) state that many women have distinctive needs at a psychological and practical level; that are not met by restrictive definitions of their roles as primary caregivers to their family. However, meeting these needs outside of mainstream cultural norms requires an exceptional effort on the part of the family, the educational system, society and the women themselves (Nangalia & Billet, 2009).

Women need to balance their career and family responsibilities. This is a demanding task, particularly when they are mother to infants and their immediate surroundings lack appropriate childcare facilities where they can leave their children with no stress or pressure while they are working (Buddhapriya, 2009). Buddhapriya,(2009 further states that women often suffer from guilt due to the fact that they are not spending enough time with their offspring and are put in the difficult situation of having to leave their children with someone else and due to the none fulfilment of their duties (Myrdel & Klein, 1968; Nevil & Demico, 1974; Nye & Hoffman, 1963). Women who work and are mothers thus face conflicting roles, as they are both mothers and professionals and this causes much strain and stress-related conflict.

The literature over the years has also endorsed the significance of work–life balance, and emphasises the current apprehension among many about the overloading of women and their lack of clean-cut roles. The following aspects were regarded as being essential in terms of the international literature (Reddy et al., 2010):

- The a number of roles performed by women
- The role strain experienced as a result of the several different roles, i.e. role conflict and role overload
- Managing methods/tactics: role confusion is measured according to both emotional and methodical procedures
- Organisational culture and work dynamics: if the values of the organisation where the woman works, support a work–life balance, this has positive work and personal well-being consequences
- Individual resources and social support, and their availability to women: a large number of studies show that there is a positive relationship between personalities, emotional support and well-being. Career options and stages that need to be considered and revised in relation to their current living situations and their

responsibilities/obligations in such situations, as well as with regard to the specific time frames

The increasing number of educated Indian women who are now joining the workforce has greatly contributed to the latest neologism of dual career families (Komarraju, 1997). Investigations that have been done in India illustrate that labour and personal problems reported by women from Indian culture often differ from those experienced in Western societies (Sekaran, 1992). Therefore this work-life conflict could play a big role in this research study because educated women cannot cope with their numerous task and responsibilities.

2.8   MOTHERHOOD

The maternal bond is describes as an intense physical, touching, and spiritual connection between mother and baby, and this relationship leads to a multifaceted interaction in which this strong union is reciprocally articulated, appreciated and reinforced (Madrid, Skolek & Shapiro, 2006). Although the degree of prejudice against working women has decreased, working mothers, on the other hand, still face numerous episodes of hostility in the workplace (Duffy & Pupo, 1992; Elliott, Dale, & Egerton, 2001).

2.8.1   Bond between mother and child

"The word 'mother' connotes love, affection, selfless devotion and all that is noble in human nature" (Chaubey, 2001, p. 107). A mother is known to be a source and fountainhead of never-ending love. The love that a mother gives is represented religiously and socially as rigid and dependable. A woman is therefore seen through the illustration of being a mother, and a very strong stereotype is born, called motherhood. Swami Vivekananda (1971,p. 58) has praised motherhood in these words:

The ideal of womanhood in India is motherhood that marvellous, all suffering, unselfish, even forgiving mother. The wife walks behind the shadow, she must imitate the life of the mother; that is her duty. But the mother is the ideal of life, she rules the family, she possesses the family.

A mother is said to be an important figure because she has special skills, but because she is with her children for most of the time, her commands have a strong impact on the attitudes, abilities and behaviour of the child (Aeri & Jain, 2010). Furthermore, Aeri & Jain, 2010 state that children who are flourishing and well-adjusted; come from homes where parental attitudes are favourable and a wholesome relationship exists. Mothers give their children love, warmth and care from birth, and childcare have become a key issue in most of the countries in the world.

Following the birth of a child, both the mother and child pass through a physical journey of compassion and bonding in which the two try to create a connection (Klaus & Kennell, 1976). In addition, the extent to which this union is successful will greatly determine the child's future relationships in either a positive or negative manner (Klaus & Kennell, 1982). Sujatha and Gokilavani (2011, p.147) hold the view that,

> *The nature of motherhood is dependent on the cultures and societies that have moulded them. Indian motherhood is inculcated in the woman from the day of her birth. She is raised to look forward to nothing else and she rates her worth by her efficiency to fulfil this role.*

Women's gender roles traditionally have been studied through themes of marriage and motherhood, and these two have defined women's roles and identities in Indian culture (Kaifi & Mujtaba, 2011). As Puri argues, marriage and motherhood are the culturally mandated statuses for Indian women: "Menarche, marriage, and motherhood, in that order, normatively define the various stages in the social status of women" (Puri, 1999, p. 137).

Webster (1988) defines a mother as "a woman as she is related to her child" and the female parent that possesses motherly qualities. Motherhood is also defined by its attributes: "the capacity to love, to create, produce, to watch over, nourish, and protect" Webster (1988). Schaffer (1977) argues that being a mother is a multifaceted pattern concerning both interactive qualities and tasks related with the role. The bond begins as early as when the child is still in the womb of the mother (Schaffer, 1977). It has been determined that even brief separation from one another can cause much agitation in the mother and child (Schaffer, 1977).

2.8.2　Working mothers

"Guilt among women is bacteria gone wild; one that eats away their pleasure and ruins their lives" (Holcomb, 1998, p.322).

"In talking about the career woman as being a mother, one could with the effects of the career on her mothering, the effects of motherhood on her career, or the effects of combining these two roles on her personal satisfactions. Most of my focus will be on the first: what kind of a mother is she, and how have her children turned out?" (Hoffman, 1973, p. 211)

The above statement is clear and the amount of research being done on the role of working mothers. Previous literature suggests that the ambivalence experienced by many working mothers and the tension between child-rearing and paid employment arises from by the so-called social expectations and requirements of motherhood (Hays, 1996; Walzer, 1998; Wearing, 1984).

According to Khan and Hassan (2012), with the emergence of a new economic pattern, tertiary education, standards of living and modernisation have led women from all walks of life to start emerging from their previous traditional roles of being homemakers and to start joining the labour market. When the subject of professional women comes to the fore, many questions are raised. One could easily question the impact of her career on her motherhood role, the effects of motherhood on her career, or the effects of these two roles on her personal satisfaction (Hoffman, 1973, p. 211). It is affirmed that motherhood confers upon a woman the responsibility of nurturing and educating a child, and the predominant societal view expects women to provide care for their families and be fully committed to their motherly role and take on household tasks (Chasteen & Kissman, 2000; Gorman & Fritzsche, 2002). Mehta (2009) further states that traditional Indian female identity places women in a very restrictive role. In the evolutionary framework, both mothers' and their offspring's psychology have states that 'mothers matter most' (Campbell, 2002, p. 34). Unfortunately, working women throughout history have always been viewed as disappointments and have been considered neglectful of their maternal duties (Domenico & Jones, 2006).

Many working mothers can relate to the emotional trauma of having to cart their helpless infants to a stranger's home in order for them to pursue their career goals (Zimmerman, McBride & Bowling, 2001). Zimmerman et al., (2001) further state that these feeling of despondency regarding day cares usually come from external sources that are against the idea of outside care. Similarly, Holcomb (1998, p. 324) states that the reason women feel culpable and anxious is aided and abetted by society around them, from co-workers to teachers to paediatricians to relatives.

Wearing (1984) defined several core beliefs that create tension between motherhood and employment.

- A good mother is always available to her children. She spends time with them, guides, supports, encourages and corrects, as well as loves and cares for them physically.
- A good mother is unselfish, putting her children's needs before her own.
- Children need their mothers in constant attendance, at least for the first three to five years of their lives.
- The individual mother should have total responsibility for her own children at all times.
- Mothering is a low-status but important, worthwhile and intrinsically rewarding job in our society. The nonmaterial rewards of mothering outweigh the lack of financial and status rewards.

A woman's role as that of the nurturing parent and mother is revered and respected. Indian epics portray women who are tradition-bound, dutiful, self-sacrificing and self-denying (Choudahry, 2001). This could be one reason why educated Indian women do not pursue tertiary education.

I will now turn to the theoretical aspects that form the focus of the current study.

2.9   INTERSECTIONALITY

A woman's life-context framework provides an important structure for understanding the various roles that women play and the way these affect women, but it does not fully address factors relating to the forces of oppression, suppression, domination and privilege.

It is for this reason that, in this section, I introduce the concept of intersectionality, which explores the multiple identities experienced by the women interviewed in my study.

Feminist intersectionality theory has flourished in the past few years, with the most notable contributions coming from Crenshaw (1989), Hooks (1990), Collins (1990, 2002, 2005) and Calliste and Dei (2000). However, the term 'intersectionality' became more prominent in the 1990s, when sociologist Collins (1990) integrated the idea into her discussion of Black feminism, or "Black feminist thought", and attempted to separate any type of information on Black women from the typical feminist beliefs, while still ensuring authenticity.

According to Knudsen (2006, p. 61), intersectionality is a theory, "to analyse how social and cultural categories intertwine". Lanhert (2009) further states that the links between relationships, gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, class and nationality are examined in this theory. There are numerous definitions of this construct that have come out from feminist thought, and theorising on intersectionality is concerned with articulating women's instantaneous experiences of gender, race and class as interdependent identities and oppressions (Phoenix & Pattynama, 2006). Knudsen (2006) further states that intersectionality seeks to look at the ways in which various categories work together in order to expose the inequalities prevalent in society.

> *Intersectionality is used to analyse the production of power and processes between gender, race, ethnicity etc., and is involved with analysing social and cultural hierarchies within different discourses and institutions. The theory of intersectionality stresses complexity. However, not all categories are necessarily mentioned* (Knudsen, 2006, pp. 62-63).

Mahalingam (2005, p.841) also states that the intersectionality perspective helps individuals better comprehend the various ways in which socialising impacts on a person's behaviour

> *A person's race, class, and gendered experience are embedded in a particular social and cultural matrix, and influence the person's beliefs about various social categories and beliefs about the origins of social differences. Intersectionality can*

be thought of as the triangulation of a subject vis-à-vis her location and social positioning along class, gender, race, or caste. This process is dynamic, multidimensional, multi-sited and historically contingent. It mediates various psychological processes, such as well-being, acculturation, moral reasoning, judgment and decision making, and everyday understandings of social relations.

Collins (1990) describes how oppressions in society do not operate independently, but intersect in complex patterns – additive models that view each oppression as 'additive', rather than interlocking, fail to stress the centrality of power and privilege. Identities, sometimes referred to as identity markers (Hum & Simpson, 2003), intersect to compound oppression. Age, culture, (dis)ability, ethnicity, gender, immigrant status, race, sexual orientation, social class, and spirituality all denote social location, a powerful determinant of one's access to the social and material necessities of life. A core underpinning of the concept of feminist intersectionality is the focus on interrogation of power in society and the structural precursors of oppression. They are called structural because "they are part of the political, economic, and social structure of society and of the culture that informs them" (Navarro, 2007, p. 2). Structural intersectionality suggests that approaches based on the lives of the elite or majority population will still not assist the minorities, as they cannot relate to the circumstances at hand (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1246).

Representational intersectionality refers to the fact that ethnic minority women are depicted in the media in terms of negative, sexualised and stereotyped connotations, and this has a negative impact on their self-esteem (Settles, 2006). For example, Indian women are often represented as passive homemakers (see Figure 2.5). An investigation of what may be termed "representational intersectionality" would include both images that are produced through a convergence of established narratives of race and sexual category, as well as recognition of how modern analysis of racialist and sexist representation marginalises women of colour (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1283).

Figure 2.5: Intersectionality
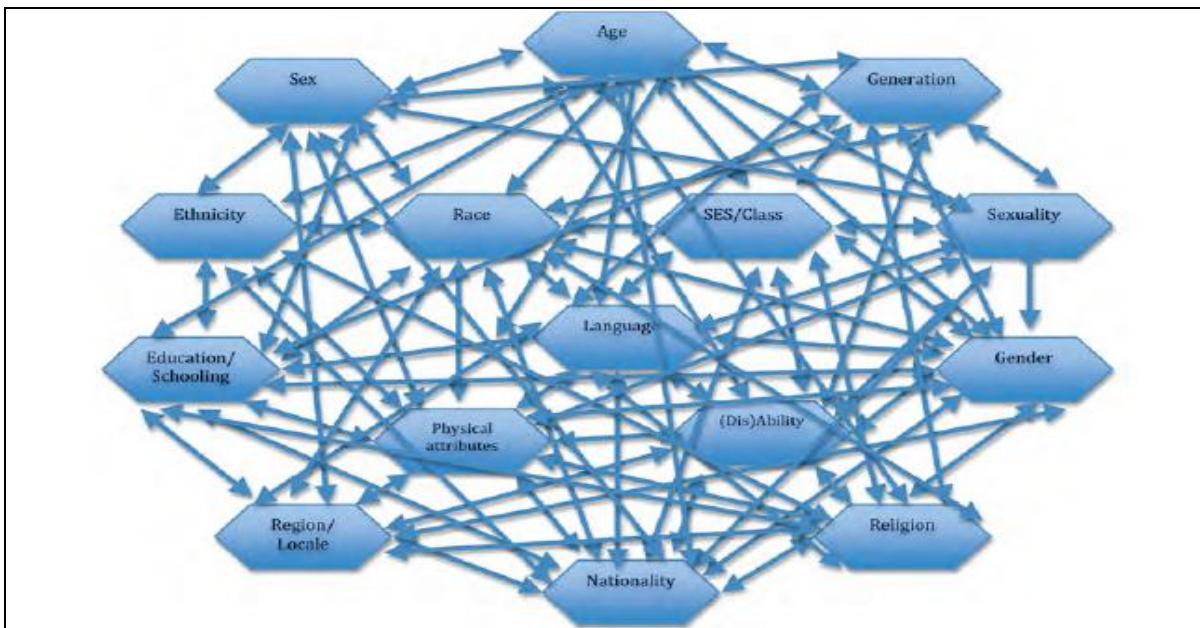
Source: Lanhert (2009)

I will use intersectionality in the study to show culture, religion and gender intersecting the lives of the women in the study due to oppressive forces that originate from culture, tradition, male control and family structures. These women have multiple identities that will intertwine, and any decisions that have to be made are done through negotiation with various identities.

2.10   IDENTITIES

Identity is a communal structure in which members of a particular group are expected to conform to prescribed criteria that have been developed over a number of years (Jones, 2005). Munsamy (2006, p. 6) claims that "identities are personal as they define who we are, who we think we are and who we imagine ourselves to be". Who we are is shaped by family, community, institutions, history, language, social circumstances and context. Identity is fluid and changes with a change in context and history (Maslak & Singhal, 2008). Identities are said to be deeply personal and also indicate the multiple social belongings that individuals represent (Connell, 2000).

Pattynama (2000) states that the identity of a woman is considered to be a formation of conditional outcomes of struggles, which include those struggles over self-acclaimed

representations as well as over externally ascribed identities. Thus women should be seen as negotiating their social and cultural identities on a constant basis (Pattynama, 2000). The identity of women therefore is a constant struggle of renegotiation, which is determined by various factors at a given time. Pattynama (2000, cited in Sader, 2008, p. 10) further states that women use "masquerade" because they are continually changing their series of identifications, which differ according to the context and its gendered, cultural and class stereotype.

2.10.1 Identity Negotiation

"Identity negotiation is influenced by a variety of factors: the repertoire and importance of social identities that a person has the setting in which one is located, and the actions and influence of other people in those settings" (Deaux, 200, p.9). This is a very important aspect for Indian women in my study, as it relates to how they negotiate various roles. McCall and Simmons (1978) point to the significance of negotiation when working out the differences in performance, relationships and interconnections of roles in the context of a grouping or interaction. Therefore, in order for there to be a sufficient amount of communication, effective reciprocation is required from others (Stets & Burke, 1996). Furthermore, gender still continues to impact on the marriage roles of both wife and husband (Stets & Burke, 1996). Figure 2.6 shows the various roles that Indian women have. Burke and Stets (1999) have managed to prove that there is in fact a link between the identification of individual and group roles, which in turn creates an increased loyalty to the group. In Indian culture, this can be seen in the negotiation of various roles and when educated Indian women have to weigh up their options.

2.10.2 Social identity theory

Social identity theory stresses the fact that individual behaviour is a reflection of an individual's greater social grouping (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This means that all the social groups encompassing a person's life, in some way or another, manage to influence a person's behaviour (Padilla & Perez, 2003). Similarly, Oyserman, Bybee and Terry (2006, p. 189) describe social identities as "aspects of self-concept based not in individual traits and goals but on group-based traits and goals". These authors note that "social identities incorporate community expectations about the occupations and academic attainment of in-group members".

Markus, Kitayama and Heiman (1996) state that, since collective group membership influences and continuously determines individuals' thoughts and behaviours, it can thus be said that cultural competence is at the heart of this theory. It is observed that, although individuals are not always in total control of their intrapersonal experiences, they are to a great extent influenced by interpersonal activities by which they are surrounded.

The theory incorporates three main points:

(a) People are encouraged and motivated to uphold a positive self-concept about themselves,

(b) The self-concept arises mainly from group identification, and

(c) Positive social identities are established when people favourably compare their in-group against an out-group (Operario & Fiske, 1999).

All of these types of social classification possess some form of defining feature that sets them apart from others (Deaux, 2001). However, for the purpose of this thesis, only aspects of social identity in relation to Indian women will be discussed.

Table 2.2 below depicts the different forms of social identity that exist, which relates to how people are connected to other groups and social categories (Deaux, 2001).

