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# Exploring Experiences of Academic Resilience in Young Indian Adults Developed Through the Stories of Their Grandparents

**by**

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**Supervised**

**by**

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A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of master's by Coursework and Research Report in the field of

**Masters of Community-based Counselling Psychology**

**In**

**The Faculty of Humanities**

**University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg**

**Date: 13 February 2025**

**Declaration of Originality**

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this or any other university.

Signature:

13 February 2025



Word count: 34550

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**Acknowledgements**

**As a tribute to my grandparents.**

***'For I know the plans I have for you, "declares the Lord," plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.' Jeremiah 29:11*** (Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©)

Above all, to God my Father. Thank you for this scripture before the start of my Masters journey. Your unwavering grace, abounding mercy and unfailing love have laid the foundation for my life and this journey. For holding me in the palm of Your hand, through it all. You are the lifter of my head. Everything I do, is for Your praise.

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**Abstract**

In South Africa, grandparents are honoured members of their families; sharing stories, culture and rituals that they have experienced. In this light, grandparents play a pivotal role as the custodians of tradition to ensure that customs and culture are passed down to younger generations. In addition, multigenerational support provides emotional and practical encouragement and fosters a sense of moral guidance, reinforcing values and culture within communities. Within the South African Indian community, grandparents are revered figures who embody wisdom, tradition and resilience. Resilience has been broadly described as the ability for an individual to positively adapt in the face of adversity. Resilience research is grounded in the belief of positive functioning which aims to identify protective factors that facilitate adaptive responses to individual challenges. However, limited research that is specific to the Indian community in South Africa exists; particularly in regard to young adults' perceptions and experiences of academic resilience and the role of their grandparents. This study sought to explore the experiences of ten young Indian adults in South Africa through in-depth interviews. By applying content analysis, this study sought to investigate how experiences shared by their grandparents have shaped participants' academic resilience. The key findings of this study highlighted the meaningful role of intergenerational transmission of resilience through the values, skills and coping mechanisms learned through grandparents' lived experiences. The exploration of the intersection of cultural heritage, family dynamics and educational pursuits, contributes to a deeper understanding of academic resilience within the South African Indian community and highlights the relevance of intergenerational wisdom in promoting resilience in the face of adversity.

*Keywords:* Intergenerational, Academic resilience, Grandparents, Adversity

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# Chapter 1
# Introduction

Resilience is broadly described as an individual's ability to overcome and manage personal stress by positively adapting to their environment when facing adversity (Rudd et al., 2021). Research on the concept of resilience allows for a shift from deficit focused context to strength-based context. Through this shift resilience research encourages and promotes healthy functioning as opposed to the prevention of adverse functioning (Rudd et al., 2021). Resilience research aims to explore ways in which a person can improve their life or the lives of others through identifying factors that contribute to their resilience (Theron, 2013). In turn, it also helps to determine how these factors encourage the development of resilience (Theron, 2013). Research in this field also argues that resilience is not a fixed trait or concept; it is a process of positive adaptation that involves the dynamic interaction between the individual and their environment (Li & Yeung, 2019). In this context, Bronfenbrenner's framework of ecological systems theory highlights these interactions at various levels of the individual (Theron, 2013). And, subsequently, resilience emerges from this continuous relationship as individuals adapt and respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by their changing environments. Therefore, resilience is perceived as a result of the dynamic transactions between the individual and their ecological systems, rather than a static characteristic that is inherent to the individual (Mtshali, 2015).

According to Mayer and Vanderheiden (2020), contemporary research on positive psychology claims that resilience is underpinned by the belief that every individual is capable of positive functioning. Individuals are therefore, despite adversity, capable of adapting in a positive way if they are exposed to the right conditions (Tudor & Spray, 2018). Thus, the purpose of resilience research aims to identify protective factors that create favourable conditions which can be encouraged or fostered in people. Previous research has identified one of these factors as the role of grandparents or family members on the development of resilience among individuals (Tudor & Spray, 2018). Moreover, considering the ecological framework, grandparents are also able to influence the individual at various levels or systems.

## 1.1 Research Aims

The primary aim of this research was to explore the experiences of academic resilience in young South African Indian adults through the stories from their grandparents. This study

conducted a qualitative exploration of these experiences to understand the meaning of what academic resilience represents to them. In addition, this study aimed to explore perceived influences that contributed to participants' development of academic resilience. Specifically, this study focused on the perceived contribution from grandparents to foster academic resilience among younger generations. Therefore, this research explored the experience of intergenerational practices on the development of academic resilience in young Indian adults.

### 1.2 Research Questions

The study aimed to answer the following research question: How did the contribution of grandparent's encourage academic resilience for Young Indian adults? Further, the sub-questions below addressed the exploration of how young adults fostered academic resilience from their grandparents:

1. In what ways have young adults perceived their grandparents' contribution to their academic resilience?
2. How do the stories or experiences shared by grandparents reflect values and beliefs that are passed down to young adults?
3. How have these stories encouraged young adults to cope with academic or personal challenges of their own?

### 1.3 Study Focus

This research aimed to provide a qualitative exploration of ten young Indian adults' experiences of academic resilience that were influenced by their grandparents. The research intended to explore how the role of grandparents' experiences impacted participants through shared stories. As a result, this study also looked at how this created protective factors that fostered academic resilience. Furthermore, the study aimed to add to the representation from the integrated culture of Indian values and traditions within the South African Indian community. In this context, grandparents are revered as elders and repositories of wisdom; thus, this study sought to explore the role of intergenerational narratives in fostering resilience.

According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), South Africa consisted of a population of 1.3 million Indian descendants in 2015 (WEF, 2015). The Indian community in South Africa has existed prior to the 19$^{th}$ century and has since developed an integrated culture of both Indian and African values and traditions (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2016). Indian presence in South Africa increased significantly during this period of time through acts of slavery as a form of indentured

labour. Following this, the Indian community faced numerous challenges including racial discrimination and segregation (Bose, 2020).

During 1948 to 1994 South Africa was under the Apartheid era; a racial segregation under an all-white government which dictated that non-white or people of colour were required to live under different and harsh conditions compared to their White counterparts (Mphambukeli, 2019). As a result, access to education were denied or very limited to people of colour. The Indian community fell under some of these oppressive conditions; hence, the importance of educational success was emphasised within the community (Mphambukeli, 2019). The role of grandparents remain emphasised by these existing values as grandparents in the community are perceived as knowledgeable and wise (Zikalala, 2020). Educational success is also deemed dependent on academic resilience.

Although research exists on academic resilience, research focusing on academic resilience with reference to the role of grandparents in the lives of young Indian adults in South Africa, remains limited (Zikalala, 2020). Therefore, this study aimed to fill the existing gap by looking at the experiences of these young adults and the influence of their grandparents on academic resilience.

### 1.4 Rationale

This research is considered of value as the contribution from grandparents in the development of academic resilience in young adults has not been sufficiently researched. Especially in the context of young Indian adults in South Africa. According to Nkosinathi and Mtshaki (2015), South African grandparents play an important role in the education of younger generations through the development of academic resilience. Identifying protective factors that contribute to academic resilience can allow for a shift from a deficit-focused framework to a strength-based framework. Thus, research on academic resilience can promote education success for young adults by identifying positive factors that foster and promote academic resilience (Rudd et al., 2021).

Although there is no standard approach to measuring academic resilience (Rudd et al., 2021), this study aimed to qualitatively explore the subjective experiences of developing academic resilience among young adults. Considering, this research provided an in-depth exploration of resilience by identifying themes and factors (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). The exploration of this research was warranted as Cassidy (2016) noted grandparents' stories as a protective factor in

the development of resilience. In addition, individuals who had experienced adversity in childhood may have experienced barriers to academic resilience (Denham, 2018). Thus, it was crucial to explore the contributing factor of grandparents and how they encouraged academic resilience to overcome these barriers (Gunnstead, 2006). In turn, this study may contribute to strength-based research by identifying protective factors that promote resilience.

Further, practitioners working with young adults who had been raised by their grandparents may have interest in this research, as well as young adults themselves. Understanding how grandparents influence academic resilience can help educators, counsellors and other practitioners that leverage family strengths during intervention to support young adults facing academic challenges (Sinha, 2014). Research on protective factors and academic resilience can provide insight into identifying how intergenerational wisdom and values contribute to academic success which is often influenced by these protective factors. Sinha (2014) argues that young adults who are ill-equipped to cope with challenges may experience academic failure, stress or disappointment which can limit their future opportunities and overall academic experiences resulting in a negative influence on well-being, self-esteem and ambition.

Despite research on resilience with regards to institutional support, the role of grandparents remains underexplored. Grandparents who raised grandchildren may have interest in this study (Vermeulen & Greeff, 2015). Community developers that identified homes where grandparents were present in the lives of grandchildren could use this research to better understand academic resilience as a protective factor (Naidoo & van Schalkwyk, 2021). This interest was worth pursuing as it describes the relationship between academic resilience and the stories of grandparents, the meaning of these stories, and honour the role that grandparents play in the lives of young adults (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). The South African Indian community may be interested in this research due to the factor of being represented through research.

### 1.5 Researcher Interest

Upon starting my Master's journey, our cohort was allocated the topic of positive childhood experiences and was suggested as a topic for our research. I was immediately drawn to this theme as resilience research as a strength-based approach, in comparison to deficit-focused approaches, had been of interest of mine for many years. As a registered counsellor, my practice was founded on delving into childhood experiences of clients, the adversity they had faced, and most interestingly - the resilience they had developed throughout their lives. Resilience as

a positive concept interested me as it was a trait that was frequent among my clients who identified as academically successful. These clients claimed that resilience was the key factor that helped them adapt to the challenges or adversities they had experienced. The need to adapt positively was also a reason why many clients sought counselling. This sparked an interest in my clients' relationships with their environments and how these relationships contributed to their resilience. Especially considering the influence of grandparents as it resonated with my own experiences regarding educational success.

### *1.5.1 Positionality*

As a young, Indian female adult who is currently on an academic journey, this research study was very personal to me. Being from the Indian community, I understand and am familiar with some of the experiences described by my participants. However, while some similarities existed, it was important to be aware of the limitations and potential biases formed by my experiences and knowledge and how this could have influenced the data. This was mitigated through the process of reflexivity. I had to be aware of my expectations and be conscientious of any prejudgements of participants' experiences because of our similar contexts. For example, some of the participants had grandparents who were part of their lives for much longer than my own. In addition, the experiences they shared with their grandparents in adolescence or adulthood were different to my experiences, which were only limited to childhood.

Albeit the limitations, my positionality helped to form rapport with my participants through familiar discourses that were used. For example, 'house names' are common practice in the Indian community and a grandparent may be referred to as 'Nana', 'Nani', 'Ma', 'Papa' or 'Dada'. Further, my positionality also contributed to witnessing my grandparents lack of education due to their limitations for educational opportunities. My grandparents were not able to finish their schooling past grade three; and this posed many difficulties for them such as being unable to read, write or have basic mathematical skills. Despite these troubles, my grandparents were determined to continue their education, and the community supported their efforts through informal schooling. In turn, their experiences and stories contributed to my development of academic resilience.

For this reason, I became interested in exploring potentially similar experiences of other Indian young adults. I was further interested in how generational knowledge impacts academic resilience in South Africa as research remains limited considering the Indian community. A

study by Leta (2020), detailed some of the experiences of Indian children who attended schools during the apartheid era. Although the author highlighted the dire circumstances of some families during this oppressive time, it also emphasised the importance and value placed on education within the Indian community (Leta, 2020). Lastly, as neither I nor some of my participants have any remaining grandparents, this research was meaningful in honouring and paying tribute to the grandparents of the Indian community in South Africa. Especially considering their sacrifices, dedication and love which have contributed to positive childhood experiences and academic resilience among younger generations.

### 1.6 Structure of the Report

This research report consists of six chapters; introduction, literature review, methodology, findings and discussion, summary of findings, and conclusion. Chapter one introduces the research topic, aims, research questions, the study focus, rationale, researcher's interest and position. Chapter two explores pivotal and current findings on the historical background of the South African Indian community, the role of education within the community, the value of family legacy, grandparent's role within the Indian community and relevant theoretical underpinnings. This comprehensive review further contextualises the study's rationale and theoretical assumptions.

Chapter three discusses the methodology, the research approach employed in the study, a description of the sampling strategy and participants is given, the data collection-and analysis -processes. The process is discussed, and ethical considerations along with reflexivity are mentioned. In chapter four the findings and discussion of this research is explored, by discussing the themes that were identified through this research. Themes of intergenerational transmission of resilience, nurturing supportive relationships, fostering personal growth and empowerment and developing adaptive coping mechanisms were discussed and the link between themes and theoretical underpinnings were considered. In chapter five a summary of the findings, considerations and limitations of the study are discussed. In chapter six, the conclusion brings together the report from its aim, literature review and findings.

### 1.7 Conclusion

Chapter one has laid a foundational understanding of resilience; emphasising its dynamic nature within the context of individual-environment interactions. Resilience moves beyond a

fixed trait to encompass a process of positive adaptation amidst adversity. This is influenced significantly by ecological systems and familial interactions, paying particular focus – in the context of this study - on the influence of grandparents. The chapter positioned academic resilience as a critical domain of study within the South African Indian community, highlighting the historical and cultural contexts that shape educational aspirations and the role of grandparents as custodians of wisdom and resilience. Furthermore, the theoretical framework of the ecological systems theory has been introduced to underscore the complex interplay between individuals and their environments, essential for understanding how resilience develops.

The reflexive interest provided a personal context for the researcher's interest, acknowledging the significance of familial narratives in shaping academic resilience among young adults in the South African Indian community. Considering the rationale of the study, the study aims to contribute valuable insights on how intergenerational narratives and familial support systems contribute to academic success despite historical and contemporary adversities. Chapter one also lays the groundwork for a nuanced exploration that seeks to enrich our understanding of resilience as a dynamic process shaped by cultural, familial and historical factors.

# Chapter 2
# Literature Review

This chapter delves into the intricate interplay between intergenerational relationships and academic resilience, specifically examining the role of grandparents in fostering academic success among young Indian adults. This chapter further explores how grandparents' influence shape academic aspirations, provides emotional support and instils a sense of cultural identity through synthesising existing literature. Further, the chapter discusses the theoretical frameworks that underpin this study. In understanding the mechanisms through which grandparents' involvement contributes to academic resilience, this chapter aims to provide valuable insights into the factors that promote educational success and well-being among young people.

## 2.1 The History of Indians in South Africa

The history of Indians in South Africa is a multifaceted narrative that stretches back several centuries, beginning with early arrivals in the 17th century (Mukkadam, 2024). Initially, individuals from the Indian subcontinent were brought to the Cape Colony as slaves by the Dutch East India Company (Bennet, 2021). However, it was during the 19th century that the Indian population in South Africa expanded significantly through acts of slavery imposed as a form of indentured labour (Vahed, 2019). Between 1860 and 1911, a substantial number of labourers were transported from India to the Natal Colony to work on sugar plantations (Connolly, 2023). These labourers primarily came from impoverished regions of India and endured arduous conditions akin to semi-slavery; facing long work hours, poor living conditions and systemic discrimination (Bose, 2020). Despite these hardships, their labour was instrumental in establishing the sugar industry in South Africa (Kumar, 2019). In addition, many of these labourers, upon completing their contracts, remained in South Africa; contributing to the growth of the Indian community in the country (Vahed, 2019).

Historically, the South African Indian community faced numerous challenges, including racial discrimination and segregation, particularly during the apartheid era. The 1948 apartheid classified Indians as a separate racial group and subjected them to discriminatory laws and practices (Sauti, 2019); including being denied equal opportunities in education, employment and housing. Nevertheless, the community displayed remarkable resilience and determination in fighting against these injustices (Baker, 2019). Key Indian figures, such as Mahatma Gandhi,

emerged as influential leaders during this struggle. Gandhi, who spent several years in South Africa from 1893 to 1914, played a pivotal role in advocating for the rights of Indians and other marginalised groups (Vahed, 2019). His development of non-violent resistance inspired many and laid the groundwork for the broader struggle against apartheid.

Despite the adversities they faced, Indian South Africans also made substantial contributions to society across various sectors. They excelled in business, medicine, law, education, and culture, enriching the nation's social and economic fabric (Nuti, 2019). For instance, Indian traders established successful businesses while Indian doctors provided essential healthcare services (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Indian lawyers fought for justice, and educators contributed to the development of education. Today, Indian South Africans form a vibrant and integral part of the country's society (Doke, 2021). Not only have they overcome historical injustices but also continue to make significant contributions to South Africa's development (Nuti, 2019). Their legacy serves as a testament to their resilience, determination and enduring commitment to South Africa. In this context, it is evident that the history of Indians in South Africa is a complex narrative of displacement, resistance and significant societal contribution; highlighting their crucial role in the nation's ongoing journey toward equity and inclusion.

## 2.2 The Role of Education in Empowering South African Indians: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Challenges

Education holds a profound value within the South African Indian community, serving as a vital pathway to empowerment, social mobility and community development (Alexender, 2013). This emphasis on education is deeply rooted in historical experiences, cultural beliefs and a collective aspiration for progress (Bell, 2016). For many South African Indians, education represents a powerful tool for overcoming socio-economic barriers (Vally, 2022). Historically, the Indian community faced significant challenges, including limited access to quality education during the apartheid era. However, despite these obstacles, families prioritise education to improve their circumstances and achieve upward mobility. This is primarily based on the belief that education can provide better job prospects and financial stability which is the driving force behind the community's dedication to learning (Alexender, 2013).

Education is not merely an individual pursuit; it is woven into the cultural fabric of the Indian community (Bagea, 2023). The strong emphasis on academic achievement reflects deeply held values that prioritise knowledge and learning. For this reason, parents and elders instil a sense

of responsibility in younger generations to pursue education as a means of honouring family and community traditions (Rayhan, 2023). This cultural reverence for education fosters a sense of pride and identity, reinforcing the idea that success is attainable through hard work and commitment to learning. The Indian community's historical resilience during hardship has further underscored the value of education (Ilyas, 2023). Evidently, when discriminatory policies during the apartheid regime limited educational opportunities, many Indian families sought alternative routes to ensure their children could access learning (Gwele et al., 2024). The establishment of community schools and tutoring initiatives further exemplifies this determination. This adaptability not only preserved educational opportunities but also cultivated a collective strength that has continued to benefit the community. In that capacity, the emphasis on education has led to significant contributions by Indian South Africans across various fields including medicine, law, engineering, and academia (Abdallah et al., 2024).