Table 2.2: Types of social identity

Types of social identity
Ethnicity and religion
Asian
American
Jewish
Southerner
West Indian
Political affiliation
Feminist
Republican
Environmentalist
Vocations and avocations
Psychologist
Artist
Athlete
Military veteran
Relationships
Mother
Parent
Teenager

Widow
Stigmatised identities
Person with AIDS
Homeless person
Fat person
Alcoholic
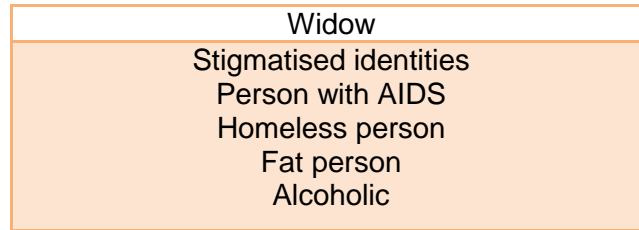
Source: Deaux (2001)

2.10.3 Role-based identification

Research done over the years suggests that role-based identity is the notion that each person has more than one contributing identity, which constantly alters depending on the situation (Wise, 2008). For example, Figure 2.6 shows that Indian women could hold multiple identities – as a parent, wife, a daughter, daughter-in-law, a professional in a particular discipline, etc. Each of these roles has certain expectations, which serve as social guidelines (Burke, 2006). Therefore each identity is confirmed by matching the self-perception of that identity to the identity standard (Wise, unknown). Similar ideas indicate positive results, whereas uncertainty reflects negative circumstances (Stets, 2005). Rao, Apte and Subbakrishna (2003) state that: multiple roles can also be very detrimental to a woman's physical and emotional wellbeing. A prime example of this situation is the current web of confusion and conflict many women find themselves in regarding their traditional and modern roles as women (Maslak & Singhal, 2008, p. 483). The following role-based identities are vital in the current study:

2.10.4 Gender identity

Gender is a social phenomenon that is best understood as constructed, contested and intersecting with other social phenomena (Read & Bartowski, 2000). Different cultures have different ideas about gender, and the titles of male and female are among the most frequently mentioned identities. Depending on whether a woman sees herself as a feminist or perhaps as more of a conventional woman will have an impact on her identity as a woman, and this therefore will differ considerably from person to person. Gendered identities are placed onto the body through acts that are practised by the individual and repeated over a period of time. Cultural practices also govern and dictate the roles that are performed by men and women (Munsamy, 2006). Therefore one can assume that gender plays a prominent role in the development of identities, which can interconnect and overlap with one another (Deux, 2001).

In Indian culture, women are often seen in unfavourable terms, as liabilities rather than assets (Majumdar, 2004). The relationships women have toward the social settings in their homes, schools and work, together with the changing principles and what is expected of them, all add to the active descriptions of gender that are related to women in Indian culture (Maslak & Singhal, 2008).

So how, exactly, do gender roles related to education and the workforce support traditional gender roles in the family for university-educated Indian women in today's urban settings? (Maslak & Singhal, 2008, p. 483)

2.10.5 Cultural identity

Culture, in all its complex and myriad manifestations, is a vital component in the construction of identities (Munsamy, 2006). Horowitz (2000) stated that cultural identity is the identity of a group or culture; or of an individual as far as he/she is influenced by his/her belonging to a group or culture. Cultural identity is further related to the specific geographic area, where people from that area share common characteristics such as beliefs, traditions, language and the like (Horowitz, 2000). According to Singelis (2000), culture is a system that brings about itself: it is equally conditioned and conditioning. Through its establishment, rituals, socialisation practices, and interactions, culture provides guidance and rewards that systematically shape individual social cognition (Singelis, 2000). According to Singelis (2000), culture is constantly being invented and reinvented by those belonging to it.

Research done on social identity over the years by Hogg and other researchers shows that, from birth, most of us already belong to some cultural alliance, whether nationally, politically or socially (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995). These identities refer to all those actions that are condoned by the group and that in essence create the necessary characteristics of the assemblage (Dewey, 2002). Deng (2005) points out that cultural identity respond to the issues of "Who am I?", "Where are we going?" and "What do we have?" Preservation of culture is enhanced when it is personally constructed. Subsequently, the normative behaviours of the group can be associated with or compared to individual identity. This is done through the process of feedback and self-verification.

Markus et al. (1996) state that cultural competence lies at the heart of this theory for the reason that collective group membership manipulates and regularly ascertains an individuals' opinions and behaviours. Accordingly, the social identity affirms that people think, feel and act as members of collective groups, cultures and institutions. Thus, in the light of the above, it can be said that individuals are not self-contained units of psychological analysis.

The approach of social identity favours the notion that individuals' social cognitions are socially construed and dependent on the individuals' group or on collective frames of reference. Similarly, Isaacs(1975,p.38) states that identity and customs are the same and consist of "[t]he ready-made set of endowments and identifications that every individual shares with others from the moment of birth by the chance of the family into which he is born at that given time in a given place" (cited in Wise, p. 6). Singhal and Maslak (2008) also highlight this by stating that, although education and career can allow females to pursue their interest in the marketplace, they can also fracture the boughs of traditional Indian cultural continuity.

In the Indian culture, a woman's identity is that of a wife and mother; she is secondary to her husband and his family, tolerant to her family, moral, subservient, pure, and one who upholds cultural traditions and family harmony (Abraham, 1999; Bhanot & Senn, 2007; Dasgupta, 1998; Dasgupta & Warrier, 1996, Goel, 2005). Furthermore, Mehta (2009) suggests that the cultural pressures and obligations of the traditional Indian female identity continue to exist. Indian women have multiple roles in the community (Kollan & Parikh, 2005; see Figure 2.6):

- Women have a number of roles that they need to fulfil
- At times they will have to play the role of a parent or a daughter
- From time to time they have various roles – that of being a daughter, wife, daughter-in-law, mother and career woman
- In social settings in the community they have to play different roles simultaneously
- Having played/playing different roles, women occasionally submerge their personal self-role and their own identities

Figure 2.6: Various roles of Indian women
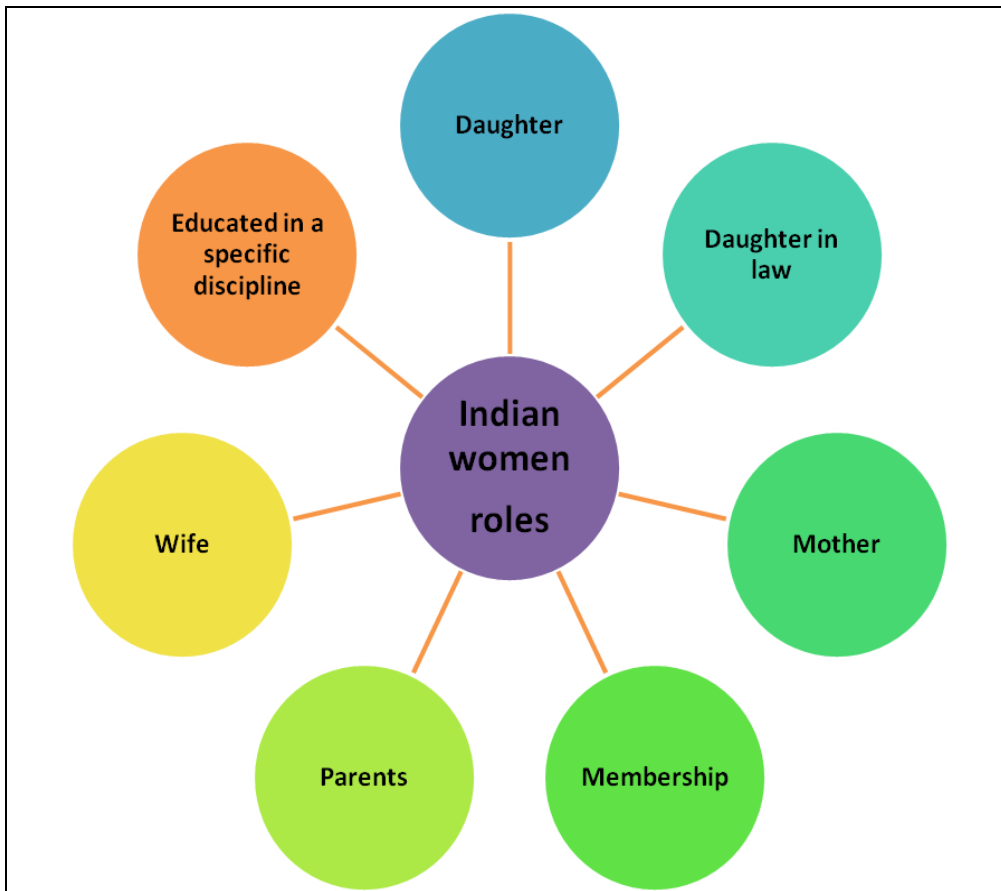
Source: Adapted from Kollan and Parikh (2005).

At this brink, conflicts and complexities are created in a woman as she is wedged between two roles – the traditional expectations of society on the one hand, and the new cultural settings designed by her own ambitions on the other hand.

2.11   CONCLUSION

The literature review discussed the theoretical framework of my study. This section also highlighted the different levels that could influence educated Indian women not to pursue careers. Below I explain the various designs and methods that were used in the study.

CHAPTER 3:
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to justify the use of an explanatory research design and to discuss the methodology used to apply the design. This chapter also explains how I selected the sample, how data were collected and what data collection instruments were used. Finally, the relevant ethical considerations are discussed.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

3.2.1 Research Approach

According to Hancock (1998, p. 2), a qualitative study is done to find the answers to questions such as: "Why? How? In what way? Whereas quantitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with questions about: How much? How many? How often? To what extent?" Therefore, on the basis of this research problem and research objectives, a qualitative approach was appropriate, because this study is concerned with the principles, understandings and feelings of individuals, thus subjective information (Hancock, 1998). Similarly, qualitative research is characterised by its aims, which are related to understanding and making sense of social life, therefore understanding the reasons why educated Indian women do not pursue careers (Brickci & Green, 2007). Therefore in-depth interviews were used to understand the story behind a participant's experiences, and this assisted me to pursue in-depth information on the topic.

The diagram in Figure 3.1 outlines the steps that were followed in the *research process* used in the study on *reasons why educated Indian women do not pursue careers.*

Figure 3.1: Research process used in the study

Step 1: Identifying reasons why educated Indian women are not pursuing careers	→ **Discussions with a few Indian women who are currently not in the workforce**
Step 2: From problem identified: — **Research Problem** — **Research objectives**	
Step 3: Identify paradigm best suited to this research	→ **Interpretivist**
Step 4: Identify strategy	→ **Qualitative method**
Step 5: Determine data types	→ **Qualitative data types**
Step 6: Data collection method	→ **Voice recording and transcribing**
Pilot study	→ **In-depth interviews: Life stories**
Main study	→ **In-depth interviews: Life story interviews**
Step 7: Analyse data	→ **Content analysis using Atlas Ti**
Step 8: Write up conclusion and recommendations	→ **Review literature: Final chapter**

Source: Adapted from Mackenzie and Knipe (2006, p. 203)

3.2.2 Research strategy – the qualitative method

Qualitative research is a study done to explore and understand a central phenomenon which concept or process explored (Creswell, 2008). The research questions asked are general and broad and seek to identify the participants' experience of a central phenomenon (Maree, 2010). Morse (2003, p. 833) states that qualitative methodology is used when hardly anything is known about a topic, the research background is poorly understood, the limitations of a field are ill defined, the phenomenon under investigation is not quantifiable, the nature of the problem is unclear, or the researcher thinks the study needs to be revised. Similarly, Kvale (1996) states that qualitative interview research tries to find out and explain the meanings of vital themes in the world that subjects come from.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 8) state that the qualitative approach highlights various qualities, namely "entity, processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency". According to Berg (2007), a qualitative study is understood by the consequences, thoughts, uniqueness, metaphors, symbols and description of things. Patton (2002) defines qualitative study as attempts to understand the individual connections in a particular circumstance. This is done not to envisage what might take place, but as an in-depth analysis of the situation and the meaning brought by participants and what is happening to them currently.

The main reason for using interviews is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say. Various authors have identified what they consider to be the most vital characteristics of qualitative, also known as naturalistic, research. The list beneath signifies a mix of these authors' explanations of what a qualitative study is all about:

- The natural setting provides the source of the data. The researcher makes an effort to study, explain and interpret settings as they are, thereby upholding what Patton (1990, p. 55) calls an "empathic neutrality".
- The researcher is active as the "human instrument" of data collection (Hoepfl, 1997).
- Qualitative researchers chiefly use inductive data analysis methods (Hoepfl, 1997).
- Qualitative research information is descriptive, incorporates and contains significant language, and the "presence of voice in the text" can be seen (Eisner, 1991, p. 36).

- Qualitative research aims at discovering the meaning events have for the individuals who experience them, and how the researcher interprets the information (Hoepfl, 1997).
- Qualitative researchers consider the personal as well as the general, seeking the unique characteristics of each case (Hoepfl, 1997).

3.2.3   Strategy of inquiry

The term 'narrative' has several meanings and is used in a variety of ways by a range of disciplines, but repeatedly it is the same as 'story' and, as in all stories, numerous voices and identities arise (Larsson & Sjoblom, 2009). Narrative allows researchers to gain access to the identity constructions of participants, and it is said to be a fine approach for allowing discriminated and minority groups to have a say (Elliott, 2005; Halberstam, 2005; Josselson & Lieblich 1995; Riessman, 2002, 2003). As a result, telling a story is a way of telling someone else about oneself, but also about the teller's identity constructions (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1998). This assists in articulating the meanings that both have about the teller and his or her identity, and about the social context of which the teller is a part (Crossley, 2000; Wetherell & Maybin, 1996).

Narrative strategy is a type of qualitative research in which the researcher studies the individual's life and asks one or more individuals to "tell" the stories of their lives, which often are retold by the researcher (Creswell, 2009, p. 13). Narrative research is used so that a comprehensive understanding of the respondent's life is gained (Josselson, 1995; Josselson & Lieblich, 1999; Lieblich et al., 1998; Riessman & Quinney, 2005). According to Polkinghorne (1988, p. 1), this approach is known as "the primary scheme by which human existence is rendered meaningful". Moen (2006) states that a narrative approach will also take into account how individuals give meaning to their experiences from the stories they are sharing. It is also imperative to take note that the individual who is being studied is irreducibly connected to his or her societal, cultural and institutional setting (Wertsch, 1991), thus a narrative will take into account both the individual and also the contextual aspect of the individual under study (Moen, 2006).

The narrative approach is classified within the qualitative or interpretive study process (Gudmundsdottir, 1997, 2001). "A qualitative approach to the field of investigation means

that researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of and interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (Moens, 2006, p. 4). A qualitative approach therefore was used in the present study, with semi-structured interviews being used to understand the reasons why educated Indian women do not pursue careers through the stories that they tell.

3.2.4 Research paradigm

[A]ll researchers interpret the world through some sort of conceptual lens formed by their beliefs, previous experiences, existing knowledge, assumptions about the world and theories about knowledge and how it is accrued. The researcher's conceptual lens acts as a filter: the importance placed on the huge range of observations made in the field (choosing to record or note some observations and not others, for example) is partly determined by this filter (Carroll & Swatman, 2000, pp. 118-119).

A research paradigm is a set of important theories and viewpoints on how the world is understood, and this provides a thinking framework that will assist and guide how the researcher will act (Jonker & Pennink, 2010). A research paradigm is fundamental to the research design and influences the way in which the research questions are asked and how they will be studied (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

In this section, I defend why a particular research approach was chosen to study the phenomenon in question.

The first question to ask before conducting research relates to the paradigm that will be applied to the study, as it significantly influences how one embarks on a social study from the way of structuring and comprehending social phenomena (Berry & Otley, 2004; Creswell, 2009; Neuman, 2011; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). Interpretive analysis is known as a reconstructive process of retelling a participant's story, and attempts to render daily behaviour meaningful within a particular context. It is "engaged in a process of trying to make the strange familiar" (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 139). Therefore, for the purpose of this study I will discuss interpretivism to defend my decision to choose this research paradigm for the study.

"Research is interpretive if it is assumed that our knowledge of reality is gained only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, documents and other artefacts" (Klein & Myers,1999, p.69). Interpretivism is used to gain insights through finding out meanings and improving our understanding of the whole (Neil, 2006). I therefore focused on understanding and interpret what of 'social actors' meant and to appreciate their viewpoints, which are highly contextual and therefore not widely generalisable (Saunders et al., 2007). I therefore undertook to make sense of what people think and feel, as well as how they converse, whether verbally or through non-verbal cues, which is also considered essential (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2008).

This is a subjective paradigm and the significance of language is linked to the qualitative approach to gathering data (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Interpretive approaches view human understanding as a circular process in which analysis attempts to uncover and recreate meaning (Gioirgi et al., 1979; Packer & Addison, 1989). This involves more than summarising the content of human behaviour, but also takes into consideration the complexities of human understanding in terms of processes, functions, tensions and contradictions (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). Interpretivism (Carson, Gilmore, Perry & Gronhaug, 200l) can be described as:

1. Being enthused by a sequence of qualitative ideas and approaches
2. Taking account of the main characteristics of the research paradigm, in contrast to positivism
3. Permitting the researcher to focus on what is taking place in a given circumstance
4. Taking several realities into consideration, such as the different perspectives, researcher participation, and background of the study.

The following assumptions of the interpretivist perspective are highlighted below (Maree, 2010, p. 59):

3.2.4.1   *Human life can only be understood from within*

Interpretivism concentrates on people's subjective experiences, how they share meaning and their interaction with others in their social world.. Therefore, in this research study, I

used semi-structured interviews that will help understand how these educated Indian women make their decisions not to pursue careers.

3.2.4.2   *Social life is a distinctively human product*

The interpretivist approach assumes that reality is not objectively determined, but socially constructed. Therefore I will understand the women's individual experiences that led to their decisions not to pursue careers, and also to understand and interpret the meanings raised in the multiple identities that these women face.

3.2.4.3   *The human is a purposeful source or origin of meaning*

The study will explore the richness, depth and complexity of why these educated Indian women do not pursue careers by conducting semi-structured interviews so that I can develop an understanding of the reasons why these educated Indian women do not pursue careers.

3.2.4.4   *The social world does not exist independently of human knowledge*

In an interpretivist approach the researcher's own knowledge and understanding of phenomena will constantly influence the researcher in the questions to be asked and the way research is conducted. Therefore, as I am Indian, I also need to conceive the world as external, and consequently will need understand their reasons for not pursuing careers and ignore the subjectivity of my own endeavours.

In this study I served as the instrument for understanding and interpreting the reasons why educated Indian women are not pursuing careers.

3.2.5   Key Scientific Beliefs

In this section I will defend the research approach that was selected by elaborating on the key scientific beliefs according to the interpretive approach, which is the research paradigm used for this study. The two main key scientific beliefs to distinguish existing research paradigms are known as ontology and epistemology (Kalof, Dan & Dietz, 2008; Laughlin, 1995; Saunders et al., 2009). Guba and Lincoln (1994) state that researchers

need to clearly state both their ontological and epistemological assumptions before starting any research study (see Table 3.1). Answering the ontological question, "What is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what is there that can be known about it" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108) is the initial step in how researchers can approach a research problem. This is related to knowledge and the development of that knowledge, and the two scientific beliefs will be discussed in further detail (Wahyuni, 2012).

Table 3.1: Ontology and epistemology

Ontological assumptions	Epistemological assumptions
Reality is not directly created in individual interpretation and is subjective	"Knowledge is gained through a strategy that respects the differences between people and the objects of natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action" (Bryman, cited in Grix, 2004, p. 64)
Individuals do their own interpretation, formulate understandings and associate meanings with events	Knowledge is gained inductively to create a theory.
Events are unique, therefore cannot be generalised	Knowledge stems from specific situations and is incapable of basic interpretation
There are numerous points of view on a single incident	Knowledge is expanded through individual experience
Causation in social sciences is determined by interpreted meaning and symbol	

Source: Mack (2010)

3.2.5.1 _Ontology_

Blaikie (1993,p.6) explains the term ontology as "the science or study of being", and extends this description to the social sciences to include "claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other". Therefore there are multiple constructs of reality, and perceptions of reality might change throughout the process of the research (Mertens, 1998). In ontology you can become aware that the existence of reality is external and self-sufficient of social actors and their interpretations of it, which is known as objectivist (Saunders et al., 2009) or realist (Neuman, 2011). On the

flip side, subjectivist or nominalist adopter theory considers reality to be reliant on social actors and presumes that individuals add to social phenomena (Wayuni, 2012, p. 69).

From an ontological perspective I was able to access the life stories of the educated Indian women who are not pursuing careers and who participated in the study, and gained an understanding of the various types of reasons why they are not pursuing careers (in terms of culture, religion, family dynamics, societal expectations and individual factors). I was interested in finding out the reality of why educated Indian women are not pursuing careers and not being part of the South African labour force.

3.2.5.2   *Epistemology*

Epistemology of interpretivism refers to a concern to explore and comprehend the social world, using both the participants' and the researcher's understandings (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Epistemology takes into account the views concerning the most suitable way of questioning the nature of the world (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008) and 'what is knowledge' and what are the sources and limits of knowledge (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Chia (2002) describes epistemology as how and what it is possible to know, and the need for reflection on procedure and standards through which consistent and confirmable knowledge is produced.

The interpretive researcher's epistemological assumption is that "findings are literally created as the investigation proceeds " (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). The interpretive approach explicitly recognises that "understanding social reality requires understanding how practices and meanings are formed and informed by the language and tacit norms shared by humans working towards some shared goal" (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991, p. 14).

Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) state that epistemology is about 'knowing how you can know' and, by expanding and enquiring how knowledge is created, what criteria are drawn up differentiating between good and bad knowledge, and how truth can be symbolised or explained.

I adopted interpretivism as the epistemological perspective most suited to the study, as I was interested in the reasons why educated Indian women do not pursue careers and wanted to gain a deeper understanding of the background, journeys and reasons that led to the decisions of them not being part of the South African labour force. I am also Indian and knowledge was gained through personal experience.

3.3   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research can be explained as a systematic attempt to examine a particular problem that needs an answer or solution and provides the desired information that guides researchers to make conversant decisions to successfully deal with the problem (Rahamah & Abdullah 2008). The information that is presented could be the result of a careful analysis of data gathered first, or of data that is already on hand. According to Sekaran (2003), a study is investigated for two different reasons. Firstly is to explain an existing problem faced and demand a timely solution. Secondly is to create a body of knowledge by trying to identify with of how certain problems that occur can best be understood.

3.3.1   The research setting

Educated Indian women who were not pursuing careers were chosen for the study, eight from the Muslim and eight from the Hindu religion.

3.3.2   Sampling

There are a number of methods of sampling that are available in qualitative research: the sampling strategies that the researcher makes use of have to be described and clarified and should relate to the objectives of the study (Law et al., 1998). Hancock (2002) states that: there are several sampling techniques that can be used in a quantitative study. Sampling tries to find out and verify the representativeness of findings through the random selection of individuals and, in qualitative sampling, methods are concerned with finding specific information from specific groups and subgroups in the population. "Sampling in qualitative research is purposeful and the process used to select participants should be clearly described" (Law et al., 1998, p. 6). Purposeful sampling chooses participants for a reason, e.g. age, traditions, experience, and not just by chance.

3.3.2.1 _Target population_

The target population of the current research study was educated Indian women who were not pursuing careers. A total of 17 participants were interviewed – eight Hindu and nine Muslim women, as they make up the biggest portion of Indian culture. Figure 10 below illustrates how I selected the participants.

Figure 3.2: Illustration of sampling design
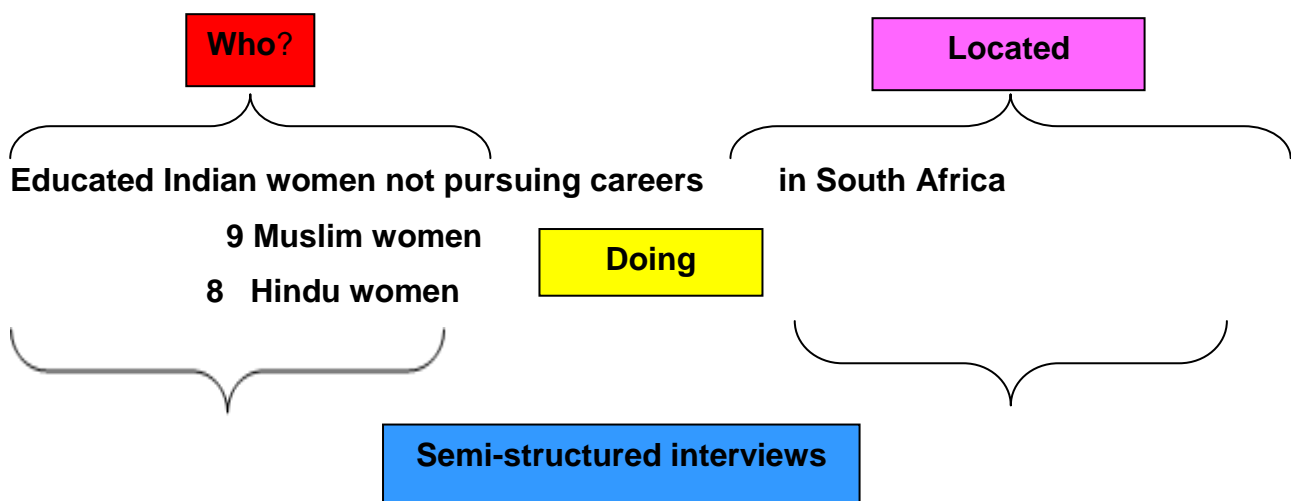
3.3.2.2 _Sampling method_

The non-probability sampling method is a sampling technique that provides a convenient way for researchers to assemble a sample with little or no cost and/or for those research studies that do not require representativeness of the population (Babbie,1990). In nonprobability sampling, subjective judgments play a specific role (Henry, 1990). MacNealy (1999,p. 155-157) states that there are three types of such nonprobability sampling techniques: purposeful, convenience, and snowball. Specifically, purposive sampling and snowball sampling were used for this study.

According to O'Neil (2010, p. 32), purposive sampling "is when the researcher uses his or her judgement to choose respondents as they meet the purpose of the study". A sample is selected on the basis of what the researcher thinks to be a common person. Therefore, educated Indian mothers not pursuing careers were selected because they were judged to be distinctive of the population under study. The judgement can be based either on the

'typical' person the researcher wants to include (modal instance sampling) or 'expert' persons. The purpose of this narrative research study was to understand and discover reasons that prevented educated Indian women from pursuing careers (many Indian women pursue tertiary educations but do not end up working). This study was conducted only among South African Indian women who have studied at any tertiary institution and received a certificate, diploma, undergraduate or postgraduate degree, etc. and who are not pursuing a career.

Snowball sampling is used when members of a desired population are difficult to identify, for example people who are working while claiming employment benefits (Saunders et al., 2007). You therefore would make contact with a single or two cases of the population, then ask them to identify additional cases, thirdly ask the new cases to identify other cases that they are aware of, and fourthly not continue when there are no new cases or the sample is too large. This non-probability sampling method was suitable for this research study, as educated Indian women will be able to identify other potential respondents who are similar to themselves and this will also result in a homogeneous sample (Lee, 1993). Therefore, because educated Indian women who are not pursuing careers are difficult to identify, snowball sampling was used to identify them.

3.4   DATA COLLECTION

3.4.1   Life Story Interviews

The life history approach in qualitative research highlights the importance of presenting the individual's personal evaluation of his or her experiences and of giving information about his or her social experiences or context; it is the account of a life, completed or ongoing (Rahamah et al., 2008).

Life story, or biographical, interviewing is described by German sociologist Schutze (1983, 1984) as an attempt to understand the meanings that individuals give to their lives and the social occurrences that they have experienced throughout their lives. According to Goodson and Sikes (2001, p. 87), a life story is concerned with understanding a person's view and account of their life – the story they tell about their life. The life story method is classified as one that focuses on the understandings and importance that people give to

their own life experiences (Chaitin, 2004). Chaitin (2004) also highlights various assumptions of the life story approach, which substantiate why I chose this approach:

- One major underlying assumption of the life case mode of interviewing is that each individual has a unique story to tell and a unique understanding of that experience and must in full and open manner allows this uniqueness to find expression.
- Rosenthal (1993, 1998) states that, from life story interviews, one will gain understanding of the individual's insight into the particular social structures, dynamics, cultural values, morals and norms.
- Life stories can be interpreted and analysed because when the respondents relate their life story, they are choosing what to say and how to say it. In this particular study, the life story approach is appropriate because I as the researcher used semi-structured interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the background of these educated Indian women to understand their life story and thereby to get a better understanding of the reasons why they are not pursuing careers.

3.4.2   Biographical data of the sample

Table 5 depicts the biographical data of the sample of women who participated in the main interview phase. Each participant was given a pseudonym so that her anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed. To protect the women's anonymity and confidentiality, I also used ranges for some of the biographical details in the table. (See Annexure C for a short narrative profile of the women.)

Table 3.2: Biographical data of the women in the study

Pseudonyms	Age	Religion	Years studied	Qualification
Kareena Chetty	32	Hindu	3 years	Fashion Design and Marketing Diploma
Karishma Zinta	35	Hindu	5 years	Occupational Therapist and Hand Therapy (Postgraduate)
Shilpa Kapoor	42	Hindu	6-7 Years	Medical Herbalist, and a QXCI course
Raveena Rai	32	Hindu	5 years	Textile Design and Technology
Ashwariya Arora	62	Hindu	5 Years	Teacher
Amrita Tandon	34	Hindu	5 years	BA Degree in Teaching and Postgraduate Diploma
Bipasha Padkoune	25	Hindu	4 years	BA in Information Design
Deepika Mirza	29	Hindu	6 years	BSc in Construction Management
Diya Bassu	52	Muslim	11 years	BA Degree, Higher Education Diploma, Horticulture, Honours in Psychology, BA Psych
Esha Kulkarni	41	Muslim	4 years	BA Art and an HDE
Jaya Chopra	23	Muslim	5 years	BCom Financial Management
Rani Khan	29	Muslim	3 years	BA Art and then an HDE
Juwi Kapoor	27	Muslim	8 years	CA SA
Rima Balan	28	Muslim	3 years	Natural Sciences, Biochemistry, Cell Biology and Human Physiology
Vidya Sen	29	Muslim	3 and half years	Accounting Degree
Sonam Chawla	50	Muslim	3 years	Teaching
Sonali Deol	31	Muslim	4 years	BCom Econometrics

3.4.3 Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative interviews have been categorised in various ways, with many current texts loosely differentiating qualitative interviews as unstructured, semi-structured and structured (Bernard, 1988; Crabtree & Miller, 1999; Fontana & Frey, 2005). Qualitative interviewing commences with the supposition that the viewpoint of the other is important, inevitable, and able to be made precise. Interviews are done to investigate what is in and on someone else's mind, and to gather their stories (Patton, 2002). Therefore I asked educated Indian mothers why they were not working. The aim of qualitative interviewing is to acquire rich descriptive data that will assist the researcher to understand and gain insight into the participant's construction of knowledge and social reality (Maree, 2010). A semi-structured interview is a technique that is used in research projects in the social sciences to support data emerging from other data sources (Maree, 2010). It also allows a researcher to probe for answers and to clarify answers (Maree, 2010). Semi-structured interviews are used to give and receive information, and use an open structure that allows for focused, conversational, two-way communication.

Semi-structured interviews are supposed to be the single data source that is used in a qualitative study (Adams et al., 2002) and are planned in advance to be done at a preferred time and place outside of everyday events (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). This type of interview structure is organised around preset, open-ended questions, and can include other questions that arise from the conversation between the interviewer and the respondent (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

The researcher conducting semi-structured interviews is freer than when conducting a structured interview (Kajornboon, 2004, p. 75), as the interviewer does not have to adhere to a detailed interview guide. Probing will assist the researcher to explore new paths that were not considered (Gray, 2004, p. 217). David and Sutton (2004, p.87) state that having "… key themes and sub-questions in advance lies in giving the researcher a sense of order from which to draw questions from unplanned encounters" (David& Sutton, 2004, p. 87). Patton (2002, p. 343) recommends to "… explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject … to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined". The semi-structured

interview is beneficial for life history interviews, as it reveals a personal biography and is a potentially powerful method for understanding another's life story (Atkinson, 1998; Birren & Birren, 1996). In addition, all the interviews are conducted face to face, and this ensures that the interviewer obtains in-depth information. The interviewer is also able to pick up on the candidate's non-verbal cues (facial expressions/body language), which can give a clearer indication of the candidate's true and honest feelings/emotions.

Table 3.3: Strengths and Weaknesses of semi-structured interviews

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Attempts to establish rapport with the interviewee • Allows for greater coverage • Allows the interviewer to pursue novel areas • Produces richer data • Structure and sequencing of questions are pre-determined, although interviewer will be encouraged to probe for answers • The interviewee shares more openly during the interview and may introduce a concept that the researcher may have not thought of	• Reduces control the interviewer has over the structure, and the ability to think of questions during the interview, and the articulateness of the respondent. • Takes longer to carry out because the respondent is seen as the experiential expert on the topic in question, and therefore should be allowed enough time to give their own story • Depth of qualitative information makes it harder to analyse

Source: Smith & Osborn (2007)

3.4.4   Data recording

Doing interviews using an audio-recorder was the preferred method of data recording. The interviewee is seen as a subject and an irreplaceable person from whom the interviewer wants to gather information. Because semi-structured interviews were used, they could take an unexpected turn or be longer than anticipated. It also is difficult for interviewers to accurately write down what is said in an interview while simultaneously observing non-verbal cues and so forth. It therefore is important for researchers to record their interviews in order to improve the quality, reliability and validity of their research findings. A good tape recorder is essential in interviewing, as it can be used to capture what is said and how it is said (Patton, 2002). Patton (1990, p. 348) states that a tape recorder is "indispensable",

while Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 241) "do not recommend recording except for unusual reasons". Audio-recording ensures that the entire interview is captured and allows for complete data analysis later, so cues that were not attended to during the interview the can be recognised when listening to the recording again (Carrim, 2012). Legard, Keegan and Ward (2003) say that the researcher should make use of audio-recording as well as take notes during the interview, as this allows the researcher to pay close attention to the interview as well as to probe in depth.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) base their suggestion relating to the inappropriateness of recording devices on the likelihood of technical or mechanical failure. However, recordings are advantageous because they capture data more dependably than speedy annotation, and can making it simpler and easier for the researcher to pay more attention to the interview (Hoepfl, 1997). In order to improve the quality of this research study, a voice recorder was utilised. Each participant was told the benefits of recording the interview, was assured of confidentiality and explained how the tapes and transcripts would be stored. I transcribed the taped interviews after the interviews were completed.