Furthermore, these contributions extend beyond individual success and enriches the broader South African society. Professionals from the Indian community have played crucial roles in addressing societal challenges, providing expertise and fostering innovation (Surana et al., 2020). Their achievements underscore the idea that education is not only a personal asset but also a benefit to the community, further contributing to the nation's development. In contemporary times, the value of education remains steadfast as many Indian South Africans continue to strive for academic excellence. Accordingly, the community recognises the importance of lifelong learning and adapts to evolving educational landscapes (Day, 2023). Efforts to promote access to higher education, vocational training and professional development are increasingly prioritised, ensuring that future generations are equipped to navigate an ever-changing world (Srivastava, 2023). According to Singh (2024), the value placed on education by South African Indians is multi-dimensional, encompassing empowerment, cultural significance, resilience and societal contributions. Thus, education serves as a cornerstone for individual and community advancement, reinforcing the belief that knowledge is key to unlocking potential and achieving lasting change. This enduring commitment to education not only shapes the lives of individuals but also contributes to the rich tapestry of South African society.

### 2.3 The Value of Family Legacy in the Indian Community

In the Indian community, the concept of family legacy is deeply ingrained and holds significant cultural, social, and emotional value (Verma, 2020). This legacy further encompasses

traditions, knowledge and achievements passed down through generations; influencing the identity and aspirations of individuals within the community (Ding, 2024). One of the vital aspects of this legacy is the role of grandparents - often serving as custodians of cultural heritage and wisdom (Liu & Yin, 2021). As family legacy plays a crucial role in preserving cultural heritage, grandparents act as a key link to this history. In this sense, they reinforce a sense of belonging among younger generations through their presence and teachings. This cultural continuity further helps younger family members to understand their roots and fosters pride in their heritage. Theron (2015) posits that the values instilled within families are foundational, and grandparents often play a key role in imparting these principles, such as the respect for elders and the importance of education, hard work and community service. Moreover, their lived experiences and moral teachings serve as guiding principles for behaviour and decision-making, influencing choices in education, careers and personal relationships (Liu & Yin, 2021).

In addition, the legacy of ethical behaviour and moral integrity is seen as a responsibility to uphold the family's honour, often with grandparents serving as role models for younger generations (Rayhan, 2023). Family legacies also create a support system that reinforces social cohesion within the community (Jewett et al., 2021). Grandparents often serve as emotional anchors, offering wisdom and guidance to their grandchildren. The bonds formed through familial ties, which often extend beyond immediate relatives, create a broader network of support (Kending, 2023). This network provides emotional, financial, and social assistance, reinforcing a sense of unity and belonging. In this context, grandparents help cultivate strong family relationships that contribute to the overall strength of the community. Family legacy also encompasses the aspirations and achievements of previous generations, with grandparents frequently highlighting the accomplishments of their ancestors. Subsequently, many Indian families take pride in the successes of their forebears - whether in education, business or social feats (Davies, 2023). Grandparents also often encourage younger generations to strive for excellence, motivating them to build on the successes of their lineage (Chance, 2021). As a result, this desire to honour family legacy can drive individuals to pursue higher education, entrepreneurial ventures or community leadership roles.

However, while the value of family legacy is profound, it can also present challenges. Expectations to conform to family traditions or to pursue specific career paths can create pressure on younger members. Still, grandparents may be instrumental in negotiating these

expectations; helping bridge the gap between traditional values and modern aspirations (Ding, 2024; Fowler, 2019). Balancing individual goals with familial obligations requires careful navigation, particularly in a rapidly changing world. Nonetheless, many young adults find that understanding and embracing their family legacy, often articulated by their grandparents, help them to define their paths while honouring their heritage.

According to Britton (2024), the transmission of family legacy relies heavily on intergenerational dialogue, with grandparents playing a pivotal role in this exchange. Engaging in conversations with grandparents allow younger family members to learn from their experiences and insights, fostering mutual respect and understanding. This dialogue bridges generational gaps, strengthens familial bonds and enriches the family narrative, ensuring the legacy remains relevant and vibrant (Britton, 2024). As a result, the value of family legacy in the Indian community is multi-faceted, encompassing cultural continuity, ethical values, social support and aspirations (Hussain, 2023). This highlights that grandparents serve as vital custodians of this legacy - imparting wisdom, values and teachings that shape individual identities and foster a sense of belonging. In addition, while navigating the complexities of modern life, many young people find strength and motivation in their family legacy, which is especially as articulated by their grandparents. This interplay between heritage and individual aspirations therefore enriches the community and ensures that the legacy continues to thrive across generations.

## 2.4 The Role of Grandparents on Grandchildren's Academic and Life Outcomes

### *2.4.1 Intergenerational Resilience*

In exploring academic resilience, a holistic approach considers the interconnectedness of individual, familial and societal factors within the Indian community; emphasising the influence of societal factors within their lives. By examining the interplay between culture, identity and resilience within the South African Indian community, researchers can gain deeper insights into the processes underlying academic success and develop targeted interventions that empower young adults to thrive (Martin, 2016). By focusing on the perspectives of those directly impacted by academic challenges, researchers can ensure that resilience interventions are contextually relevant, culturally sensitive and empowering (Theron, 2015). This is true for all members of the South African community with a broader focus outside of the Indian community.

On the one hand, general resilience is conceptualised as a trait-like, psychological feature and is one of the individual characteristics that encourage how an individual responds to challenges or changes within their environment (Martin, 2016). In this sense, resilience is expressed when an individual can continue to function effectively during a time of distress. On the other hand, academic resilience is the ability to adapt positively to academic challenges and adversities and is a crucial factor in achieving academic success (Rojas, 2015; Cassidy, 2015). Academic resilience also encompasses more than just the ability to persist through challenges; it entails effectively regulating one's thoughts and emotions. Individuals with high levels of academic resilience often demonstrate strong cognitive and emotional regulation skills, enabling them to stay focused, manage stress and remain motivated despite setbacks (Fullerton et al., 2021). Strategies like goal setting, self-reflection and seeking social support are crucial for enhancing both cognitive and emotional resilience (Fullerton et al., 2021).

According to a study by Frisby and Vallade (2021), low academic resilience can lead to feelings of anxiety, stress, hopelessness and loneliness. Low academic resilience can also decrease enjoyment and impact education, academic self-esteem and morale (Sinha, 2014). Conversely, high academic resilience can contribute to positive life outcomes, higher self-esteem and academic success (Frisby & Vallade, 2021). It is important to note that while academic resilience is a valuable trait, it is not the only factor that contributes to academic success. Other factors such as motivation and support by friends and family (including grandparents) and self-efficacy, also play a significant role. Sinha (2014) argues that grandparents, often revered as repositories of wisdom and cultural heritage within the Indian community, play a pivotal role in shaping younger generations' worldviews and coping mechanisms. Through the sharing of personal stories and lived experiences, grandparents impart invaluable lessons of perseverance, determination and resilience – serving as guiding beacons for their grandchildren. In this sense, grandparents' involvement in their grandchildren's lives can significantly enhance their academic resilience by providing emotional support, guidance and mentorship (Ding, 2024).

Conflicting views on how kinship promotes young adults' positive adjustment, particularly in the contexts of academic resilience in South African Indian communities, exist (Dasgupta, 2023; Theron, 2015). For instance, Dasgupta (2023) links academic success to the support of family and friends, while Theron (2015) argues that research on the subject is limited. However, Ding (2024) supports the views of Dasgupta (2023) in that the contributions that grandparents share with their grandchildren can be a contributing factor to their academic

resilience. This is because the bond between grandparents and their grandchildren run deep and is around emphasised by wisdom and passion. In addition, academic resilience literature explains positive adjustment to adversity in ways that are biased toward Western culture; however, these studies have referred to the importance of kinship (Mupenzi, 2018). Moreover, previous research has highlighted risk factors and protective factors; however, these studies are from the perspective of the grandparents and do not focus on grandchildren directly (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2016). Thus, resilience research has primarily focused on Western contexts, creating a significant gap in understanding the experiences of the South African Indian community; particularly considering young adults from high-risk or previously disadvantaged communities (Naidoo & van Schalkwyk, 2021; Rudd, et al., 2021; Theron, 2015). In this context, prior research often overlooks cultural factors and the unique challenges faced by these individuals.

According to Makgetla (2020), South Africa is the most economically unequal country, with the minority races holding over 80% of the economy. These findings suggest that previously disadvantaged racial groups are more prone to higher levels of poverty. In turn, the prevalence of poverty in South Africa often leads to high academic failure and results in young people encountering a multitude of challenges and barriers to achieving academic success (Naidoo & van Schalkwyk, 2021; Zungu, 2022). However, despite these adversities, some youths are still able to attain academic success due to their ability to adapt to challenges within their environments (Naidoo & van Schalkwyk, 2021). In this context, young people living in high-risk contexts often develop a sense of academic resilience. The encouragement of academic resilience is further influenced by positive developmental relationships which help young adults achieve educational success (Putri & Nursanti, 2020). This motivation to become successful may stem from a strong family setting.

While family support, including that of grandparents, plays a significant role in fostering academic resilience, it is not the sole determinant. A multitude of factors influence an individual's ability to navigate academic challenges and emerge stronger. According to Frisby and Vallade (2021), positive teaching behaviours, robust academic and emotional support and inspiring role models can significantly contribute to academic resilience. Moreover, resilience-building opportunities are often embedded within supportive networks and everyday interactions at various levels (Carmen et al., 2022). As young adults progress through their academic and personal lives, they inevitably encounter various challenges and experiences. Their responses to these challenges are influenced by a myriad of aspects, including their

capacity for perseverance. Perseverance is defined as the sustained effort to achieve goals despite obstacles (Codreanu et al., 2021). Further, a crucial aspect to consider regarding academic resilience is the intersectionality of identities and experiences within the South African Indian community (Sasinsky, 2022).