3.5   PILOT STUDY

The pilot test assisted the research in finding out if there are flaws, limitations, or other weaknesses within the interview design and will allow him or her to make necessary revisions prior to the implementation of the study (Kvale, 2007). The concept of a *pilot study* is used in various ways in social science research. It is also known as a feasibility study, which is a "small scale version[s], or trial run[s], done in preparation for the major study" (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2001, p. 467). A pilot study is done on individuals that have similar interests to those who will participate in the main study and helps researchers with the refinement of research questions, which will be discussed in the next section (Turner, 2010, p. 757).

An advantage of conducting a pilot study is that it might give advance warning about where the main research project could fail, where research procedure may not be followed, or whether proposed methods or instruments are unsuitable or too complicated. De Vaus (1993, p. 54) says that it is safer to do a pilot test then take the risk. These are

vital reasons for doing a pilot study, but there are other reasons why one was conducted for this study, as set out in the Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Reasons for doing a pilot study

• To develop and test the adequacy of research instruments
• To evaluate the viability of doing a full-scale study
• To decide on the best procedure to use in the research
• To make a decision about whether the research procedure is realistic and workable
• To establish whether the technique used for sampling is appropriate and effective
• To assess the chance of choosing the sampling size
• To spot logistical problems that might arise when using the projected methods
• Estimating variability in outcomes to help determining sample size
• To collect preliminary data
• To make sure that the techniques of data analysis will expose potential problems

Source: De Vaus (1993)

3.6   DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a systematic search for meaning. It is a way to process qualitative data so that what has been learned can be communicated to others. Analysis means organizing and interrogating data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories. It often involves synthesis, evaluation, interpretation, categorization, hypothesizing, comparison, and pattern finding (Hatch, 2002, p. 148).

3.6.1   Content Analysis

Qualitative data analysis occurs in the data collection phase of the study so that the researcher can produce an emerging understanding of the research questions, which in turn informs both the sampling and the questions being asked. This process of data collection and analysis ultimately leads to a point in the data collection where no new themes arise (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

The data was analysed through content analysis, which is defined as an organised, replicable method for reducing countless words in transcripts to fewer content categories, based on the clear guidelines of the coding process (Berelson, 1952; Krippendorff, 1980; Weber, 1990). Content analysis also helps to understand the raw data by looking at it from various angles (Maree, 2008). Maree (2008) further states that content analysis is an inductive and iterative process in which the researcher looks for relationships and dissimilarities in texts that would disconfirm or corroborate a theory. Therefore this study made use of content analysis to identify categories or themes by using coding.

3.6.1.1   *ATLAS.ti*

ATLAS.ti is a computer program that was developed recently, following the proliferation of personal computers since the early 1980s (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). From the time of the early revolutionary software, such as the Ethnograph (Seidel, Kjolseth & Seymour, 1988), has emerged very refined programs like ATLAS.ti (Weitzman, 2000), Folio Views and NVivo (Meadows & Dodendorf, 1999). Atlas ti even offers the intriguing potential of coding untranscribed digital segments of interviews.

Qualitative data analysis therefore can be supported by making use of computer-aided software, such as ATLAS.ti (Muhr, 1994, 1997a, 1997b). ATLAS.ti is a well-known program for qualitative data analysis, and for text, visual and audio data (Smit, 2002, p. 65). The program supports and helps the researcher throughout the data analysis phase, when transcripts are analysed and understanding is gained using coding and by making notes on activities (Smit, 2002). This study used this software, which simplified the process of data analysis (see diagram in Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: Illustration of data analysis
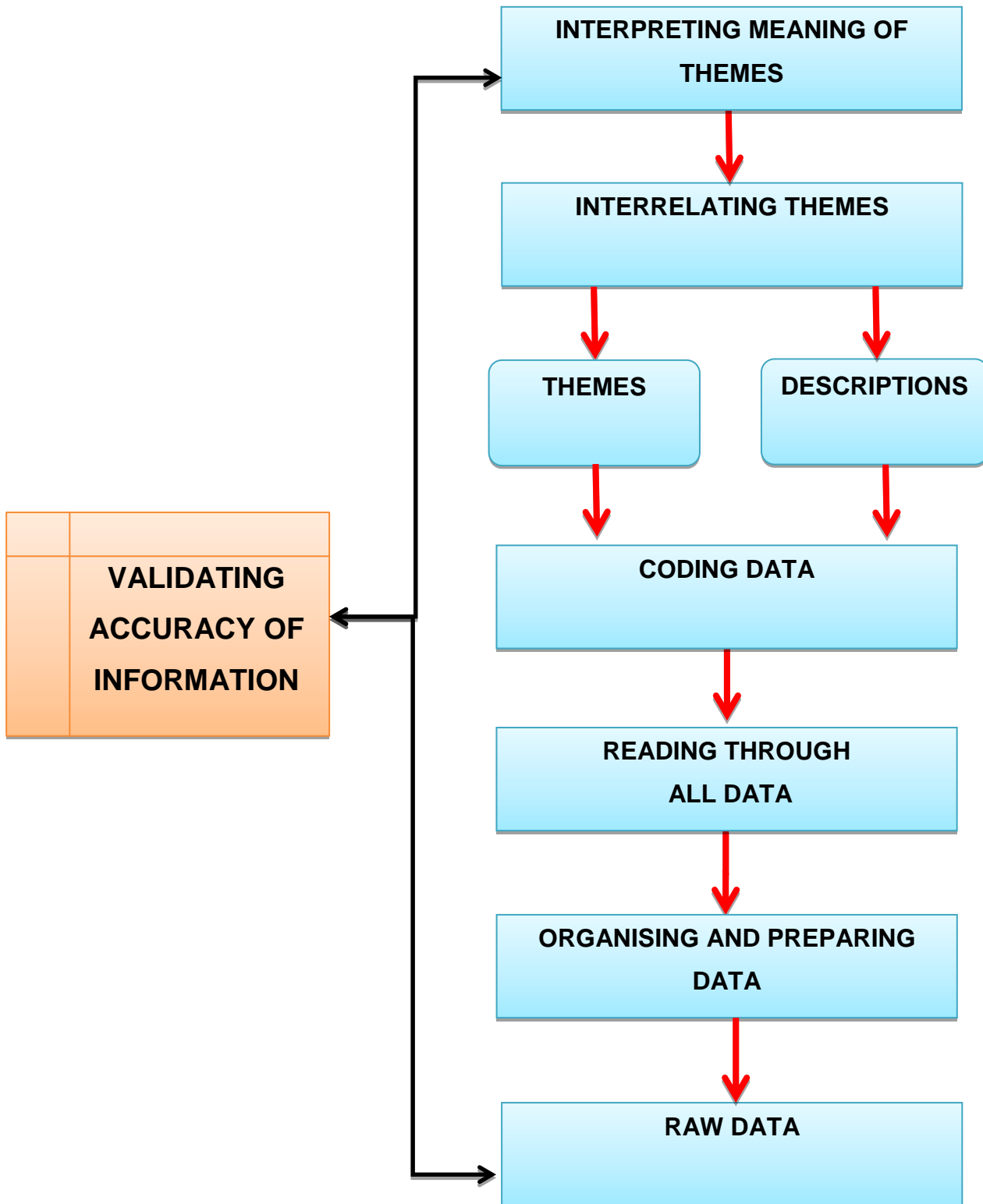
Source: Creswell (2009, p. 185)

3.6.1.2 _Data analysis through coding_

Bogdan and Biklen (1982, p. 145) state that qualitative data analysis is "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others". Creswell (2009) highlighted the following steps that are used in data analysis:

Step 1 Organise and prepare

The procedure of handling big amounts of qualitative data can be done by actually physically sorting and storing slips of paper, or by using a computer program created to support researchers in this phase of the study (Hoepfl, 1997).

Step 2 Reading

Read through all the data and try to make sense of it so it is easier to code.

Step 3 Begin detailed analysis/coding

Analysis starts with identifying themes that emerge from the raw data. This process is sometimes referred to as "open coding" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). During open coding, the researcher identifies and cautiously names the conceptual categories into which the information observed will be grouped (Hoepfl, 1997). Similarly, Miles and Huberman (1994) state that analysis means breaking down into pieces or to break down the data, labelled as "coding". Dey (1993.p.30) describes data analysis as "a process of resolving data into its constituent components, to reveal its characteristic elements and structure."

Step 4 Use coding to generate peoples' answers and categories

"The purpose of coding is to not only describe but, more importantly, to acquire new understanding of a phenomenon of interest. Therefore, causal events contributing to the phenomenon; descriptive details of the phenomenon itself; and the ramifications of the phenomenon under study must all be identified and explored" (Hoepfl, 1997).

Step 5 Advance how the description and themes will be presented

These distinct categories, known as open coding, are evaluated and combined in innovative ways as the researcher begins to assemble the "big picture" and build the puzzle together (Hoepfl, 1997).

Step 6 Make an interpretation of the meaning of the data

The researcher must interpret the conceptual model into a storyline that will be read by others (Hoepfl, 1997).

3.7   ASSESSING AND DEMONSTRATING THE QUALITY AND RIGOUR THE PROPOSED RESEARCH DESIGN

Qualitative validity can be described as the manner in which the researcher checks data for accuracy by making use of procedures, while qualitative reliability is described as whether the research methods are constant across different researchers and different projects (Gibbs, 2007).

Validity is determined by the findings and whether they are accurate from the viewpoint of the researcher, the participants and the reader (Creswell & Miller, 2000). If the validity or trustworthiness can be maximised or tested, then a more "credible and defensible result" (Johnson, 1997, p. 283) may lead to generalisability. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 316) state that "[s]ince there can be no validity without reliability (and thus no credibility without dependability), a demonstration of the former is sufficient to establish the latter". However, these authors also suggest ways that may develop the dependability of qualitative research through the use of an "inquiry audit", in which assessors scrutinise both the development and the results of the research for consistency (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 317).

Gibbs (2007) states two reliability procedures:
- Checking transcripts to ensure that they do not contain obvious mistakes made during transcriptions.

- Ensuring that there are no drifts in the definitions of codes by constantly comparing the data with codes.

Creswell (2009) names the following validating strategies:

- Making use of member checking by determining the accuracy of qualitative findings by showing participants the findings and determining whether the participants feel that they are accurate. Also, using follow-up interviews to provide the participants with an opportunity to comment further.
- Making use of thick descriptions of findings so that the readers can transport themselves to the setting and experience an element of shared feelings.
- Clarifying the bias that the researcher brings to the study. I am an educated Indian women and, as such, bring certain biases to the study. Therefore the proposed study report will include comments about interpretations of the findings and how personal bias may have influenced them.
- Presenting negative or discrepant information that runs counter to the themes, and by showing this as contradictory.

3.7.1   Credibility,transferability,dependability,conformability

If there were only one truth, you couldn't paint a hundred canvases on the same theme (Pablo Picasso, 1966)

Qualitative researchers, who use an interpretive paradigm in their studies, think of trustworthiness as contrasting to the conventional, positivistic criteria of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Padgett, 1998). Consequently, procedures used for verification in the research design will be discussed. The aims of the research required attention to be given to the participants' perspectives. This is because, as Harre and Gillett (1994, p. 21) concludes, "once one sees the tasks of understanding human behaviour as involving interpretation and empathy rather than prediction or control the self-report of the subject become very important".

The aim of the research was to better understand the reasons why educated Indian women do not pursue careers, and the verifiability of the findings were tested by

trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, as equivalents for internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Table 3.5: Lincoln and Guba's translation of terms

Conventional inquiry	Procedures for verification	Methods to *ensure quality*	Authors
	Trustworthiness	Triangulation of data sources Thoroughness and accuracy in data collection and recording Extensive number of informants	Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Patton, 1990
Internal validity	Credibility	Member checks; long-lasting engagement in the field; data triangulation Negative case analysis Demonstration of logical chain analysis	Miles & Huberman, 1984; Patton, 1990; Yin, 1994
External validity	Transferability	Thick description of setting and/or participants Data methods documented in detail	Geertz, 1983; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 1990
Reliability	Dependability	Audit – researcher's documentation of data, methods and decisions; researcher triangulation	Maxwell, 1996; Yin, 1994
Objectivity	Confirmability	Audit and reflexivity	Lather, 1991; Miles & Huberman, 1984

Source: Adapted from Lincoln and Guba (1985); Ballinger (2006)

3.7.1.1 _Credibility_

Credibility is an "adequate representation of the constructions of the social world under study" (Bradley, 1993, p. 436). There are a number of suggested ways that would assist in improving the credibility of the research results, and this is done by using long-lasting engagement in the field, constantly observing, triangulation, negative case analysis, checking interpretations against raw data, peer debriefing, and member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Below are Shenton's (2004) measures of credibility, which I used to justify the extent to which my study achieved credibility.

- **_The adoption of research methods well established_**; I conducted the study employing well-established qualitative methods such as life story interviews to gain an in-depth understanding of why educated Indian women do not pursue careers.

- **_The development of an early acquaintance with the culture of the participants_** before the first data collection dialogues take place; this was achieved by a visit before the actual interview to build a relationship of trust between the participants and myself. Also, because I am an Indian woman, the participants felt comfortable talking to me. However, my familiarity with Indian culture and personal experiences did not interfere with the interview.

- **_Triangulation_** with regard to the data sources; I sought the opinion of a Moulana from the Muslim religion and a priest from the Hindu religion, as they are familiar with Indian culture and the respective religions. These people provided insight into Indian culture and religion in respect of certain issues that were highlighted during the interviews. The respective religions does not stop Indian women from working.

- **_Tactics to assist in making sure of honesty in the informants_** _when_ contributing data were used, and I allowed each participant who had been approached for the study an opportunity to refuse to participate. Even before the interview commenced, I informed the participants that the utmost care would be taken to ensure

confidentiality. Also, the participants were free to withdraw at any stage of the study and that they did not need to provide any reason for doing so.

- *Frequent debriefing sessions between the researcher and her superiors*; through discussions, my ideas could be broadened as others bring to bear their understanding and perceptions. The meetings also served as a sounding board for developing ideas and interpretations. The supervisor constantly challenged me to provide more detailed and thick descriptions about the complexities of the women's life stories to enhance the quality of my interpretations and analysis.

- *Member checks*; Guba and Lincoln (1985) state that member checks can strengthen a study. Some participants were asked to read the text of the interviews and were given an opportunity to state whether their words matched what they actually intended to say.

- *Thick description of the phenomenon under scrutiny*; I used thick descriptions in the current study, which will help with the credibility of the study.

3.7.1.2   *Transferability*

Transferability means that other researchers can relate the findings of the current study to that which they have done (Bowen, 2005, p. 216). Transferability emphasises the significance of the researcher, conveying to the readers and the limitations of the study Cole & Gardener, 1979; Marchionini & Teague, 1987; Pitts, 1994). Shenton (2004, p. 70) states that the following information on the issues should be taken into consideration, and these measures of transferability justify the extent to which my study achieved transferability:

- Any boundaries in the type of people who contributed data;
- The number of individuals who will be involved in the field work was stated in the sampling section of this chapter;
- The data collection methods that were used were discussed in detail to justify the use thereof;
- The number and duration of the data collection sessions were also discussed.

3.7.1.3 _Dependability_

Dependability refers to "the coherence of the internal process and the way the researcher accounts for changing conditions in the phenomena" (Bradley, 1993, p. 437). I kept records of my recordings of the interviews, interview transcripts, all correspondence with the participants and also the ATLAS.ti document that was used to extract the themes. These were stored in a secure place in line with the ethical requirements. Shenton (2004, p. 71) states that dependability can be achieved to allow the person who reads the research report to develop a methodical understanding of the methods and their effectiveness. This includes:

a) The research design that was used and how it was implemented, which provides an explanation of what was carried out on a strategic level;

b) The operational detail of data gathering, which deals with what was done in the field;

c) Reflective appraisal of the project, which is the evaluation stage during which I evaluated the effectiveness of the study.

3.7.1.4 _Confirmability_

Confirmability refers to "the extent to which the characteristics of the data, as posited by the researcher, can be confirmed by others who read or review the research results" (Bradley, 1993, p. 437). The concept of confirmability is the qualitative investigator's similar concern to objectivity, thus steps must be taken to make sure that the findings are the result of the experience and ideas of the informant's characteristics and the preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004, p. 72).

I tried to remain as objective as possible when conducting the current research, as I am also an Indian woman. Various forms of triangulation were used to reduce my personal bias, as stated above. Substantive reasoning was provided for why the qualitative method and interpretivism were used rather than other methods. I also described the data that was collected and the procedure that was followed in the present study.

3.8   RESEARCH ETHICS

Ethical issues in the research problem

According to Punch (2005), during the identification of the problem the researcher (which is me) identifies a problem that will benefit individuals (its academic value) and will also be meaningful for others, not only me.

Ethical issues in the purpose questions

Sarantakos (2005) states when, developing the purpose statement, one needs to convey the actual purpose of study so that this can be described to the participants; this is what I also tried to do.

Ethical issues in data collection

The following are things the participants should be aware of (O'Neil, 2010). Also see the attached consent form in Appendix B.

- Study objective
- Risks of potential harm
- Outcome of data collection
- Confidentiality
- Withdraw at any time

Protecting research participants and honouring trust (O'Neil, 2010)

Each candidate was contacted telephonically to enquire about their availability. Each candidate volunteered for participation. A meeting was set up at a time which both I and the respondent agreed upon. The participants were also aware of the fact that a consent form needed to be signed and that the interview would be recorded.

Anticipating harms: protect research participants as far as possible against the potentially harmful effects of research (O'Neil, 2010)

Prior to the interview being conducted, possible interview questions were sent to the participants via email. This was done so that they would have an idea of what questions to expect and prepare for. If the participant was uncomfortable with the questions and felt that they were not aligned with the aim of the research, the questions could be discussed and changed. The aim of this research study was clearly stated in the email.

Negotiating informed consent and rights to confidentiality and anonymity (O'Neil, 2010)

Before the interview began, the participants were required to read and complete the informed consent document. This document outlines the major aspects of the interview, with reference to the objective of the research, the parties concerned, that the data obtained from the interview will be kept confidential, and who would have access to such information. The participants' agreement was then signed.

Participants' involvement in research (O'Neil, 2010)

During the interview, the participants were encouraged to ask me to clarify any questions. They were welcome to skip questions that posed discomfort.

Fair return for assistance (O'Neil, 2010)

At the conclusion of the interview the participants were thanked for their assistance and co-operation.

Ethical issues in data analysis procedures

According to Creswell (2009):
- Data once analysed needs to be kept for a certain period of time
- and personal agreements designate ownership of research data (Berg, 2005, cited in Creswell, 2009).

The interpretation of the data needs to be as accurate as possible.

3.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I described the research design and research methodology, which formed the foundation of this research project. I also differentiated between the ontological and epistemological stance that I would use. The life story approach was discussed and how the life story interviews contributed to the study. Content analysis was used to identify themes from my in-depth interviews. I also discussed the ethical issues and their impact on the study.

CHAPTER 4:
FINDINGS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Most adults have multiple roles and group memberships with which they identify and in which they find meaning; the Indian women participating in this study also have various roles to play with which they have to identify and in which they find meaning (Settles, 2004).

The focus in Chapters 4 and 5 is on the 17 women who participated in the main part of the study. Pseudonyms are used when quoting the women's words to protect their identities. Identifying information is also left out to maintain confidentiality, which is part of the ethical considerations that were taken to account during this study.

I was interested in investigating the factors that have an impact on the reasons why married Indian women who are educated are not pursuing careers, and to understand the multitude of factors that influence their decisions. In order to understand their decisions, I probed into their early lives to ascertain the beliefs systems in which they were raised with regard to women being educated and pursuing careers, as well as the opportunities the women had within the social and historical context, and to understand if the macro-environment impacted on their decisions in any way. I specifically probed to understand more about the Indian cultural perspective on educating females, the macro-environment, societal expectations, family structures, traditional gender roles, husbands, motherhood, extended families, in-laws, and their adherence to religious precepts relating to women pursuing careers.

The life story approach therefore was used to obtain a holistic view of the reasons why these educated women gave up on their careers and how they negotiated their various identities to reach this decision.

The participants in this study shared their life stories and at certain times the discussion caused emotional distress. By giving up on their careers they had lost a piece of their identity, and these were views that were common to both me as researcher and the

participants. I realised that my own subjectivity in this interpretation might filter through the understanding of these views I am about to share.

4.2   FEEDBACK FROM THE PILOT STUDY

For the pilot study I interviewed two participants, one Hindu and one Muslim, who had pursued tertiary education but were not pursuing careers. I also had a very limited glimpse of the childhood background, values, father's decision in allowing them to study, impact of the extended families, and husbands' decisions in not wanting them to pursue tertiary education. Therefore in the main study I decided to probe more into the lives of the participants to get a clearer and more holistic view to understand the reasons that led to these women not pursuing careers.

In the main study I explored the life stories of seventeen Muslim and Hindu women who were educated but not currently pursuing careers, or who had left the workforce. I did this by probing more in-depth into their childhood, their educational and career opportunities, society's expectations, the macro-environment, family structures, motherhood, work-life balance, values, and the extent to which they internalised religious and cultural views relating to women studying and pursuing professions.

4.3   OUTLINE OF RESULTS

The analysis describes factors such as the macro-environment, cultural, religious and community factors that influenced the women in the current study and how these various factors impacted on their educational and career opportunities. Furthermore, it provides an understanding of reasons why these educated women are not in the workforce and pursuing careers.

The results of the study will be discussed as illustrated in Figure 4.1, which provides an illustration of my understanding arising from the interviews and their analysis. I explore the above elements in depth, to provide an insight into and outline the complexity of the factors influencing these women not to pursue careers.

Figure 4.1 shows the four main themes of the study, namely:

- Macro-environment
- Premarital lives
- Post-marital lives
- Individual factors

The illustrated themes are ultimately impacted on by the gender and cultural identities of Indian women, with specific reference to their careers as identified in the upcoming section.

Figure 4.1: Main themes of study

GENDER AND CULTURAL IDENTITY NEGOTIATION OF EDUCATED SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN MOTHERS NOT PURSUING CAREERS

MAIN THEMES

SUB-THEMES

MACRO-ENVIRONMENT

- Apartheid
- Post-apartheid

PREMARITAL LIVES OF WOMEN

- Cultural views
- Reasons for studying
- Career restrictions
  Movement outside homes
- Role of community

POST-MARITAL LIVES OF WOMEN

- Religion and careers
- Husbands as decision makers
- In-laws' expectations
- Extended family
- Community/societal expectations

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

- Internalising cultural values
- Gender roles
- Work-life balance
- Motherhood
- Guilt trips
- Frustrations
- Dreams and aspirations
- Self-fulfilment

GENDER AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

This study has been sub-divided into four main themes, namely macro-environment, premarital lives, post-marital lives and the individual factors of the women. These themes will be discussed separately in this chapter.

4.4   MACRO-ENVIRONMENT

The macro-environment concerns major external factors that influence a given society. This study concentrates on the work life and external factors that have an influence, such as laws, rules and regulations that affect women in their work life. Further, this study concentrates on and analyses the Employment Equity Act and affirmative action in the workplace. Thus, what follows is a discussion of the above in relation to both the apartheid as well as the post-apartheid era.

4.4.1   Apartheid and post-apartheid eras

The women stated that, during the apartheid era, the South African laws, rules and regulations restricted them from pursuing tertiary education. The majority of women also stated that, during the apartheid era, their parents were never afforded the opportunity to study and the South African laws, rules and regulations never supported them in pursuing careers.

"Look life's moved on from where women are, when you used in the 1920s women used to be incapable of fending for themselves going out and work themselves, but now when we have the opportunities out there which was what you were talking about earlier the macro environment it has opened up to women so it's that much easier to work nowadays, it's much easier to study nowadays, look there's, there's your UNISA there's your Business School, various schools that you can go that if you don't, you know they make it easier for you to uh earn a tertiary qualification and to go out there to equip you basically to work."

However, the women in the study highlighted that, in the post-apartheid era, the South African laws, rules and regulations encouraged them to go out and gain tertiary education. Furthermore, various training programmes are available in the workforce so that they may equip themselves to be better in this work environment. The labour legislation, as relating to employment equity and affirmative action, therefore encourages women to work. In that

respect, the majority of the women stated that one should not use the previous South African laws, rules and regulations as an excuse for them not to pursue careers, as career opportunities are limitless. Deepika's view was similar to that of the other participants:

"I think that the fact we had apartheid that now fallen away and we are given a bigger platform to stand on being Indian females and the reason of that is because we were never afforded those opportunities our parents never got that. We are lucky enough to have and we are able to go forward and do something with that is only encouraging us more and more to do it go ahead and have a career and pursue it and become something, there's no reason why we cannot become president of this world or anything of that matter."

The next section that will be discussed is the premarital lives of the women as they were growing up in their natal homes.

4.5 PREMARITAL LIFE OF WOMEN

In order to understand the women's decisions not to pursue careers, an overview needs to be gained of their past in order to better understand their present situations. Hence the cultural upbringing of these individuals will be discussed to show how it influenced their career paths and how the various elements interacted and moulded these women into not pursuing careers. I analysed the women's life before marriage, with its culture, family obligations and societal expectations, which shaped their gender and cultural identities.

4.5.1 Culture and work

4.5.1.1 *Steeped in culture*

Culture played a big role in these women not pursuing careers, as Indian women have responsibilities that they need to fulfil as mothers, wives, daughters and also as daughters-in-law. According to some of the women, it is stated that an Indian women needs to have a compromising nature every step of the way. Esha, like some of the other women in the study, stated:

"We often in a situation where initially we have the freedom to decide in our parents' homes and when we marry especially when you marry in a joint family you expected to have these added responsibilities and added stuff. Everybody expects you to do things to please everybody else and unfortunately if an Indian women it's expected to make the compromise in every situation."

The majority of the women also stated that, as young girls growing up, they were taught values that they were expected to pass on to the next generation. The importance of family seems to be extremely significant in the lives of the women, and takes precedence over their careers. Also, the women had to see to everyone else's needs before their own. Karishma stated that family obligations were important:

"I think our values and morals that we grew up with and what our parents taught us I think we live by that and we prosper more in our career because we live by those values so I think we very much family orientated and we thrive on that support physically emotionally, financially as well. I think Indians are very supportive of the families or particular persons in their families, our decisions are based more orientated towards the family if the need be, if it's a career crisis then you have to choose but it's also based on what suits the person, what makes them happy you know, also financially important to them."

Kareena similarly stated the importance of family:

"I think the fact that we got the traditional value as that a mother should be a while at home for her kids should be a good thing, I don't think it's bad I think that values that our parents thought us is something I would like to instil in my children that your family does come first than career."

The women stated that, as they were growing up, family values played an important role in their lives and were thus instilled in them. These values continue to play an important role. Deepika stated that:

"I think as an Indian female we all have our responsibilities and duties towards our families and they do take priority over anything else, be it your career or anything else of that matter but you family takes priority so yes you have obligations towards you family."

4.5.2 Reasons for women studying

The majority of the women stated that their parents wanted them to pursue tertiary education as a form of "security" and "financial backup". This was due to the fact that their parents wanted to assist them in becoming financially independent in the event of unforeseen circumstances, like a spouse's death or divorce. Most of these women stated that one cannot plan for the future Therefore having some sort of tertiary education would help them support themselves and their family. Although the women worked for a while, their fathers emphasised that cultural obligations, such as taking care of their households, husband, in-laws and children would always take priority over their education when they were married. Juwi express her father's reasons for women studying:

"I did go and study even though I knew I will end up a housewife is that for security reasons to one day; like I said in the event I need to go and work and in today's time a matric is just not good enough you need to have some of qualification and I never know what the future holds, I never know that my husband might die at a young age or I might get divorced and things might not work out and my parents are not around to support fend for myself and my future children financially."

Basically, the majority of the women studied solely for financial backup should the need arise.

4.5.3 Career restrictions

Despite being encouraged to study by their parents, the women were also expected to pursue feminine careers, such as PA work, secretarial work or typist. According to their parents, they needed to choose careers that would still allow them to be a homemaker and mother and, as such, the career should not interfere with their roles as wives and mothers as prescribed by their culture. Ashwariya's parents, similarly to some of the other parents, emphasised that she should pursue a career that was compatible with having a family:

"Yes, my parents encouraged us to study, I have to qualify they encourage you to study in a career that was compatible with a married life. I was not encouraged to become a doctor or something that was difficult to bring up my children or any career that would affect my marriage."

- 96 -

Rima also highlighted that women within the Indian culture are encouraged to stay at home:

"Well Indians have this mentality that, although it's progressed quite a bit the, the deep secret mentality is still amongst our grandparents and our parents were born in that era still believe that women should stay at home, women should not be working if they do work they should work in some insignificant little PA work, or secretarial work or typist or something like that."

Similarly, despite being encouraged to study, the women were restricted in what fields they could pursue. This was due to the fact that family life was very important to the parents once their daughters married and had children. Juwi's parents, like other parents in the study, were also concerned about this:

"My parents were very encouraging for me to study like I said previously always thought of it as job security one day to have for yourself but at the same time my father used to encourage us to look at something to study that will be beneficial to us as a wife and a mother for example even I had a passion for accounting from school days he encouraged me to study something like that or teaching or I get work part time or work from home much easier for me than become a doctor and work odd hours of the night and wouldn't be beneficial for me as a Muslim lady."

The parents of these women also felt that a job that would require a lot of travelling was not appropriate. Once again, fathers highlighted that it was important not to choose a career that would impact negatively on family life. Esha pointed out that her father highlighted that it was not practical for Indian women to choose careers with a lot of travelling:

"When it came to choosing a career, I had initially thought about doing something more practical like Archaeology and stuff like that but my father felt it was not a job for an Indian Muslim woman with all the travelling and stuff. I think when it came to selecting a job he probably thought about the family that I was going to marry into and that I would have kids of my own and he didn't agree with me struggling along the world looking for artefacts and that kind of thing of neglecting my kids."

However, their brothers were encouraged to choose careers in which they could support their families and be breadwinners. Thus there were no limitations set upon them, whereas the women always had to study a career that suited family life. Bipasha stated that:

"*In that sense they were encouraging me to work right and be independent but I think girls are expected not too have demanding careers you know boys are always like from the time you study I remember in my household my parents were extremely liberal when we wanted to become an artist parents were fine with it, but I remember when my brother was choosing a degree and I when I already chosen my degree studied arts they said to him "you got to choose a degree with good earning power and stable hours and a whole lot of things and you got to consider that", so I said "but you never told me that when I was choosing my degree" so they said "that's because you're a girl, he's a man and one day he is going to be a provider" and I said "What is the assumption I would not be a provider for anything or anybody and I do for luxury", so it was quite a startling sort of thing to say in our household, which was relatively very liberal.*"

4.5.4   Movement outside home by women

Even though they were allowed to go to university and study, some of these women stated that they were basically on a leash before they were married and could not go out as they pleased. They always needed permission from their parents and needed to be accompanied by a family member, whereas the same limitations were not imposed on their brothers. Before being married, single women needed to consult their fathers when making decisions. Raveena summed up the feeling of gender inequality between siblings in a household, and how brothers were basically given the freedom to do what they wanted whereas as women constantly needed their father's permission as follows:

"*He gets his own way no matter what when had to go for excursions at school my parents would say no to me, my brother just went on matric vacation to Durban with his friends. I had to plan even up to now if I am going somewhere I have to tell my dad a week in advance, my brother will simply wake up and I say I going out can I have money then it is as simple as that.*"

4.5.5   Role of community in women's lives

The society and the community in which these women live has a direct impact on their decisions not to pursue careers. Knowingly and/or unknowingly, women are placed under a lot of pressure in terms of boundaries that are set by the community. These boundaries include: having a curfew, limitations on association with people as well as place, and limitations on outings, association and attire. The women also stated that, when growing up, they needed to live up to a certain standard, otherwise they would be criticised by the community. Juwi summed up some of the thoughts of the women in this study:

"Yes because their decisions are based on what people will think. As a young girl you are not allowed to go out, you not allowed to go to a club because people might see you and talk about you and you not allowed to have a boyfriend because its frowned upon so definitely in our culture what the community thinks about you is very important."

The next section focuses on the women's lives after marriage and the different aspects that had an impact on their decisions not to pursue careers.

4.6   POST-MARITAL LIFE OF WOMEN

Having gained a basic understanding of the premarital life of the women and all the factors that influence their early life, the post-marital life will now be discussed. This stage of a woman's life, together with all the influencing factors, are analysed so that one can view and evaluate the changes between these two stages.

4.6.1   Religion and careers

Religion will be discussed in two parts – in relation to Islam and to Hinduism.

I thought a priori that religion would play a significant role in the participants pursuing careers. I found that, although both Islam and Hinduism allow women to pursue tertiary education and careers, the religious injunctions were not followed by the males in the natal home and by the extended families, as the cultural practices regarding the roles of women were given precedence.

4.6.1.1   _Islam_

The women identified Islam as a religion that encourages men and women alike to gain knowledge. They gave examples in which the prophet (PBUH) encouraged and allowed his daughters to gain knowledge and thus educate themselves. There were no limits to pursuing the drive for knowledge. Thus there is always freedom to pursue education and work.

The women also stated that there is equality between men and women in all aspects in Islam. This includes the fact that none of them is limited when it involves striving for education and when pursuing a career. The only differentiating factor between women and men is that, when women go out to work they need to do it in a modest way. Therefore, religion is not a factor in these women not pursuing careers.

However, on several occasions these women confirmed that, unlike religion, cultural obligations have an impact to them in relation to them being mothers, wives, daughters and also daughters-in-law. Juwi stated her thoughts on this topic, which she shared with another participant:

"I don't think my religion Islam clearly states when we learn about knowledge when we learn about our religion it state you should seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave. But as an Indian girl as an Indian Muslim girl there's a lot of stereotypes where you as a women should, you should be at home, and a mother's place should be at home with her children and thus having a responsibility to fulfil of being a good wife and a loving mother."

Similarly, Esha stated that Islam allowed women to work as long as their religious principles were not compromised in the process:

"Well Islam allows women to work if you're the sole supporter and there's nobody else to support your family, you definitely allowed to work, provided that your work conditions and your work environment is compatible with your religion you obviously not going to work in a butchery that sells pork not going to be an escort agent, you not going to sell alcohol but you are allowed to work and one of the recommended jobs would be teaching."