Beyond cultural influences, minority groups in South Africa grapple with socioeconomic disparities, educational inequities and historical narratives of marginalisation (Linklater, 2020). These interrelated factors shape the resilience pathways of young adults, influencing how they navigate academic challenges and setback (Sinha, 2014). Therefore, the role of family dynamics and intergenerational transmission of resilience narratives cannot be devalued. In the Indian community, grandparents are often respected as repositories of wisdom and cultural heritage, playing a pivotal role in shaping the worldview and coping mechanisms of younger generations (Linklater, 2020). Through the sharing of personal stories and lived experiences, grandparents impart invaluable lessons of perseverance, determination and resilience, which serve as enduring pillars of strength for their grandchildren (Mtshali, 2015).

In addition, the broader social context within which young adults operate shapes their resilience trajectories. Al-Jebzi (2022) argues that community support networks such as religious groups or organisations, school or university curriculums and access to resources, all contribute to the resilience-building process that may impact resilience dynamics. Further, cultural values, traditions, and beliefs regarding education, achievement and success, intersect with broader socio-economic factors to shape individuals' resilience responses (Desai, 2018). Understanding these cultural nuances is therefore essential for designing culturally responsive interventions and support systems that effectively promote academic resilience among young adults.

### *2.4.2 Fostering Self-Efficacy and a Growth Mindset*

Grandparents, often seen as the keepers of wisdom and tradition, play a vital role in shaping the lives of their grandchildren. Beyond providing love and affection, grandparents have the unique ability to foster self-efficacy and cultivate a growth mindset in younger people (Armstrong, 2022). Thus, supportive relationships and mentorships are pivotal in nurturing this mindset (Ding, 2024). Bryan et al. (2020) also highlighted that family involvement initiatives contribute to forming strong support networks essential for cultivating academic resilience in young adults. This resilience is further underpinned by a growth mindset, a belief in one's capacity for growth through effort and perseverance (Bryan et al., 2020). Young adults with a

growth mindset view challenges as opportunities for learning and development, rather than insurmountable obstacles. Having a positive self-concept and strong self-efficacy is essential for resilience (Ding, 2024). In this context, young adults believe in their ability to succeed and perceive failures as temporary setbacks, making them more likely to overcome academic challenges with determination. By sharing personal experiences, offering guidance and encouraging a positive outlook, grandparents can empower their grandchildren to reach their full potential. This can be done in several ways.

**2.4.2.1 Story Telling.** Guha (2019) argues that Indian culture is rich in folklore and historical narratives passed down to family legacies through grandparents; often sharing encouraging stories of historical figures, mythological heroes and family ancestors who overcame adversity. Grandparents, with their rich tapestry of life experiences, are revered as natural storytellers (Thompson, 2024). By weaving tales from their past, they can significantly influence the mindset and self-perception of their grandchildren. Through shared stories, grandparents can cultivate a growth mindset among younger generations by encouraging children to view challenges as opportunities for growth and learning (Barnes, 2020). When grandparents recount personal experiences of overcoming obstacles, they instil resilience and a belief in the power of perseverance. When emphasising the importance of effort and dedication, they also inspire young minds to work hard and strive for their goals.

Furthermore, storytelling can be a powerful tool for nurturing self-efficacy (Pellas, 2023). By sharing stories of personal accomplishments and triumphs, grandparents boost their grandchildren's self-belief. When children hear about their grandparents' successes, they internalise the belief that they, too, can achieve great things (Edwards, 2019). Grandparents also use storytelling to help children develop a positive self-image (Johnson, 2022). By emphasising the unique qualities and strengths of their grandchildren, they foster a sense of self-worth and confidence. In addition, storytelling is used to teach children valuable life lessons. Through tales of historical figures, mythological heroes and fictional characters, grandparents impart wisdom about principles like honesty, kindness and integrity (Johnson, 2022). In turn, these stories help children develop a strong moral compass and a sense of right and wrong. By sharing stories of individuals who overcame adversity, grandparents can inspire children to face challenges with courage and determination (Galvin, 2019). As a result, storytelling is a powerful tool that grandparents use to shape the minds and hearts of their grandchildren. By sharing stories that inspire, motivate and teach, grandparents aid in the

development of a growth mindset, self-efficacy and a strong moral character among younger generations.

**2.4.2.2 Cultivating a Strong Work Ethic.** The intergenerational bond between grandparents and grandchildren offers a unique opportunity for the transmission of cultural values, life skills and a growth mindset. The Indian culture which is steeped in ancient wisdom and rich traditions, places immense value on hard work and dedication (Mallery, 2022). In this context, grandparents often play a pivotal role in instilling these values in their grandchildren (Said, 2024). For instance, they share stories of historical figures like Mahatma Gandhi, who fought for India's independence through non-violent means. And mythological heroes, who embodied courage, wisdom and perseverance. These tales inspire young minds, igniting a spark of determination and a belief in the power of hard work. In addition, grandparents often encourage their grandchildren to participate in various activities such as academics, sports or cultural pursuits (Amorim, 2019). By emphasising the importance of consistent practice and effort, they instil a sense of discipline and commitment. For example, a grandparent might share a story of a renowned musician who practiced long, consecutive hours to achieve mastery in their field. Such anecdotes motivate young minds to dedicate themselves to their chosen fields. Further, grandparents often involve their grandchildren in household chores and responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning or gardening (Rudra, 2023). These tasks not only instil a sense of responsibility but also teach the value of contributing to the family and community.

In fostering a strong work ethic, Indian grandparents are also cultivating a growth mindset in their grandchildren (Gatson, 2024). They emphasise the importance of learning from mistakes and viewing setbacks as opportunities for growth (Ding, 2024). For example, if a child struggles with a particular subject, a grandparent might share a personal anecdote about overcoming a similar challenge. Thus, by highlighting the importance of perseverance and effort, they encourage a positive attitude toward failure and a belief in the power of continuous improvement. Notably, the role of grandparents in fostering growth and self-efficacy can never be overstated. Grandparents often celebrate their grandchildren's achievements, no matter how small, reinforcing the idea that hard work and dedication are rewarded (Johnson, 2022). Indian grandparents also play a vital role in shaping the character and values of their grandchildren. By emphasising the importance of hard work, perseverance and a growth mindset, they ultimately equip young people with the tools they need to succeed in life.

**2.4.2.3 Promoting Cultural Values.** Indian culture is often passed down through generations by grandparents. They share captivating tales from Indian mythology, and historical events such as the Indian Independence Movement (Shukla, 2024). These stories not only entertain but also impart valuable moral lessons and ethical values (Aden, 2024). By sharing these stories, grandparents instil a deep sense of cultural identity in their grandchildren. Furthermore, grandparents play a pivotal role in preserving and celebrating Indian festivals and rituals (Salawu, 2020). They actively participate in festivities, involving their grandchildren in various ceremonies and traditions. By participating in these festivals, children develop a strong sense of belonging to their cultural heritage and learn about the significance of these traditions.

Another important aspect is language preservation. Grandparents encourage the use of indigenous languages at home, which helps children maintain a connection to their roots (Salawu, 2020). By speaking their native languages, children not only learn about their cultural expressions but also strengthen their ties to the community and its heritage. This linguistic connection deepens their understanding of cultural nuances and traditions. Many Indian grandparents are also fluent in multiple languages, including regional languages and Sanskrit (Prasad, 2024). In South African Indian communities, people primarily preserve languages such as Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati and Urdu (Salawu, 2020). This allows them to often teach these languages to their grandchildren, exposing them to the richness and diversity of Indian linguistic heritage.

Further, by sharing classical literature, poetry and music, young people cultivate a deep appreciation for Indian artistic expressions (Salawu, 2020). Another way that grandparents instil cultural values is through cultural emphasis on respect for elders and humility. Grandparents often model these values in their interactions with their grandchildren. For example, they teach them to greet elders with respect, speak politely and express gratitude (Chou, 2019). By observing their grandparents' behaviour, children also learn the importance of good manners and social etiquette, modelling these in their own interactions. Through these interactions, grandparents instil a sense of empathy, compassion and consideration for others.

**2.4.2.4 Providing Unconditional Love and Support.** South African Indian grandparents play a vital role in promoting cultural values through their unconditional love and support. One significant way they do this is through culinary traditions. Food serves as a means of connection, as grandparents often share stories behind certain dishes, emphasising their importance in family gatherings and celebrations (Abarca, 2024). In addition, some

grandparents enjoy cooking and sharing traditional recipes; they teach their grandchildren about their cultural cuisine, fostering a sense of identity and continuity (Kim, 2024).

Furthermore, emotional support provided by grandparents creates a safe space for children to express their identities (Freeman et al., 2021). This unconditional love allows them to navigate the complexities of being part of a multicultural society with confidence and resilience. Grandparents also often emphasise values such as respect, humility and family loyalty, teaching children how these principles are integral to their cultural identity (Chou, 2019). Consequently, grandparents serve as mentors, offering wisdom and guidance that help younger generations navigate their cultural identity in a contemporary context (Fowler, 2019). This mentorship not only imparts knowledge but also encourages children to appreciate their heritage while adapting to the world around them. Through these various methods, South African Indian grandparents ensure that cultural values are passed down and cherished in future generations.

### *2.4.3 Architects of Academic Success and Emotional Well-being*

Indian grandparents in South Africa play a central role in nurturing the academic and emotional well-being of their grandchildren (Ding, 2024). Their unwavering love, patience and wisdom create a nurturing environment where children can thrive. They inspire hope and instil in their grandchildren emotional love and support. In turn, this boosts self-esteem and cultivates self-confidence among children, which is essential for academic success (Sinha, 2014). Self-confidence is seen as a powerful tool that can significantly impact a child's academic performance. Children who believe in themselves are more likely to embrace challenges, persist through difficult times and seek help when needed (Tough, 2013). This positive mindset can lead to improved motivation, focus, and ultimately, better academic outcomes. Grandparents also serve as empathetic listeners, patiently hearing their grandchildren's thoughts, feelings and academic challenges. By validating their emotions and offering words of encouragement, grandparents can boost children's self-esteem and motivation (Barbosa et al., 2021).