4.6.1.2 _Hinduism_

The Hindu participants stated that they did not know anything that was written in the scriptures that said women should not be able to pursue careers. Hinduism also supports women who go out to get tertiary education, because times have changed in that many opportunities are available to women of all races, unlike before, where mostly men were employed and expected to be breadwinners. Taking the above into account, there are not as many restrictions as before on Hindu women. Amrita expressed the views of most of the other Hindu women in the study:

"In none of the scriptures they said the women cannot work. Husbands and wives are supposed to be equal partners and I am sure when the scriptures were written it's so old they would not talk about work and concept of work, if you look at some of our myths, the whole Mahabarat was about liberation of women."

With regard to Islam and Hinduism, women from both these religions acknowledged that religion allowed them freedom to work, but their husbands and in-laws had internalised culture to such a great extent that they negated the role of religion in allowing these women to pursue careers.

4.6.2 Husbands as decision makers

In the Indian culture, husbands are the heads of households. The participants stated that their husbands were very traditional and culturally inclined. Thus these women confirmed that their husbands were the so-called "_captains of the shi_p", which means that they had the final say. These husbands adhered to the culture and maintained that a woman's role was to be a homemaker. The women therefore were faced with gender inequality because they had to give up their careers and stay at home to look after the children. Some of the women felt inferior to their husbands, as their careers had to take a back seat compared to those of their husbands. These husbands wanted a traditional upbringing for their children and proper values to be instilled in their children. The husbands felt that wives giving up their careers were actually a small compromise for traditional values to be instilled in their children, as prescribed by culture. According to Ashwariya:

"I think the majority of the responsibility in the home is still the Indian women even if you earn as much or more than your husband even today you still are secondary to him in your home and at this stage I don't think there is equal partnership between husband and wife."

It was further reiterated by the women in the study that, although they had moved from extended/joint families into nuclear families, their husbands still made the final decisions. These husbands were influenced by extended families' expectations about what a woman's role is (discussed below). These decisions were not up for negotiation, especially when it came down to looking after their children and staying at home. Juwi said:

"He is quite strict in that sense even I am not allowed to leave the baby with the domestic worker or employ someone to help me with the baby I have to be there at all times with the baby, there was no choice in that he wanted me to stay at home with the child."

These women also stated they did not have much freedom and needed permission from their husbands to leave the house, even if it just was going down the road or grocery shopping. It was also highlighted that they were not allowed to meet friends for coffee or have a girls' weekend, and if they were to go to be out for the whole day they had to return home before their husbands to make sure supper was on the table. They felt that this was unfair because their husbands did not need permission to go out. Amirita stated that:

"He doesn't stop me but he has his ways and it's not as easy for me to go out as him, I mean he goes to China four or five times a year, he wants to meet his friends he will just phone me and say his taking you know the off ramp from highway and all he says is lock up and see you later so I can't do things at my own leisure, I can't go to the beautician without having to make all these arrangements."

Also, once the women become pregnant it is assumed that they would give up their careers to become "*stay-at-home mums*". Husbands, in-laws as well as natal families become very unsupportive towards women pursuing their careers because they believe that it is an obligation to taking care of the children. This unsupportive attitude stems from the cultural beliefs of the husbands as well as both families mentioned above. Going back into the working environment was not even up for discussion with their husbands and, if they persisted, resulted in chaos in their homes. Consequently, cultural beliefs were the

main reason for their decisions not to pursue careers. Juwi, like many other women in the study, stated that:

"Like I said my husband wasn't very favourable on me going back to work after having a baby he wanted me to be at home he didn't want me to put the baby in a crèche he wanted me to be with the baby. He is quite strict in that sense even I am not allowed to leave the baby with the domestic worker or employ someone to help me with the baby I have to be there at all times with the baby, he said there was no choice in that he wanted me to stay at home with the child."

Similarly, Amrita also stated that if she forced the issue and insisted that she wanted to go back to work it could lead to divorce:

"It will cause total havoc I think if to an extent it will even cause separation he just would not hear it."

Despite the fact that a nuclear family is expected to ease the burden, husbands still expect their wives to fulfil their responsibilities as a traditional Indian wife. Juwi stated that

"When we moved out of my in-laws' place and got a place of our own it was still expected of me even though I had a full-time job I was earning just as much as my husband I had to it was still expected of me to fill my role as a wife and to make sure the house was tidy all the responsibilities of a regular housewife had to still be fulfilled even though I was working a fulltime job. And now being at home I still have to make sure that I have the work done I still have to make sure I mean there is days that it's so hectic with the child, where I still have to make sure there is a pot of food ready for him for supper."

In addition, husbands held the leadership role at home and thus women seemed to be in a subservient role. This seemed to affect the women mentally and physically due to the fact that at work they were independent and leaders, whereas at home they were dependant and subservient. Rima stated that:

"So there's always that, that conflict between the two personalities and at home you're supposed to subdue the motivated, ambitious you and at work subdue or submit to it, uhm you know the submissive loving daughter, wife whatever."

4.7 IN-LAWS EXPECTATION OF WOMEN'S ROLES

Mothers and fathers-in-law still seemed to have a direct effect on these women's decisions not to pursue careers, even though the majority of the women in this study did not reside with them. In-laws believe that it is more important to be mothers and that a mother's duty is to bring up her own children and that this was more important than pursuing a career. The in-laws also felt that the daughters-in-law had paid too much attention to their careers in the past and that family obligations motherhood and household duties should take priority. They therefore demanded that their daughters-in-law live up to Indian cultural expectations and obligations and the women were forced to resign from their jobs. Kareena summed up the situation:

"My in-laws never really said anything about this directly but indirectly I would pick up conversations and they would make statements "Oh you were working late again" or "You have to travel again" or "Don't you think this job was too much for you right now". It's like they will never be direct or rude they would go the indirect route of asking me is the right way to go after having a family. When I now said I am finally resigning it was like: "Thank goodness, finally". I honestly believe because my in-laws are very staunch they do believe a women's place is at home because my mother-in-law always has been a housewife while my father-in-law provided and they still believe in that."

Similarly, fathers-in-law felt the same way about their daughters-in-law and expected them to be at home taking care of their families and to live up to their cultural roles and expectations. Some women also stated that their husbands were in the family business, so their fathers-in-law pressurised the husbands to force them to give up their careers and stay at home to take care of their children. Juwi stated that:

"My mother-in-law does indirectly kind of impact my decision because when the question was brought about it was clearly stated to me that every women must bring up their own child it's not someone else's responsibilities. It's my own responsibility and I should take

responsibility for it so to a certain extent my mother-in-law was not willing to look after him she felt that is my responsibility I made the child I must look after the child."

Another expectation from the in-laws was that mothers should be at home raising a family rather than going out to work because, according to the cultural beliefs, a women's place is at home taking care of the overall wellbeing of the household. In-laws also expected the women to live up to their cultural obligations, in which a significant role is that of motherhood. Diya expressed the view of many of the women when she stated that:

"I got messages from you know the family, my family and my in-laws to say that you know that it was better for you to rather be at home and be with the children rather than go out and work."

Matriarchy seemed to be dominating these women's lives. It was the matriarchal forces, like the mothers-in-law, grannies and oldest aunties, that seemed to have a greater effect on these women's decisions not to pursue careers. In a subtle manner, they seemed to get their point across as far as their views of these roles and obligations are concerned. Esha stated that:

"My mom-in-law became the head of the family then things changed, things became a lot stricter and there were more rules and conditions that came with that I think."

Patriarchy seemed to only affect these women when their husbands forced them to stay at home because they were now mothers. Other than that, there seemed to be joint decision making in some of these women's lives. Rima stated that:

"Look when it comes to everything else, there is no patriarchy it sums up like we raising the children together, like him helping out and things taking the kids to the doctor the important stuff, that I mean that we consult one another, but in times of when it comes to me personally pursuing my career there's a bit of patriarchy and egalitarianism."

4.7.1 Extended family and community /societal expectations of women

Extended families also have an indirect impact on the decisions of women because they expect of them to give up their careers and be mothers once they fall pregnant. Some of

the women stated that their natal extended families as well as their husband's extended families indirectly dictated that women should be home executives and mothers, as this was believed to be a priority for Indian women. Jaya stated that:

"They expect you to take responsibilities so I think they would rather have me focused on the house duties and seeing to the house and family instead of pursuing a career because of their old-fashioned thinking."

Also, within the Indian community being a mother is a significant role. When a woman falls pregnant she is faced with many questions, since ultimately society expects her to give up her career so that she can look after her own children. Also, when people came to visit these women they would indirectly pass comments to convince them to give up their careers and choose the path of motherhood. Deepika shared her thoughts:

"Yes there's no doubt about it that's the first question you ask once you fall pregnant and you have a qualification and you are working that's the first thing people ask oh what you going to do are you going to go back to work leave work it's the first question no doubt about that."

Diya also pointed out, like many of the women in the study:

"My husband brought our mutual friend and neighbour to chat with me and he was also trying to convince me about you know the benefits of me rather staying at home, being there for my children rather than going out to work."

The next section looks at the individual factors that had an impact on the lives of the women and also all the aspects that had an impact on the women to be in the situation they were.

4.8   INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

Individual factors are personal factors that play a role in women's lives and that affect the way they respond to circumstances they find themselves in. These circumstances are analysed with specific reference to the women not pursuing careers. I looked at aspects

such as dreams and aspirations that the women once had, and how these had changed together with the other influencing personal factors.

4.8.1 Internalising cultural values

Taking cognisance of the analysis of the macro-environment above, which relates to all women, a difference is noted with regard to Indian women specifically. The Indian culture is filled with cultural obligations, family obligations and responsibilities, family structures and traditional gender roles – all of these still seem to be a stumbling block for these women. In the study it has been confirmed by the women that they are so deeply rooted in their culture to the extent that government laws and rules will make no significant difference to the Indian household and mind-set. Rima voiced her opinion on this matter:

"Look the law encourages women to go out and work, but Indian women are so buried, buried very deeply in their families, in their culture, their tradition so yes it is easier for women in general to work out there, but most often Indian women don't get exposed to that level because they're so enclosed in their own environments to be exposed, to even realise that it's so easy to work."

Various identities existed in these women, but they all shared a similar view when it came to compromising their career in order to serve their motherhood role. Some of the women felt that they had lost a piece of themselves and thus lost a piece of their identity. They further felt that they had lost touch with the world and lacked the mental stimulation and also yearned for the social interaction that they once had in the work environment. Although these women enjoyed motherhood, they still felt despondent because there no longer was any intellectual stimulation that catered for their inquisitive minds, as in the working environment. Amirita stated:

"You know what I don't think I regret sitting at home now but you do feel and tend to feel useless now when I have conversations with adults will I be able to participate other than talking about nappy changing you question yourself as person because you know you educated person but when you out of that environment that social environment and interacting on a business level being with your friends on weekends you don't have much to say because you at home with your babies and you changing nappies, you tend to feel

that you have given up something quite big and you feel useful and you can't have a conversation anymore and everyone talking about the business world and your day was nappy changing, and baby talk and rhymes and songs so you don't really have much you say you feel less of a person to be honest I feel less of a person and I come from such a strong business environment where I used to talk to such intellectual people highly intellectual people so I feel like sold myself I feel short right now I feel like it's a sacrifice I have to make for at least five years of my life."

Most women in this study verified that their cultural identities were so strong that when it came to giving up their careers it was a huge factor. Due to their traditional mindset, a compromising nature was expected by the women in the study as they had to be homemaker, cook, mother, wife and caretaker, and take care of the family's overall wellbeing. Hence they compromised their career due to the cultural obligations that they had to fulfil. Esha reflected the views of other participants:

"We often in a situation where initially we have the freedom to decide in our parents' homes and when we marry especially when you marry in a joint family you expected to, to have these added responsibilities and added stuff and everybody expects you to do things to please everybody else and unfortunately if a Indian women it's expected to make the compromise in every situation... the culture, with most Indians people start at that stage but things have changed now people felt at that stage that it was fine for you to work until you had children because bringing up the children was the sole responsibility of the mother."

Similarly, Vidya stated that the culture expects a woman's responsibility to be to stay at home, and cultural obligations and expectations do have an impact on their decisions to stay at home:

"I said religion Islam says many women are equal right it's not a culture wise, our forefathers don't want their wives to work now so my father like then my father wouldn't want my mum to work and my husband wouldn't want me to work so at the end of the day it's just culture."

4.8.2 Gender roles

Numerous women in the study stated that they had gender roles within the household. Their traditional gender roles as women entailed cooking, cleaning and taking care of the children. Also, women and not men are always encouraged to stay at home because of the high expectations of Indian women. Women uphold this because they have internalised this belief from a young age, when they were taught the differences between the roles of men and women. Women are further so deeply rooted in their culture that they are expected to leave their careers for the sake of their families. Esha stated:

"Whatever the story is whether it is a choice between the husband leaving work or the women leaving work to uh to, to assist the family it's always the women who's pushed into that situation so there's definitely I think there's way too many expectations uhm from an Indian women."

Vidya reflected the views of some of the women in the study when pointed out that it was just expected of them to stay at home because, as women, they had to look after the overall wellbeing of their husbands and the household:

"I'm my own person and very independent but you go into a family that's very conservative that, they'll actually tell you what to wear, so because we'd been we educated and you don't expect them from that person so when they tell you why you working or why do you have to work and why don't you just stay at home, who's going to cook for your husband, how you cooking what did your husband eat you know you they phone at night and they'll say they will ask your husband did you eat what did you eat you know, so that's a bit uh crazy I think."

4.8.3 Work-life balance

Indian families have drastically changed in the way they function. Today these families prefer nuclear families and no longer function in extended or joint families. Some of the women pointed out that, in the initial stages of marriage they stayed in a joint/extended household and that this had a direct impact on their lifestyle. The women complained that in this joint/extended household they could not find balance between their work and the roles and responsibilities that came from living in the household. According to Karishma:

- 109 -

"You know with Indians we live in an extended family and we have other extra responsibilities living with mother-in-law father-in-law, coming home cooking, having certain family responsibilities, weddings, etc. Also when the children came and got sick I had to take leave arrange for leave couldn't just leave them with my mother-in-law all the time had to see to them whatever so I think was certain aspects did impact on the work-life environment."

Furthermore, the women confirmed that they had sacrificed all their free time, including weekends, due to monotonous household chores and family responsibilities. Kareena reflected the views of a number of the women, who stated that they had to juggle a lot of roles and responsibilities, including on weekends:

"I think more challenging and more tiring because usually I will laze around on the weekends and take it easy to rest but week get so difficult and then also trying to because we very family orientated will my personal family then trying to see visiting my mum seeing and visiting my sister always you will have to always keep in contact with family needs always have be house helping with something so yes I found it a bit challenging at the time."

4.8.4   Motherhood

Cultural expectations and values, particularly motherhood, are instilled in every Indian family. This was confirmed by the women in the study, who repeatedly emphasised that, as expected of them, they had left their careers to be mothers. Deepika stated:

"Our priorities as Indian women are different you decide and you know what bigger priority in life but you know my career can wait and I am sure if I ever decided to go back I would be offered numerous opportunities again whereas being a mother there are no second opportunities of seeing my kids grow up."

Similarly, the roles expected of and instilled into Indian women had a significant impact on their guilty consciences. Being a mother was not limited to looking after the children, but further entailed cooking, cleaning and taking care of the household. These women therefore were moulded by cultural and traditional obligations and gender roles. Kareena stated that:

"I think we will always have the way we brought up, like as modern as my mother is she will still tell you that you should always make sure that there is food in your house, a home cooked meal and a mother should be at home taking care of her children, and the mother should be the one bathing the children, changing her children. I think I am very different as much as I am career orientated then you have mothers dominating the house you also feel guilty that you have not come home and cooked or seen to your children so traditional gender roles are very strong."

It was not only the husbands who did not want their children to be cared for by strangers and held that it was the responsibility of their wives, but the mothers shared the same view. Many mothers were paranoid in the light of current issues like kidnapping, molestation, neglect and the dangerous environment and therefore did not want to jeopardise their children's lives in any way. Juwi summed up the views of a number of the women:

"One of the reasons one of the most obvious reasons is for safety and today's times there is so many stories that you hear about children getting kidnapped getting removed from their houses where domestic workers there is a lot of families where whites especially where parents entrust their child to stay home with their domestic worker and that's one of the reasons why my husband refuses for me to leave the child for any period of time with a domestic worker."

Esha confirmed this view:

"I mean nobody wants to study all those years and sacrifice all, all this money, time and the effort uh into getting a degree and then having it stopped, nobody wants that but when you put into a situation where you have to choose between a career and, and having a few more luxuries and choosing that between knowing that your kids are put into a situation where they could get kidnapped they could get hurt, they could be molested through neglect anyone, any mom would obviously being Indian being Muslim, being white, being coloured being whatever religion you would be but when you put in a situation any mom would choose her children for that."

4.8.4.1 _Child's development_

'A child's development in the first five years of life provides a crucial foundation for the accomplishment of key developmental advances. The women highlighted how important it was for them to be there for their children, from their first word to their first crawl and their first step. These were special heart-warming moments that the mothers did not want to compromise. The women also spoke about making a difference in the lives of their children when it mattered most. Thus, being a mother and seeing their children grow was more important than fulfilling a career. Juwi reflected the views of the majority of the mother in the study when she stated:

"It is very important there's certain developments, developmental milestones that every child should reach whether it's his first crawl, first step, talking, eating whatever it may be and it's important to make sure that your child gets all the nutrients being at home cooking home cooked food daily and instilling our values into him and he can become a good Muslim boy or man one day."