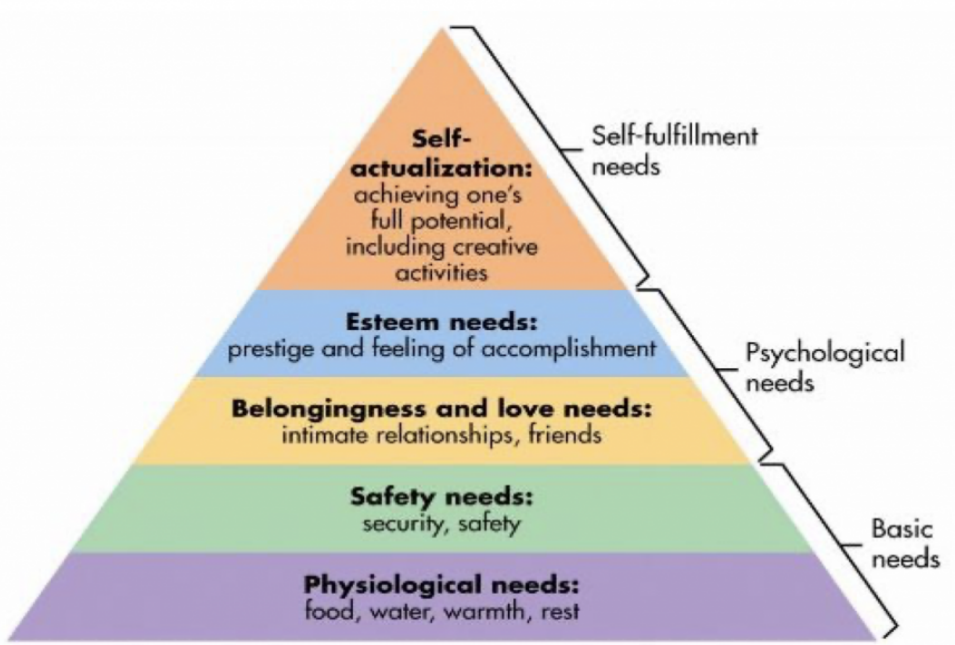
Grandparents can also help children develop effective study habits, time management skills and problem-solving strategies (Lu et al., 2022). For instance, grandparents can help children create study schedules, review their work and provide guidance on difficult assignments. In addition, grandparents would often encourage children to participate in cultural activities such as dance, music and art, enhancing their creativity and cultural awareness. Thus, Indian

grandparents in South Africa play an invaluable in fostering the academic and emotional well-being of their grandchildren, especially as they provide a sense of safety (Barbosa et al., 2021). By affording them unconditional love, support and guidance, grandparents help children to develop the skills and attitudes they need to succeed in school and life (Johnson, 2022). Grandparents' wisdom, patience and unwavering belief in their grandchildren's potential can have a lasting impact on their academic and personal development.

The role of grandparents as architects of academic support and emotional well-being, can be understood using the Maslow hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1954) as depicted in Figure 1. At the most basic level, grandparents may contribute to meeting their grandchildren's physiological needs, such as providing food, shelter or clothing, especially in times of financial strain or family crises (Hussain, 2023). They also play a crucial role in fulfilling their safety by creating a secure and loving environment where children feel protected and cared for. This is because grandparents are often a source of unconditional love, acceptance and emotional support; therefore, fostering a strong sense of belonging and connection (Hussain, 2023). They also spend quality time with their grandchildren, creating lasting memories and strengthening their bond.

**Figure 1**

*Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*



***Note:*** *An American Psychologist, Abraham Maslow believed that humans are motivated by physical and psychological needs that are unrelated to unconscious desires. Maslow developed a hierarchy of needs to explain these needs and understand what motivates people. (Maslow's Amazing Hierarchy of Needs Copyright © 2016 By Unicaf Team).*

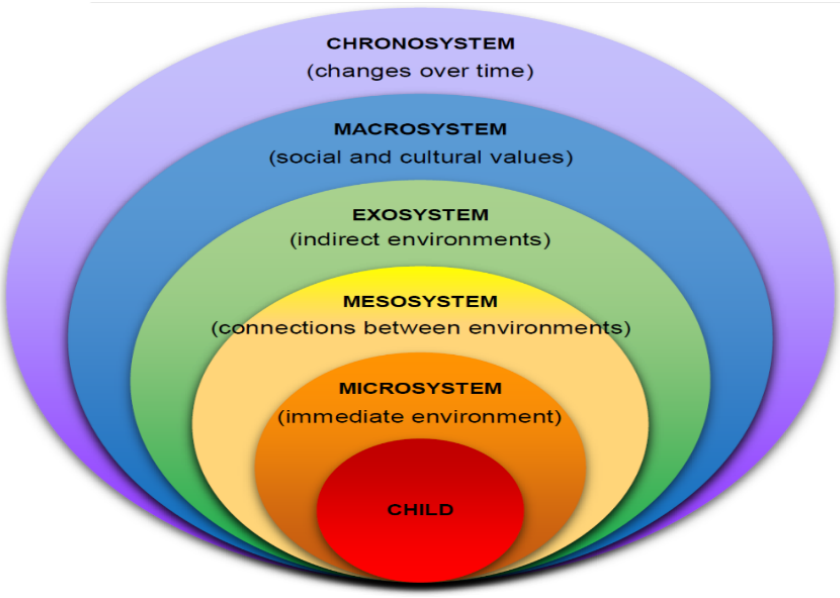
Moving up the hierarchy, grandparents contribute to their grandchildren's esteem by providing encouragement, praise and positive reinforcement, boosting their self-esteem and confidence (Sinha, 2014). They also instil valuable life lessons, moral values and ethical principles which shape character and a sense of purpose (Ding, 2024). Finally, grandparents can help their grandchildren reach their full potential by fostering academic success and cultivating their interests and talents. In this context, they may help with homework, provide tutoring and encourage a love for learning, supporting their grandchildren's academic aspirations (Fowler, 2019). By exposing them to various activities and hobbies, grandparents also help grandchildren to discover and develop their talents and passions. Moreover, by addressing these needs across the hierarchy, grandparents contribute significantly to their grandchildren's overall well-being, academic success and personal growth. They serve as pillars of support - guiding and nurturing their grandchildren towards a fulfilling and successful future.

### 2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study was underpinned by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory which provides a comprehensive framework for understanding human development within the context of various environmental influences (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This theory posits that individual growth is shaped by a range of interrelated systems, each of which plays a distinct role in development (Lerner et al., 2014). Initially formulated to address the complexities of child development, Bronfenbrenner's framework emphasises that individuals do not develop in isolation; rather, they exist within a dynamic interplay of multiple environmental contexts (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The theory has garnered support from various scholars and has been expanded upon, solidifying its status as a foundational model in developmental psychology and education (Swanson, 2024). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is particularly valuable for studies focused on child development, educational practices and social work interventions as it highlights the importance of examining multiple layers of influence (Lerner et al., 2014).

**Figure 2**

*Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory Remixing*




***Note:*** *The framework (Figure 2) consists of five nested systems, each representing different levels of environmental influence on the individual (The Whole Child: Development in the Early Years Copyright © 2023 by D. Budzyna and D. Buckley).*

**Microsystem**

The microsystem is the immediate environment encompassing direct interactions such as those with family, peers and schools. It is characterised by face-to-face relationships that profoundly impact an individual's daily experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In this study, the microsystem highlights the pivotal role that grandparents play. Their involvement offers emotional support, cultural values and practical resources that significantly impact a young adult's educational journey. By providing encouragement and sharing their own experiences, grandparents contribute to the development of resilience, which is crucial for navigating academic challenges. This emotional and moral support further empowers young adults to build a growth mindset, enabling them to view setbacks as opportunities for learning rather than hinderances.

**Mesosystem**

The mesosystem involves the interconnections between different microsystems, illustrating how experiences in one context, such as family life, can influence another, like school performance (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The mesosystem further illustrates how grandparents can influence young adults by linking various aspects of their lives. For example, grandparents may interact with parents and educators to create a supportive environment that prioritises

education. This collaborative approach reinforces the importance of academic success, creating a network of encouragement that enhances the child's resilience.

**Exosystem**

The exosystem includes broader social settings that do not directly engage the individual but affect their development, such as parental workplaces and community resources (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Within the exosystem, the potential financial support from grandparents alleviates some of the external pressures associated with pursuing higher education. This economic stability allows young adults to focus more on their studies, contributing to their academic resilience. The study can examine how these financial contributions, while indirect, have a profound impact on a young adult's ability to thrive in an academic setting.

**Macrosystem**

The macrosystem represents overarching cultural values, customs and societal structures that shape the environments in which individuals live (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The macrosystem plays a significant role in grandparent-grandchild dynamics. In many Indian families, education is highly valued, and grandparents often embody and transmit these cultural beliefs. By instilling a strong work ethic and the importance of educational attainment, grandparents help shape the aspirations of young adults, reinforcing their commitment to academic success.

**Chronosystem**

Lastly, the chronosystem introduces the dimension of time, acknowledging that life transitions and historical events can significantly influence development over the lifespan (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The chronosystem also considers shifts in educational policies or family dynamics and how these can affect resilience. Understanding these temporal aspects allowed the study to explore how grandparents adapt their support as circumstances change, ensuring that their contributions remain relevant and impactful. Therefore, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory underpins this study by providing a comprehensive framework for analysing how the various roles of grandparents contribute to the academic resilience of young Indian adults. By examining these interconnections across different systems, the research highlighted the multifaceted nature of support and resilience, illustrating how familial relationships and cultural values interact to shape educational outcomes. This theoretical

approach not only enriches the analysis but also emphasises the importance of considering multiple dimensions of influence in understanding academic resilience.

Furthermore, by considering the interplay between various systems, researchers can gain a more nuanced understanding of individual behaviours and outcomes. For instance, an examination of how family dynamics (microsystem) interact with school policies (exosystem) can reveal critical insights into factors that affect a child's academic achievement (Marsh et al., 2019). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory offers a robust and multidimensional framework for analysing the complex influences on human development. Its emphasis on the interconnectedness of various environmental systems therefore allows researchers and practitioners to develop more holistic approaches to support individual growth (Holt & Aveling, 2020). By grounding studies in this theoretical model, scholars are better able to analyse the intricate interactions that shape human behaviour and ultimately inform effective interventions across diverse contexts.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter explored the complex history of Indians in South Africa, emphasising their multifaceted experiences of migration, labour and cultural adaptation. The literature highlights the significant contributions of the Indian community and the challenges they have faced, particularly in the context of apartheid and its enduring legacies. This historical narrative accentuates key themes of resilience, community cohesion and social justice, revealing how these factors have shaped the South African Indian identity. The role of grandparent's contribution towards academic resilience was explored through methods such as storytelling, emotional support and intergenerational transmission of beliefs and values. The theoretical framework underpinning this study provides a comprehensive lens through which to examine these dynamics. By situating individuals within their interrelated environments, ranging from family and community to broader societal structures, the Bronfenbrenner's theory illuminates how various systems interact to influence the educational and social outcomes of individuals. This framework therefore facilitates an understanding of how the Indian community has navigated systemic challenges and leveraged familial and communal support to promote educational attainment and social mobility.

Moreover, education emerges as a critical focal point in this discourse, functioning as both a vehicle for empowerment and a means of preserving cultural identity. The literature emphasises

the Indian community's deep-rooted belief in the transformative power of education: a driving force behind their resilience in the face of historical and contemporary challenges. Despite the systemic barriers imposed during apartheid, families prioritised education, establishing community initiatives to ensure access and quality learning opportunities. In summary, this chapter highlights the interplay between historical narratives and theoretical frameworks, illustrating how the legacy of the Indian community in South Africa is intricately tied to their commitment to education. As they continue to contribute to the broader South African society, their enduring dedication to learning not only fosters individual success but also enriches the cultural and social fabric of the nation. The literature emphasises the importance of recognising these contributions within the context of ongoing struggles for equity and inclusion; thereby, framing the Indian experience as a vital component of South Africa's journey toward social justice.

# Chapter 3
# Methodology

The following section provides a description of the research methodology that has been used for this research. This study aimed to explore young Indian adults' experiences of how their grandparent's stories promoted, encouraged and contributed to their academic resilience. The research described the contributions in terms of grandparents' roles, stories or experiences as contributing protective factors that encouraged academic resilience.

## 3.1 Research Approach and Paradigm

A qualitative approach highlights the importance of understanding the meaning of experiences and intends to gain deeper insight into a phenomenon (Cousin, 2013). Qualitative approaches are subjective in nature, a necessary aspect when exploring the personal and subjective experiences of participants in order to gather meaningful data (Cousin, 2013). In the context of this study, an exploratory qualitative approach was used to explore and highlight the perceptions of young Indian adults in South Africa. An exploratory approach seeks to uncover and expand on the understanding of a phenomenon that may have been minimally researched within a specific cultural and contextual framework. The design allows for flexibility in data collection and interpretation which promotes rich insights into participants' experiences. The study focused on their academic resilience, which is attributable to the contributions of their grandparents.

The research paradigm that was used in this study was interpretivism. This paradigm aims to create understanding of the subjective experiences of participants (Auriacombe & Schurink, 2012). In the context of this study, subjective experiences included the relationship between the experiences of young Indian adults and their grandparents' contribution towards their academic resilience. A paradigm consists of key components such as an epistemology, ontology and methodology which shapes the study's approach to understanding the research. Epistemology refers to the theory of knowledge, the observers of intersubjectivity which is the young adults' experiences of their grandparents' contributions (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2016). It is cross-sectional as it captures the perceptions of the young adults at a point of time, which is after they have succeeded academically. The ontology relates to grandparents' contributions to these young adults (Rudd et al., 2021).

The ontology addresses the internal reality of the experiences shared by the young adults, which provides an understanding of how young adults develop academic resilience through the contributions of their grandparents (Mattes, 2012). The epistemology of the research related to contributions and storytelling, in South Africa story telling is a traditional aspect throughout families. Story telling can be a protective factor in the development of academic resilience (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2016). The paradigm sought to understand the experiences of young adults directly. An advantage of qualitative research is that it allows the researcher to interpret without altering its true intent, as it refrains from manipulation or distortion (Maree, 2014). However, a disadvantage of qualitative enquiry is that it does not allow for transferability of findings or generalisations (Cousin, 2013). Notably, this research study does not aim to achieve this. Employing a qualitative methodology offered several other advantages, including the opportunity to explore topics in depth and detail. By gathering data from human experiences, the study was able to contextualise its findings within broader social contexts, increasing the potential transferability of results to other settings. For example, the insights gained from the research could inform interventions for therapy or programmes pertaining to resilience building or other related initiatives (Dieronitou, 2014). The qualitative design, based on hermeneutics, focused on understanding the interpretations and insights of young adults regarding their experiences.

In terms of limitations for this approach, the potential for biases and the time-consuming nature of analysis, particularly when dealing with diverse data and themes were considered. As qualitative data varies among participants, themes and responses may differ, posing challenges in categorisation. The subjective nature of participants perceptions makes interpretation complex and potentially subjective for the researcher (Dieronitou, 2014). Ethical considerations regarding confidentiality can also complicate the presentation of findings, requiring careful attention to detail and time-consuming efforts to ensure privacy. A further downside to qualitative research is its limited generalisability, as it focuses on the perceptions of Indian young adults rather than aiming for broader applicability. For the purpose of this study, generalisation to a larger population was not necessary, as the focus was specifically on understanding the perspectives of young adults within the context of their grandparents' contributions towards their academic resilience (Dieronitou, 2014). However, this does not conclude that the general Indian population may not have had similar experiences. The time-consuming nature of analysis and ethical considerations regarding confidentiality may be justified, as consent and confidentiality forms were completed by participants prior to data

collection (Dieronitou, 2014). The data collected consisted of experiences from participants, provided through questions on their experiences, their grandparents, academic success, resilience and history. This research constituted basic research, aimed at generating knowledge about the experiences of the young adults and its purpose was to explore these experiences (Maree, 2014).

### 3.2 Sampling and Participants

In the current study, participants were chosen using criterion based purposive sampling to select information-rich participants that were relevant to the research. This sample strategy was used to identify and select participants that met some predetermined criterion of importance and relevance to the study (Palinkas, 2015). The sample for this study included 10 young adults from the Indian community in South Africa. Participants were chosen based on criteria using purposive sampling, allowing the inclusion of information-rich participants relevant to answering the research question. Information power was applied to the research, referring to the selection of a smaller sample who may possess highly relevant knowledge or insights (Naidoo & van Schalkwyk, 2021). Participants were found through advertising on various social media and online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Participants were selected based on the following selection criteria:

- Participants had to provide written consent and agree to volunteer for this research.
- Participants required a tertiary qualification in any field of study.
- Each participant had to reside in South Africa, identify as Indian and be between 18 and 30 years old.
- Participants had to have exposure to their grandparents, either maternal or paternal, and have lived with them for more than 12 months, with or without their parents.

Further, participants' demographic data is captured in Table 1 below. The sample consisted of six females and four males of Indian descent. At the time of the interviews, nine of the participants had obtained or were studying towards postgraduate qualifications, whilst one participant had completed an undergraduate qualification only. Participants attended a number of universities across South Africa, listing the University of KwaZulu Natal, the University of Witwatersrand, Nelson Mandela University and the University of South Africa. Seven participants indicated that they had one grandparent or more who had already passed away at the time of the interview. Three participants had living maternal and paternal grandparents.

Eight participants had lived with their grandparents during a period of time. In addition, two of these participants had lived with their grandparents after either one or both of their biological parents had passed away. The remaining two participants indicated that they never lived with their grandparents. However, they reported that they would visit their grandparents often enough and were deemed suitable to partake in the study. All participants were between the ages of 23 to 35 years old at the time of this study.