Deepika, like many other mothers in study, said that seeing the children grow was something they would never get back:

"Our priorities you know as women Indian women as well specifically are different you decide and you know what was a bigger priority in life but you know my career wait and I am sure if I ever decided to go back I would be offered numerous or a number of opportunities again where as being as being a mother would not afford me the opportunity of seeing my kids grow up ever."

4.8.4.2 _Guilt trips_

> _Guilt is a common form of emotional distress and a common factor in behavioural decisions and people invoke guilt feelings to apologize for misdeeds, to express sympathy, to manipulate others, to refuse sex, to discipline children, to bolster self-control, and more, and they perform or avoid a stunning variety of actions because of the anticipation of guilt_ (Baumeister, Stillwell & Heatherton, 1994, p. 243).

Taking the above definition into consideration, guilt was an emotion that some of the participants faced because they were now mothers and their careers therefore took a back seat. It was noted that continuing with their careers caused the participants to feel guilty and have a guilty conscience, as their children would be neglected. In addition, many of the women stated that their own adherence to traditional values and obligations caused them to feel guilty. Traditional values, roles and obligations directly led to these women giving up their careers to be mothers, because this was the expectation they needed to fulfil. Kareena shared her guilt in this regard:

"*I said like in the corporate company that I work for there is a lot of career driven women and my managers all have au pair for their kids and they travel a lot and are hardly ever around and all of their kids have a learning disability every single one all three of them one of their kids have a learning disability and I can see them always feeling guilty about it but never taking sign and say I had enough I going home to look after my kids.*"

Vidya summed up the feelings of many of the women in this study when she said:

"*I think it was a guilty conscience, because, I think also our traditional values where the mother is supposed to look after her children, she supposed to look after her home it just felt if I was working I probably feel my time was taken away from my child at the end of the day so, maybe like a guilty conscience, because of our values.*"

The participants whose mothers had sacrificed their careers in order to raise their own children felt guilty in the sense that they too had to fulfil that same responsibility for their children. This sacrifice resulted in them not being neglected as children and therefore it would not be fair if they, as mothers, did not do the same. Karishma stated that they felt guilty because their mothers had raised them:

"*Definitely because most of our mums are home mums basically never basically worked and even if they worked they done something from home like my mum was a dress maker she would do her little business from home it never impacted on use or neglected us, I think when I had to make the decision of leaving I had to think about that and how my mum coped and how we grew up to say you know there is time my mum also helped me out with decision she said you know what there is many years after that for you to work*"

this is the time for you to look after your children and that's your responsibility you decided to bring the children into this world so it's your responsibility to bring them up and look after them you can't bring them up as a burden on someone else."

Sonali stated that:

"It's just something that just fell into place like that you know I just feel like I need to give them whatever I can, my mum did the same for me so I feel like I need to make sure that all their needs are met but I only see to a certain age as soon as they are old enough to look after themselves I can start doing things for myself."

4.8.4.3 Frustrations of women not pursuing careers

Many of these women felt financially dependent on their husbands when they gave up their careers. This meant that they had to ask their husbands for every cent and would also need to account for it. They did not feel deprived of anything besides the financial independence and freedom they had when they were in the working world. Juwi stated that the women in the study sacrificed their financial freedom:

"I stopped working I've given up financial freedom when I was working I had my own salary, I did not need to ask anybody for money now my husband has to give me an allowance whether it's for groceries or my personal use and I need to make that I fit and budget."

The self-esteem of these women was low, as they put themselves last in every situation and disregarded themselves. They felt despondent even though they are making some sort of difference in their family's life by staying at home for their children's development and to raise their children with the same values that were instilled in them, basically for a traditional upbringing. It was confirmed on several occasions that one needs more of a life than just looking after children and cooking. Ashwariya stated that:

"I just feel you need a life outside of your family, you need friends outside your family, you need an interest in life apart from just cooking and bringing up kids."

4.8.5 Dreams and aspirations

In spite of being happy to be mothers, most of the participants imagined their lives to be different when they were at university; they had different dreams and aspirations and now they seemed a bit despondent, as they had moved away from their imagined path. Amrita had imagined that her life would turn out differently:

"Oh not this way imagined myself in high heels looking good everyday earning lekker money doing coffee with friends I think a high-flying career woman although teaching is not so glamorous I really saw myself far in my career I actually enrolled for my honours and actually when I got married the strains were too much."

Career-orientated women who had worked hard in their careers to build themselves up, to the extent that they were up for promotion, felt they had to choose their families over their careers. This was due to the fact that they believed family to be more important to them. Kareena concurred with other women in the study when she stated that:

"There was when I did actually give in my resignation I was actually working towards a senior divisional manager I was actually studying towards it my managers gave me a lot more to handle so that when the next appointment came I could appointed so when position came up apply for it and get appointment so I was working towards that. I actually had applied I was meant to have started studying this year again in February so um it was a major step for me to give up my career."

Deepika stated that, despite having so many opportunities awaiting them, they choose motherhood:

"So a lot more career opportunities awaiting me so I think when I say at a peak or success of my career there was a lot more job opportunities awaiting me I as well was at same time lecturing and I left for my family and at the same time I was about to pursue umm new topics umm in breaking research for umm in the field of construction management which I also left as well because I decided to pursue motherhood."

However, it was clearly highlighted in the study that the dreams and aspirations of these women in their careers were opportunities that would come by, but being a mother and the joys of motherhood could never be replaced. Deepika summarised her feelings as follows:

"I never had that I think once my daughter was born umm I have been afforded the opportunity to go back and pursue my career further I think even been given those opportunities the second time round umm I have chosen to be a mother ten times over I think you cannot even compare the two umm having a career and being a mother it is two different roles completely."

4.8.6 Self-fulfilment

Notwithstanding the fact that their careers ended abruptly, these women did not have any regrets because they had life-fulfilling experiences from the start of their tertiary education to the end of their temporary careers, which included expanding and opening their minds to knowledge, intellectual stimulation and establishing relationships with many different people in the working world. They felt these experiences made them who they are today. On several occasions the women also stated that no one could take away their degrees, and that this was part of their identities and thus a self-fulfilling experience. Rani and Jaya stated respectively:

"Studying I won't say it's a waste I have not worked a day in the field that I have studied but it was not a waste at all I gained so much as a person it broadens your horizon the way you think but doesn't mean I have to go out and work in that field for my studies to have benefited me."

"The different cultures I learnt on campus we mixed with the different cultures the friends I've made the places I have been and the things I have done."

Some of these women studied or were still studying without the intention of pursuing a career; it was merely for self-fulfilment. According to Rani:

"I am a person who loves studying I have always been that way and even after I completed my degree I did a one year shariah law thing I got a certificate in that and then I

studied Arabic and I am somebody who wants to make and I will continue studying doesn't mean it doesn't matter to me if I don't work."

4.9   CONCLUSION

This chapter evaluated various aspects that impacted educated women in not pursuing careers. It appears that cultural and gender identities are factors with a great deal of influence in both their early lives as well as their lives after marriage. Aspects such as the macro-environment and individual factors were looked at in order to determine whether, and if so how, they came into play in these women making decisions.

The next chapter focuses on the main findings of this study and compares them with the available literature reviewed on the subject matter

CHAPTER 5:
DISCUSSION

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I discuss the key findings of the study as reported in the previous chapter. I also assess my findings from the relevant literature that was consulted in order to gain an understanding of the reasons why married Indian women do not pursue careers. Also when I designed the study my objective was to understand reasons why women make all the effort to pursue tertiary education but do not pursue careers thereafter. Thus, when interviewing the participants I followed this line of enquiry by formulating questions that enabled me to focus on their life stories and gain an in-depth understanding of the reasons why educated Indian women do not pursue careers. In the course of interviewing the women I found that community, family and cultural obligations have the biggest effect on women not pursuing careers, because these are so deeply entrenched in these women from an early age.

In this section I will focus on what the Indian culture, community and family perceived were the roles of women and the values that were instilled in the young women's lives.

5.2   MAIN FINDINGS

The study revealed that the country's laws, rules and regulations do support Indian women to pursue careers and also to excel at all levels in the workplace. Esterhuizen (2008) states that in order to facilitate this process, different laws have been passed explicitly addressing various inequalities that existed in education and in the workplace. Similarly, the women stated that, after the demise of apartheid, the laws, rules and regulations encourage women as a whole to study and also to pursue tertiary education. Similarly, Posel and Casale (2003) state that policies gave facilitated the process of better integration of women after 1994. Buddhapriya (2009) adds that aspects such as social, legal and economic transformation have supported women to join the workforce, but that cultural and normative attitudes and values have had a greater impact on women. Within the Indian culture these have prevented women from altering the perceptions of society as well as their own concerning their gender roles.

The literature that was reviewed states that religion remains a powerful force in societies across the world (Shukla-Bhatt, 2008). However, from the study it was evident that, despite the women being Hindu or Muslim, both these religions did not have an impact their decisions to leave their careers. A point worth mentioning is that, according to the reviewed literature, traditional beliefs seem to be deeply entrenched, irrespective of families' and communities' current religious faith, and therefore the role of Indian women goes beyond faith and geography and is directly linked to Hinduism (Nangalia & Billet, 2009). However, in Hinduism the women's role as a wife is to bear her husband's offspring and educate them in traditional practices (Van Ham, 2008). Also, Islam also does not stop women from being career women and working outside the home, as long as her external work does not interfere with her household obligations nor lower her dignity in any way (Jawad, 1998). It appears that this was similar to the cultural obligations of the Indian culture; however, it is apparent from the study that neither Hinduism nor Islam led to the women not pursuing careers, despite the literature stating that religion is still a powerful force in society.

Cultural and gender identities also play a role in women not pursuing careers because culture, as the man-made part of the environment, continues to shape the actions and beliefs of individuals, and in this study particularly as far as this relates to women (Singelis, 2000). Similarly, Singhal and Maslak (2008) state that, even though education and career can empower to females to pursue her interest in the marketplace, it can also fracture the boughs of traditional Indian cultural continuity. Therefore it was evident from my study that cultural and gender identities play a role in women not pursuing careers, as the role of motherhood was expected from these women and took precedence over any other identity they had. Joshi and Gupta (2012) say that the values in Indian culture serve as lasting beliefs and standards that guide behaviour across situations and over time. It was apparent from the study that these values are deeply internalised by the women and their cultural obligations are deeply rooted in them. Therefore one can conclude that no government rule will have any effect within the Indian culture because of the pre-defined roles of women and the expectations that they will fulfil their traditional gender roles due to the normative attitudes still being steeped in patriarchy. It appears that cultural obligations have a greater affect on women than legislation in the South African context.

In the natal homes, values were instilled in the women when they were growing up and they were socialised by their parents and elders in the expected behaviour of women (it is clear from the study that the women were socialised to a set of roles as obedient wife, subservient daughter-in-law and loving mother, and that she goes to live with her husband and in-laws when she marries (Choudhry, 2001). Despite being allowed to pursue tertiary education, it is clear from the study that the women were expected to follow cultural values and obligations. It appears that the fathers specifically wanted their daughters to study as a means of securing their futures against unforeseen circumstances. The daughters were further restricted in terms of the type of career they were allowed to pursue. A point to be noted is that I did not review the reasons why fathers allow their daughters to study. According to the literature, female professions include clerical, sales, service, nursing, teaching and social work, as well as secretarial jobs, and these reflect society's attitudes concerning stereotypical work-related roles for men and women (Rainey & Borders, 1997; Sellers, Satcher, & Comas, 1999; Stephenson & Burge, 1997; Watson, Quatman, & Elder, 2002). Therefore the fathers preferred their daughters to study in a field that would not interfere with family obligations. Similarly, as stated in the literature, Indian parenting is strict (Jambunathan & Counselman, 2002), putting emphasis on academic achievement (Tewari et al., 2003), while family bonds and harmony are vital (Jambunathan, Burts, & Pierce, 2000).

The literature that was reviewed states that, from birth, Indian women are to be dependent throughout their lives – firstly on her father, then on her spouse, and finally on her son (Segal, 1998). This was confirmed by the women in so far as they needed permission from their fathers in their premarital lives and from their husbands in their post-marital lives. Consequently, one can conclude that the women in the study have no real identity because they are constantly "told" what to do at every step of the way. Despite being given some freedom, they are restricted at the same time. In their houses these women also felt that there was gender inequality, both in their natal homes and when they were married. In their natal homes their brothers had freedom to study and go wherever they wanted, whereas the women needed permission every step of the way. Similarly, when the women were married they needed permission from husbands. Intersectionality therefore played a factor in these women not pursuing careers. Mahalingam (2001) states that the intersectionality perspective helps individuals comprehend the multifaceted ways in which social experience shapes their identities, and it is clear from the analysis that culture,

gender, race and ethnicity play a role in the way Indian culture shapes women's identities. The intersectionality and simultaneity of the women's gender and their cultural expectations of motherhood resulted in their subordination, and therefore the women did not have free will to pursue careers. Buddhapriya (2009) states that: the internalisation of the belief that roles are biologically specific stipulates dissimilar life options for men and women, and means prioritisation of family over work for women. Hence it is apparent that the husbands and fathers in the study subjugate the women.

After the analysis the researcher was to understand the identity negotiation these women went through, so further literature was read to sum up the identity negotiation that these women face. Settles (1994) states that there are many opportunities, such as social interaction, economic movement and the advantage of skills and abilities, that arise as a result of having several identities. These identities include being a mother, a wife and a worker (Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974). However, it is noted that, although these identities from which many opportunities arise seem to be advantageous, they have their disadvantages, in that it is not always easy to negotiate the various identities. This, in turn, causes interference, which results in pressure, and thus one identity pressure has an impact on the performance of another identity (Van Sell, Brief, & Schuler, 1981).

Despite allowing their wives to pursue careers, the husbands of the women in the study only did so because there were no children involved. However, once their wives were pregnant the 'rules of the game' changed and the women were forced to give up careers. Aeri and Jain (2010) state that a mother is a significant figure in a child's live, and her instructions have a lasting impact on the attitudes, abilities and behaviour of the child. It is apparent from the study that the husbands' decisions were not due to selfish reasons, but because they preferred their wives to look after the children for a traditional upbringing, for the child's development and also to instil values in child – aspects that are not highlighted in the literature. Durvasula and Mylvaganam (1994, p. 99) state that, within the Indian culture, "the goal of parenting is not to provide the children with sufficient skills to leave the family but to instil a sense of obligation and duty" to the family. The women also stated that the bond between mother and child serves as basis for the infant's later attachments, and forms a starting point for his or her sense of himself or herself (Klaus & Kennell, 1982). Thus it was evident from the study that the mothers did not want to miss out on the first

five years of their children's lives, as all the 'firsts' were momentous occasions for the women, who felt that it was worthwhile giving up their careers as they would get numerous opportunities in the working world when their children were older.

In addition, most of these mothers felt extremely guilty when they thought about going back to work. Even though they really wanted to work, these women were taught to be the nurturing parent and believed "the mother" to be sacred and respected. Also, as Wearing (1984) states, a superior mother is always available to her children, unselfish, putting her child's needs before hers, spending time with them, steering, supporting, giving confidence, correcting behaviour, as well as loving them unconditionally and caring for them physically, similar to many women in the study. The literature that was reviewed (Holcomb, 1998; Wearing, 1984; Zimmerman et al., 2001) did not highlight that women felt guilty due to the fact their own mothers' sacrificed their needs to look after them and thus they felt obliged to do the same.

Desai (1996) highlights that, due to the pressure of the patriarchal value structure of the family on women's career goals and aspiration, they tended to ratify boundaries on their career aspirations or personal accomplishments for the sake of their families. Similarly, Sengupta and Johnson (2006) state that: the patriarchal family is the type that creates the greatest restraints on women's freedom from control by other adults in the house, and it is evident that the women in the study are controlled by their fathers and husbands. Similarly, the literature also states that women are controlled by men and are financially dependent on them and have restricted choices in several aspects of their lives (Miller, 1992). This was another aspect that was evident in the study, as women who were not pursuing careers felt financially dependent on their husbands and this caused them to be frustrated. Even though they were not deprived of anything, being financially dependent gave them a sense of worthlessness

It was apparent from the study that more families now have a nuclear family setup, unlike the traditional Indian joint family setup. However, family obligations and unity still play a major role in the lives of the women in the study. Bahadur and Dhawan (2008) state that even if the family breaks down structurally, the functions and sentimentally, of individual units continue to form part of the joint family and all members uphold jointness in terms of

family loyalty. Therefore all free time needs to be dedicated to family issues and obligations.

Extended family and their communities also had an indirect impact on the women's decisions not to pursue careers. Their extended families and society expect them to live up to the expectations of being a mother. The literature revealed that not conforming to these expectations often translated into disappointment and the view that they had a lack of respect for the Indian community and/or family (Abraham, 1998; Rastogi & Therly, 2006). Therefore it appears that these pressures from their surroundings also encouraged the women not to pursue careers.

Ahmed (1999) states that identity and roles are already established in the family and community, and hence the concept of "needing to find one's self" may be difficult to understand in traditional Indian families. However, many women in the study stated that choosing careers over family was difficult for them initially, and therefore they had to negotiate their identities of being a successful career woman. This caused the women to feel depressed, although the guilt that these women faced also played a big role in them not pursuing careers. Consequently, one can conclude from the study that this negotiation was not a permanent struggle and that, as time went by, the women's cultural identities of womanhood would overpower their careers – an aspect not revealed by the literature.