**Table 1: Participants' Profile**

| Pseudonym | Marital Status | Gender | Age | Qualifications |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Participant A | Single | Female | 28 | Honours degree in Psychology, Diploma in Human resources Management |
| Participant B | Single | Female | 27 | Honours degree in Psychology |
| Participant C | Single | Male | 26 | PhD in Religion Studies |
| Participant D | Single | Male | 28 | Honours degree in Social Sciences and Psychology |
| Participant E | Single | Female | 24 | BCom in Business Management and Marketing |
| Participant F | Single | Female | 25 | Master's degree in public administration |
| Participant G | Married | Male | 31 | Degree in Project Management |
| Participant H | Single | Male | 27 | Bachelor's degree in information systems |
| Participant I | Single | Female | 23 | National Diploma in Financial accounting, Advanced Diploma in Management Accounting, Advanced Diploma in Accounting Sciences |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Participant J | Married | Female | 31 | Bachelor of Arts in Dramatic Art, Diploma in Marketing Management |

### 3.3 Data Collection Method

Once ethical approval (Appendix E) for the research was gained, the researcher distributed an advert (Appendix F) on various social media and online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn as a method to call for participants. Participants who engaged with the advert then contacted the researcher using the email and phone details provided on the advert to express their interest in the research. Once the researcher had ten participants who met the criteria for the research, written consent was obtained from each participant through emailing each participant consent forms (Appendix D) as well as a participant information form (Appendix A). Thereafter, the researcher arranged suitable dates for the interviews to take place. Each participant received an email in which information was provided prior to the interviews being conducted which confirmed the time and date of the interview as well as other relevant information. The participants returned their signed consent forms prior to their interviews. Participants were emailed a link to their interview on the confirmed date, to ensure minimal access to privacy breaches. The participants had to be accepted by the researcher to enter the online interview meeting to ensure only they had access to the interview to maintain privacy and confidentiality. Interviews were conducted using an online platform, Microsoft Teams, that allowed for video transmission and recording. The duration of the interviews varied depending on the participant and other factors. Some lasted between one hour and an hour and a half, influenced by connection issues or other process considerations. The participants attended online interviews that were unstructured. Further information is provided in the participation form attached to this research. The experiences of these young adults were used to explore how resilience to the pursuit of academic success was facilitated through the relationship with their grandparents. An account of their experiences will be described in narrative in the discussion. Given the unstructured nature of the interview, a broad interview schedule (Appendix C) was consulted for the general guidance of the interviews with participants.

In-depth interviews were conducted in which information was obtained regarding the perspectives, experiences and beliefs of participants regarding their development of academic resilience and their experiences with their grandparents. In-depth interviews are conversational

in nature and took place between the researcher and participant, interview questions during in-depth interviews are open-ended (Rutledge, 2020). In-depth interviews allowed for participants to provide detailed explanations, also allowing for a deeper insight into the experiences shared by participants (Rutledge, 2020). The purpose of in-depth interviews is to allow for detailed information from participants that provides insights on the participants perspectives, experiences and their feelings that speak to their derived meaning of a particular topic (Rutledge, 2020). Interviews were deemed a convenient data collection method for this study as some questions were sensitive in nature. In this sense, individual interviews allow for separation from group disclosure (Alshenqeeti, 2014). This ensured that participants felt safe and more at ease speaking to their experiences. It is argued by Rutledge (2020), that whilst in-depth interviews provide a better understanding of the topic according to the participants subjective experiences, this type of interviewing style has limitations due to the lack of generalisability (Rutledge, 2020).

The interview questions used during this research were unstructured which allowed the researcher to follow-up on responses with probing questions when a belief, experience or perspective needed clarity or more detail. The open-ended nature of these questions also emphasises the subjective nature of the study and encouraged the participants to open up about their experiences. The researcher asked each participant questions related to the topic of research. To mitigate possible harm regarding the sensitive nature of the study, each participant was made aware of the appropriate and available services for debriefing. Interviews were video and audio recorded and transcribed verbatim for the data analysis process.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of sorting, categorising and organising data (Gray, 2013). The transcribed data was analysed through thematic content analysis. Thematic content analysis was used to identify themes from the reported experiences of each participant, specifically focusing on the contributions their grandparents had towards their academic resilience. Thematic content analysis focuses on identifying and analysing themes within the collected data, which may appear as patterns throughout the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Identifying themes can be used to describe and provide subjective meaning to experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework for conducting a thematic analysis was used and the researcher applied six steps.

Step 1 - Becoming familiar with the data

In this step, the researcher familiarised themself with the raw data collected over a period of three months. Interviews were recorded in a video format and automatically transcribed, which allowed the researcher to watch the videos, record impressions and make notes. Observations ensured familiarity around the participants' verbal and non-verbal communication, such as changes in tone of voice or facial expressions. The researcher also familiarised themselves with the transcripts that were produced from the automated transcription programme. In addition, the use of video recordings provided the researcher the opportunity to review non-verbal communication. Other valuable information was also noted, such as emotions, tone, expressions and pauses. This process allowed for some interpretation of the Indian jargon and non-verbal communication that is unique to the Indian community. The automated transcribing had to be edited alongside the video due to the inability for the transcription to pick up on the audio of some participants. All transcripts were edited to enhance credibility and quality of the content for further analysis.

Step 2 - Coding

Once the data had been adequately transcribed and reviewed, content was systematically coded in line with the study's research question and aims. Specific phrases, words, themes or similarities were identified across the transcripts or dataset. From this, categories or connections were created under broader codes. Thereafter, more distinctive codes were used and refined. For example, themes related to 'growing up', 'childhood' or 'primary school' experiences were linked under a boarder code of *childhood*. These were then translated to distinctive codes about *culture in childhood*, *contributions from grandparents in childhood* or *roles of grandparents during childhood*. This allowed for more manageable units of the data. Smaller units of the text ranged from a few words to a few sentences, capturing individual responses, statements, anecdotes or descriptions provided by the participants.

The researcher used an open coding approach by reading through each segment of text from the transcribed interviews and assigning primary codes to these. These codes reflected the substance of the content shared by the participants. The codes used were descriptive and aimed to capture specific concepts, experiences, ideas or themes present in the data. Through this process the researcher was then able to identify comprehensive sets of codes capturing the range of themes and perceptions discussed by the participants. From this process the researcher began to identify codes progressively which allowed for patterns, recurring themes and

significant points to emerge efficiently. Throughout this coding process, new pieces of data were also compared to previously coded pieces of data to ensure consistency and coherence in the coding between participants data. For example, the young adults' perceptions of the contributions from their grandparents were compared to other themes that had similarities and differences which were used to further categorise data and explore the theme in more depth.

Furthermore, notes were captured by the researcher to document thoughts, observations and reflections on the codes and their interpretations, serving as a form of reflexivity. Coding consistency was further maintained by adhering to criteria or guidelines established earlier on in the initial coding. This ensured that similar content was coded in the same way across the data from participants. As new insights were gained by the researcher, codes were revised and refined to better capture the details of the data. After completing the initial coding process, coded parts of data were reviewed to identify recurring patterns, similarities and connections. This involved exploring how codes could be grouped together by exploring the relationships between them. Similar codes were grouped based on their similarities, forming primary categories of related codes. These groups represented broader themes and topics that emerged from the data, reflecting the underlying concepts and ideas expressed by the participants. This allowed for the researcher to start generating themes from the coded data.

Step 3 - Generating themes

Generating themes involved revisiting the coded data to refine and consolidate the emerging themes. Coded sections across transcripts were compared to ensure consistency and coherence in the thematic structure. Axial coding was also applied, this consisted of a process of reorganising and re-examining data to identify relationships between codes and categories (Gray, 2013). The process involved exploring how different codes intersected and overlapped, together with identifying subthemes or dimensions within larger themes. As themes emerged, the researcher engaged in conceptual development to clarify their meaning and significance. This involved deepening the understanding of the underlying concepts and exploring the suggestions and complexities within each theme. The process of generating themes continued until data saturation was reached, in that no new themes or insights emerged from the data. At this point, the researcher ensured that the thematic framework captured the full range of experiences and perspectives expressed by the participants.

Step 4 - Reviewing and developing themes

After generating initial themes, a thorough review of the thematic framework was conducted to assess its comprehensiveness, coherence and alignment with the study's research objectives. This involved examining each theme in relation to the coded data, evaluating its representativeness of the participants' experiences and considering its theoretical significance within the broader context of the study. To ensure the accuracy and validity of the identified themes, themes were cross-referenced with the coded data, thoroughly reviewing each coded segment to verify its alignment with the corresponding theme. This process helped identify any discrepancies or inconsistencies between the themes and the underlying data, enabling the refining and adjustment of the thematic framework accordingly.

Further, as part of the review process, initial themes were refined and clarified to enhance their conceptual clarity and precision. This involved revisiting the definitions and boundaries of each theme, eliminating redundant or overlapping parts and consolidating related subthemes to create a more simplified and coherent thematic structure. Together with theme refinement, conceptual development deepened the understanding of the underlying concepts embedded within each theme. This involved unpacking the degrees and complexities of the data by exploring the underlying meanings and implications of the identified themes and considering their theoretical implications for the current study.

Step 5 - Refining and defining themes

The refinement process included revisiting each identified theme and critically examining its constituent elements to ensure clarity, coherence and relevance. This involved reviewing the coded data associated with each theme, identifying any ambiguous or overlapping elements and refining the thematic limits to create a more distinct and cohesive framework. Thereafter, each theme was defined, expressing its theoretical scope, key characteristics and relevance to the study's research objectives. Definitions were created to provide a clear and concise description of what each theme represented, ensuring that the interpretation of the data was transparent and consistent. Naming the themes involved selecting appropriate and meaningful labels that briefly captured the essence of each theme. For this reason, the content, tone and implications of each theme were considered; opting for names that were descriptive, suggestive and reflective of the underlying concepts. In addition, thematic names or labels were chosen to resonate with the data and convey the central ideas captured within each theme. Refining, providing definitions and naming of themes were processes that unfolded over multiple cycles

of analysis. Each theme was revisited, its definition refined based on emerging insights and names were adjusted to better align with the evolving understanding of the data. This approach allowed for continuous refinement and improvement of the thematic framework.