These women felt depressed and lost their professional identity because they had to give up their careers. The literature also states that women have distinctive needs at a psychological and practical level that are not met by restrictive definitions of their roles as primary caregivers to their family (Nangalia & Billet, 2009). Despite this, it is important to take note that meeting these needs outside of the mainstream cultural norms requires an exceptional effort on the part of the family, the educational system, society and the women themselves (Nangalia & Billet, 2009). It was confirmed that the women could not meet these needs because their cultural roles and obligations seemed to be the priority for them, despite the effort that they had put into their degrees or careers. Thus the literature reviewed does not show the frustrations that the women face due to the fact they are not pursuing careers. Even though motherhood gives them happiness, they face frustration from the lack of intellectual stimulation and social interaction that they received in the working environment. Also, it appears that, in the Indian culture, having a career is not an

identity that is important for women to have. However, identities such as daughter, wife, mother and daughter-in-law are regarded as the "real" identities of Indian women.

5.3   CONCLUSION

The women in my study were continuously engaged in identity negotiation and on several occasions were at a crossroads in choosing families over careers. The women's stories revealed several dimensions and complexities in their lives that shaped their identities, as well as the fact that, from a young age, cultural and gender-related identities were instilled in them. Various aspects of identity were entwined, and they all shaped the women's lives. Therefore, despite being bitter about the situation at the beginning, the women began to embrace the situation they were in and to believe that they had made the right decision for their families' overall wellbeing. This chapter also provided some interesting facts that overlapped with the literature on reasons why educated Indian do not pursue careers.

The next chapter focuses on the conclusions of my study, shortcomings relating to the study, as well as recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 6:
RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of my study was to explore the reasons why women pursue tertiary education but do not pursue careers. I investigated Indian women who are not pursuing careers by collecting their stories using a qualitative, interpretivist approach. In the process of conducting the research, the concepts of identity, work and identity negotiation became critical to understanding the life stories of the women who participated in the study.

6.2 STRENGTHS

The main strength of this study was using the life story approach to gain an in-depth understanding of these women's lives that a survey would not have been able to capture. Also, the life story approach allows the interviewee to participate in the reporting of the interview, which may give raise to ownership and sharing of the analytical power of the interview situation (Adriansen, 2012). Life stories are very appropriate for understanding a life time of occupational experiences as well as the personal, societal, economical, historical and geographical influences that shape those experiences therefore making using of a life story approach was therefore appropriate for this study (Wicks & Whiteford, 2006).

6.3 LIMITATIONS

The limitations of the study are the following:

- The semi-structured interview used for the data collection allowed me to deepen my understanding of the participants' perceptions with regard to educated Indian women not pursuing careers. Although women from a few provinces in South Africa were interviewed, the data cannot be generalised to all Indian women.

- This study was done with a small sample group within a specific contextual situation. In the research I made use of purposive and snowball sampling by focusing particularly on Muslim and Hindu women who are not pursuing careers.

- Interviews were conducted in a face-to-face manner and at times the participants may have not been comfortable when talking about sensitive topics. Also, my religious background may have had an impact on the way the women answered some of the questions.

- Another limitation was the women's memories of their childhood. Some women were over 50 and of an age when it was difficult for them to remember the details of certain episodes in their lives. I therefore focused on their life stories from their youth, and did not probe into earlier stories, as these might have been even more inaccessible.

In spite of the limitations mentioned above, I regard this study as helpful in gaining an understanding of the reasons why educated Indian women are not pursuing careers. As mentioned earlier, there is very little research that focuses on this topic, therefore the findings of this study make a worthy contribution to the field. This contribution, and any future research arising from it, will benefit top management in understanding the skills shortage of this minority group and also create a better understanding of the reasons why Indian women decide not to pursue careers.

6.4 FUTURE RESEARCH TOPICS

This study has implications for future research:

- To understand reasons why husband stop their wives from pursuing careers once they become mothers.

- To understand why in-laws do not want their daughters-in-law to pursue careers when grandchildren enter the picture.

- From my understanding it seems as if the Indian culture will always override any form of development (in science and technology). The fact is that the world has changed so drastically in the last two decades, yet it does not seem to influence Indian women much because their culture seems to be so deeply rooted. Why is this?

6.5   CONCLUSION

After the analysis and results, one can conclude that the decision to pursue careers is fluid and, women will choose the cultural and gender an identity that was instilled in them from a young age. Women in will ultimately choose to negotiate their identities of motherhood and family obligations over careers without a second thought. The culture of the women in the study is so deeply rooted in them that it plays a significant role when they negotiate their careers, because these women constantly revisit their cultural identities when making decisions and these seem to take precedence in every step along the way. The outside forces of government rules and regulations will not have an impact on the women's decisions not to pursue careers.

When they were growing up, the gender identity of how a women was supposed to be and act, her roles and her cultural heritage that had be instilled in them throughout their lives took precedence over careers and, at the same time, caused these women to feel guilty. Even though their religion clearly states that women can go out to work and study, these women are subjugated by the cultural values that were instilled in them from a young age; they tend to feel guilty because of the cultural heritage and this take precedence.

Married women tend to be subjugated by their husbands and unmarried women by their fathers. The husbands in this study had very traditional views of women's roles and, although they might have supported their careers before there were children involved, there was no question of the wives working once children came into the picture. The husbands refused to allow "strangers' to raise their children. The women therefore had to give up their careers as intersectionality came into play and their gender identities came to the fore.

Motherhood is also an identity that is non-negotiable. The women find it very difficult to internalise their gender identities because they had worked so hard to get where they were. Therefore, when they had to give up their careers they became bitter, angry and despondent, and had regrets. However, this identity struggle was not permanent, as these women constantly revisited their cultural identities and realised what was more important to them. Consequently, their careers automatically started to take a back seat for these

reasons and they felt privileged to be at home looking after their children or to fulfil family obligations.

In the next chapter I share personal reflections on my journey in conducting this study.

CHAPTER 7:
PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

It's supposed to be hard. If it wasn't hard everyone would do it. The hard...is what makes it great. (Unknown)

7.1   INTRODUCTION

In this last chapter, I reflect on my research journey in conducting this study. Part of my research voyage was to ensure the trustworthiness of the current study. Therefore I now step out of the researcher role to become myself and tell you about my journey through the study.

7.2   PERSONAL REFLECTION

This topic was a very interesting one for me to choose because Indian women at some point in time give up their careers, and I used to see this with my friends, family and in the community. Throughout my university life I always wondered why would you put so much effort into something and just not pursue a career. I am so grateful to have had a chance to understand the various reasons why women give up their careers. I actually honour them in a way due to the fact that family needs and obligations are priority and that they accept that their own dreams and aspirations take a back seat.

It was a long and very hard road. At first it sounded very exciting and stimulating, but as the days went on, various factors contributed for me becoming very frustrated and despondent. The fact that this topic had been researched previously made it very difficult to gather information and this seemed to knock me down. Masters seemed to be a long but easy road at the start, but honestly it was one of the hardest things I ever did and it brings tears to my eyes to sit here and type this because I never thought I would ever reach this point. I gave up on my master's dreams on several occasions. Throughout this journey I compared my experience to a ride on a rollercoaster; it is exciting yet scary at the same time, and when you least expect it there are dips, hills and unexpected brakes in between. Also, riding a rollercoaster is known for its "death defying" thrill (Wayne, 1998, p. 3). Similar, Wayne (1998) the author states that the key to a successful coaster is to give

the rider the sensation of speed and acceleration. My thoughts and feelings could not be summed up in a more perfect way.

The literature review was the most aggravating experience of my life. I think I cried buckets of tears. There were days that I typed out five lines and there were days that I typed out five pages. Also, finding literature specifically on Indian women seemed to be a hard and strenuous process. I constantly had to rely on family, friends and my supervisor to try to gather as much information as I could, and thus one led to another and I slowly but surely progressed to assimilate as much material and data as I possibly could.

> *Who would have thought there's a shortage of articles on Indian women in the Indian culture?*

> *Writer's block – now I understand the term in its pure sense, after sitting for almost three hours I am still looking at a blank page #death by master's.*

> *Bounced some ideas around with family and friends and I should include those aspects *Good ideas**

My interviews for the study were a very fulfilling experience and some of the interviewees became my friends. They always keep in contact with me to check how I am doing. I appreciated every story and went in with an open mind. I was so amazed by each and every interview that I conducted. However, when trying to locate participants for my study it was very difficult at times because many women who were approached for interviews were very rude and blunt and told me they just did not have time to help me. My warmest gratitude goes to all the participants; I was totally taken aback by their openness and frankness, and was most impressed by their willingness to share their thoughts with me. I wish each and every one of them all the best in the future. Meeting and interacting with them broadened my knowledge and also influenced my decisions about the future.

Today I was very scared as I did my first two interviews for my pilot study; I was a bit nervous because today is the start of my research project.

The story that was shared with me today, I could understand and relate to...I am mesmerised by how open and honest she was.

I just wish this lady can help me, she will be making a difference, and how can people be so RUDE!

I can't find participants, Raeesa: "Are you doing the right study?" Change now!!!!

Also, the fact that I come from an Indian cultural background made my job more difficult, because I had a problem in that I could actually anticipate answers coming from my participants and therefore had to be very careful not to compromise my objectivity at any point. Also, being an educated Indian woman I do not know what the future holds for me, and whether I one day might have to negotiate my identities in the same way.

> *It's amazing how I can anticipate the answers and how I relate to the participants.*

Transcribing was most definitely a long process – typing out word for word what the participants said, and it was also a strenuous process that required my undivided attention. I had many interviews to type out but with time got everything done. It was also amazing how much a person can say in one minute.

> *Transcribing is a long process; there is no doubt that it takes you like an hour to type out a few minutes…and I've got so many interviews *GOD HELP ME**

The analysis and results took me a couple of weeks, but it was such an exciting and stimulating experience to see how the puzzle fits together and how it was possible to make sense of and interpret the data (although it was also challenging at times).

> *Could I link this code with that family? Will it make sense? What if it makes sense to me only? What will others think?*

> **Writing up results was easier when conceptualised by the model...I need to visually understand...**

I am very thankful that I had the opportunity to research a topic and be a pioneer of research on Indian women. I also understand that education is something that no one can take away from you and it is part of your identity … As Nelson Mandela said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

7.3   CONCLUSION

This was a long and hard road, but in the end it broadened my knowledge and horizons and I am very glad that I was given this opportunity. However, further research will have to be done to add to my findings. I therefore hope that the recommendations I made above will be followed and that this topic will be given attention in the near future.

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ANNEXURE A
EXAMPLES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

EXAMPLES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What religion are you?

2. Tell me a bit about yourself-

   -Your background

   -Where you grew up

   -Father's strictness

   -Chores and responsibilities at home

   -Values instilled in you

   -How were you treated in comparison to your brother(s)

3. What did you study?

4. How long did it take you to study?

5. Why did you decide to pursue tertiary education?

6. What did you parents say about tertiary education?

   -Did they encourage you?

   -Did they have any restrictions for you?

   -Choosing a career of your choice

7. Are you married?

   -Age you got married

   -Norms

8. Did your husband ever impact your decision in not working?

9. Did ever go into the work environment-

   -Years

   -Position

-Up for promotion

10. Work family balance was it a problem?

   -How did you cope?

11. What obligations do you have being married and having a family?

12. Do you stay in a joint family

13. Do you have any children?

   -Impact your decision to leave

   -Is it important for you to raise your children?

14. How is your family structured?

15. How much freedom do you have?

   -Do have the freedom to make your own decisions or do need approval from another person?

16. What are the various identities you have?

   -Did you ever have to negotiate your identities being loving wife or pursuing a career?

   -How did the various identities you have impacted your decision?

17. Does your religion hold you back from pursuing a career?

   -Scriptures

   -Quraan

18. Does your culture hold you back from pursuing a career?

19. What does your religion say about women working?

20. What are the typical stereotypes in your culture?

21. The typical traditional gender roles you face?

22. Does your community impact your decisions in any way?

23. Does your mother-in-law interfere in your decisions of not pursuing a career?

24. Does your extended family impact your decision in any way?

25. Do you think the macro-environment encourages or discourages Indian women from pursuing careers?

   -You

   -laws, rules and regulations

26. 3 reasons that impacted your decision in not pursuing careers?

27. Why did you study if you not pursuing a career?

28. Would you like to go back into the work environment?

ANNEXURE B
- INFORMED CONSENT FORM -

Faculty of Economic and
Management Sciences

Informed consent for participation in an academic research study

Dept. of Human Resource Management

GENDER AND CULTURAL IDENTITY NEGOTIATION OF EDUCATED SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN MOTHERS NOT PURSUING CAREERS

<u>Research conducted by</u>:

Ms. R. Mahomed(27139256)
Cell: 072 201 9661

Dear Respondent

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Raeesa Mahomed, a Masters student from the Department Human Resource Management) at the University of Pretoria.

The purpose of the study is to determine the factors that impact the decisions of educated Indian females in South Africa not pursuing careers.

- This study involves an anonymous <u>interview</u>. Your name will not appear on the questionnaire and the answers you give will be treated as strictly <u>confidential</u>. You cannot be identified in person based on the answers you give.

- Your participation in this study is very important to me. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.

- Please answer the questions asked is completely and honestly as possible. This should not take more than 90 minutes of your time.

- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. We will provide you with a summary of our findings on request.

- Please contact my supervisor, Ms. N Carrim, 0823418697 if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- You have read and understand the information provided above.
- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.

_____   _____

Respondent's signature   **Date**

ANNEXURE C

DESCRIPTION OF THE WOMEN IN THE STUDY

Pseudonyms	Description of participants
Kareena Chetty	Kareena, a Hindu women, a friendly warm-hearted individual, who gave me some time while she was on holiday at her in-laws' place, despite the fact that there were so many people around she still gave me as much time as I needed. She had her little baby in her hands while giving me the interview as she just gave birth recently.
Karishma Zinta	Karishma, a Hindu woman, I went to see her in the late evening, the domestic was there to take care of her children and the interview was done at her dining room table and it was such an open, care-free arena. She also had such a motivating and encouraging attitude.
Shilpa Kapoor	Shilpa, a Hindu woman, the interview took place in a small room, the friendliness and warmth that was felt was amazing. Also she was a tall lady with well-defined facial features and such a calm, soothing voice. She shared her stories and every little detail was elaborated on.
Raveena Rai	Raveena had such spontaneous, fun and bubbly personality. I met Raveena for the first time that evening but it felt like I had known her for years and she also introduced me to a few members of her family. She was a tiny person with bouncy black hair and dimples and smiled at me at every question.
Ashwariya Arora	Ashwariya, a Hindu woman, had a beautiful car parked outside her house. A well-spoken and very neat and organised individual who was so affectionate and genuine and who also motivated me and encouraged me to get my thesis done.
Amrita Tandon	Amrita, a Hindu woman, invited me to her house late one evening. Her house was decorated with beautiful religious frames all around. The interview was done in a very comfortable position – we sat on the floor and spoke for a very long time. Her two beautiful children were also playing in the room with us. After the interview was done we also spoke about life in general just to understand each other more.
Bipasha Padkoune	This was an interesting interview; we actually did our interview late one night over Skype, because we do not live near each other. I was amazed with such advanced technology; I never imagined myself doing an interview through Skype. She was a young woman but she was sitting though she looked tall, she had a distinct clear voice and her background

	looked like a study that was full of books.
Deepika Mirza	Deepika also invited me to her house and as soon as I entered she forced me to have something to drink. She was wearing a jacket and her hair was tied in a pony. The dining room where the interview took place was very neat and organised and when I went home she smsed to ask if I had reached home because it was late in the evening and about 40 minutes from home.
Diya Bassu	Diya, a Muslim woman. A composed, collected, warm individual. She was very relaxed throughout the interview. The interview took place at her home in a big spacious room that was organised and neat. She had dark black hair and was in a comfortable position when the interview was taking place.
Esha Kulkarni	Esha was a straightforward individual. She was tall, thin, and had a longish face. She was wearing a t-shirt and jeans and was very structured when she was answering the questions.
Jaya Chopra	Jaya, a Muslim woman, was well dressed with straight long hair and light peachy lipstick. She chose to come to my house for the interview. The interview took place in my room but when she spoke she really thought about her answers and organised her thoughts before she answered.
Rani Khan	Rani, a Muslim woman, was a tall, thin individual. The interview took place at her mother's house so that there was someone to take care of her child. She answered the question straight to the point and was so passionate in what she was saying.
Juwi Kapoor	Juwi, a Muslim woman, invited me to her house early one Friday morning and her baby was fast asleep. The interview was done in her bedroom and we sat on her bed. One side of the wall was painted bright red and there was a trace of toys right through the house. Also, when I entered the house a wall in the kitchen had a few paintings and pictures of her baby.
Rima Balan	Rima, a Muslim woman. The interview took place early one Sunday morning. She was a confident individual who used a lot of hand movements and she always clarified whatever she said.
Vidya Sen	Vidya, a Muslim woman, was very fair in complexion and had long hair. She was very composed, who also thought about her answers and chose her words carefully when sharing her thoughts.

Sonam Chawla	An interview that was done in a lounge and we could overlook the sea. Very calm and collected individual and was so carefree about the world because her husband supported her every step of the way.
Sonali Deol	Sonali, a Muslim woman, relatively tall with long hair. We moved from her lounge to her dining room. Her small baby wanted her during the interview so she sat with us during the interview.