Step 6- Developing a report

Developing a report after the thematic analysis was conducted, involved integrating the findings, organising them coherently and presenting them effectively. Chapter four of the report begins with an introduction providing an overview of the study's research objectives, methodology and scope. A summary of key findings from the thematic analysis is presented, highlighting main themes and supporting evidence from the data. Each theme is described in detail, including its conceptual scope, key characteristics and relevance to the research questions. Findings are also supplemented with examples or data extracts from the transcripts for clarity and richness. Following the presentation of themes, the report includes a discussion section interpreting the findings considering the existing literature. The discussion further explores the theoretical frameworks, implications and insights. In addition, it addresses the limitations inherent in the research process and considerations for future research. The report concludes by summarising the study's key findings, implications and contributions to the field. Through these steps, a comprehensive report effectively communicates qualitative research findings to its readers (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

### 3.5 Ethical Considerations

In qualitative research, when participants are involved a level of protection is required to protect the participants and their data (Laryeafio & Ogbewe, 2023). This ensures that honest experiences of the participants are shared during data collection. Researchers adopt various approaches to ethical considerations to ensure that their participants feel safe to participate in the study (Laryeafio & Ogbewe, 2023). An approach to mitigate ethical considerations involved obtaining an ethical clearance certificate (Appendix E) which ensures that the research would entail ethical considerations as guided by the ethics committee to ensure the protection of participants. Ethical considerations such as autonomy, trustworthiness, confidentiality, justice, non-maleficence and beneficence were considered for this research.

### *3.5.1 Autonomy*

In qualitative research, the reality of obtaining informed consent is that the process of research may change according to the changing requirements of participants due to the emerging research designs (Jelsma & Clow, 2005). For this research, participants received a participation form that explained how the researcher ethically considered the autonomy of the participant. Participants received consent forms which needed to be read and signed by each participant prior to their interview. The researcher ensured that each participant understood what the study and their participation entailed, and consent was obtained to record the interviews. Further, participants had the opportunity to ask any questions around informed consent and autonomy before the commencement of the interviews. Participants were referred to as participant A to J to protect their identifying information in the discussion.

### *3.5.2 Trustworthiness*

To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the thematic analysis, the researcher provided detailed, rich descriptions of the context, participants and findings to allow readers to determine the transferability of the results to other settings. The researcher critically reflected on their own biases, assumptions and influence on the research process. These reflections were documented to provide transparency. Maintaining a detailed record of all research decisions, data collection processes, coding and analysis steps, enables others to follow the research process and verify the findings. Reflexivity helped ensure that the themes were grounded in the data and not unduly influenced by the researcher's preconceptions. The researcher sought consultation and feedback from colleagues, mentors and supervisors to validate coding decisions and discuss alternative interpretations.

### *3.5.3 Confidentiality*

The value of qualitative research includes the experiences shared by participants share and the data that interpreted by the researcher (Jelsma & Clow, 2005). Due to the personal nature of these experiences, there is a potential risk that some data may be identified and linked back to participants. This could lead to possible stigma towards the individual or community (Laryeafio & Ogbewe, 2023). Thus, confidentiality was explained to each participant and outlined in detail in the participant information form. The researcher ensured that participants understood the possible risks to confidentiality due to the in-depth nature of their experiences being shared. To ensure confidentiality and prevent any risks or threats, no identifying information was shared

of the participants in the write up of the report. Identifying information was kept as confidential without risking the richness of data or compromising the data collected. This was accomplished using pseudonyms and therefore protecting participants' identity (Gray, 2013). Collected data was stored on a password protected device in a file that was password protected as well. Recordings were stored in the same manner. Only the researcher had access to the data on record.

### *3.5.4 Justice*

The relationship of power that exists between the participant and the researcher was considered. In qualitative research, the presence of the researcher and their personality plays a role in the data collection and data analysis process (Laryeafio & Ogbewe, 2023). In addition, the research may be focused on a group or community that is marginalised, such as the young adult Indian population in South Africa. In the context of this study, the researcher acknowledged that participants were vulnerable in sharing personal information, stories and contributions from their grandparents; therefore, efforts were made to ensure they were not disempowered or exploited by the research process. This was done through autonomy and making sure that participants understood that they were able to withdraw from the study at any time, without consequence. The researcher executed this by explaining at the beginning of each interview to participants that they could withdraw from the process at any time if any discomfort was experienced.

### *3.5.5 Non-maleficence*

In qualitative research it is important that trust and openness of the process is established by the researcher (Jelsma & Clow, 2005). Since sensitive topics or themes may have been shared in the interviews, the researcher had a duty to promote the emotional integrity of the participants. In this sense, participants should feel that their lived experiences and subjective truths are represented well. Protocols for preventing harm among participants were considered by discussing possible referral services before the interviews, and handling the data with sensitivity and appropriateness. These protocols were mentioned in the participant information sheet provided to participants. These were addressed by clarifying the role of the researcher and the participant, and utilising reflexive practices of the research throughout the research process.

### *3.5.6 Beneficence*

Researchers have the responsibility to ensure that participants are referred to necessary and appropriate services, if the need arises, and protect participants' safety (Jelsma & Clow, 2005). Ethical issues regarding emotional harm are more prevalent in qualitative research compared to quantitative research due to the sensitive nature of topics and the sharing of personal narratives can evoke emotional responses or memories (Laryeafio & Ogbewe, 2023). For example, some participants recalled and shared experiences of grief and discrimination, resulting in the participant to become emotional. It was therefore important that the researcher ensures that the study's methods, procedures and protocols are cognisant to the ethical considerations and standards of research pertaining human participation (Jelsma & Clow, 2005). This was addressed by making participants aware of potential distress and appropriate support services on the participant information form. Participants were able to contribute positively to this research which allowed them to gain a sense of meaning and provided them with a space to personally reflect.

## 3.6 Reflexivity

A crucial part of qualitative research is reflexivity as it acknowledges the role of the researcher in shaping the study's design, data collection, analysis and interpretation (Gray, 2013). This process involves introspection on how the researcher's background, experiences and biases influence the research process and its findings. As the primary investigator of this study, my role has been pivotal in shaping every aspect of the research process - from conceptualisation to data collection and analysis. Reflexivity, central to qualitative inquiry, ensures transparency regarding my positionality, biases and influence on the study's outcomes. This reflexivity statement aims to critically examine my role and its implications throughout this research.

### *3.6.1 Researcher Positionality and Background*

My academic background in Humanities and previous experience in qualitative research provided a strong foundation for understanding the complexities of exploring young Indian adults' experiences of academic resilience and the influenced of their grandparents. My personal experiences and cultural background as a young South African Indian adult, also shaped my perspective on familial dynamics and the significance of intergenerational storytelling within the Indian community. In my position as a female, young adult in the Indian

community I had my own perspectives of how grandparents could contribute to the academic success of other young adults, and it was important for me to be conscious of these subjective experiences of my own. This reflexivity ensured that I could reflect on my positionality and background, with acknowledgement of similarities and differences from that of the participants.

### *3.6.2 Impact on Research Design and Methodology*

The choice of qualitative methodology, particularly thematic content analysis, was influenced by my belief in the importance of capturing rich, contextual data from participants' narratives. This approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of how participants perceive and articulate the contributions of their grandparents to their academic resilience. However, my familiarity with this method may have influenced certain aspects of data collection and analysis, including the interpretation of themes and the emphasis on cultural nuances in participants' discourses.

### *3.6.3 Data Collection and Interactions with Participants*

During the data collection phase, my role extended to establishing rapport with participants This was essential for creating a conducive environment where participants felt comfortable in sharing their personal experiences. Being sensitive to cultural nuances, including language variations and non-verbal cues specific to the Indian community, was critical in ensuring accurate interpretation of participants' narratives. However, my position as a researcher, who was potentially perceived as an outsider despite shared cultural elements, may have influenced participants' responses and the depth of disclosure during interviews.

### *3.6.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation*

Thematic content analysis involved an iterative process of coding and theme development, which was influenced by both the data itself and my interpretations. Reflexivity was maintained through constant comparison and engagement with the data to mitigate potential biases. However, as the sole analyst, my interpretations and decisions in coding and theme development inevitably reflected my own perspectives and theoretical framework. Engaging in reflexivity allowed me to critically reflect on how my assumptions, prior knowledge and analytical decisions shaped the final thematic framework presented in Table 4.1.1.

### *3.6.5 Ethical Considerations and Reflexive Practices*

Ethical considerations, particularly concerning informed consent, confidentiality and participant well-being, were paramount throughout the research process. The role as a researcher called for adherence to ethical guidelines to protect participants' autonomy and minimise harm. Reflexivity prompted ongoing consideration of ethical dilemmas, like balancing the depth of data collected within participants' comfort levels and ensuring that confidentiality measures were robust. Similar experiences between the researcher and participants might have existed. To mitigate subjectivity, the researchers continuously examined themselves throughout the data collection process, aiming to approach objective truth in the best interest of the research and participants. Participants interacted with an Indian female researcher pursuing her master's degree, potentially harbouring preconceptions about her identity. The researcher remained aware of this dynamic throughout the interviews and data collection. Additionally, the researcher acknowledged that her understanding of the topic was likely incomplete and viewed this research, considering personal experience, as an opportunity for learning.

### *3.6.6 Challenges and Limitations*

Despite conscientious efforts to maintain reflexivity, certain challenges emerged. These included navigating language barriers in transcription and translation, which occasionally hindered the accurate representation of participants' voices. In addition, my positionality as a researcher with inherent biases and preconceptions, posed challenges in achieving complete neutrality during the data analysis and interpretation. Reflexivity has been integral in acknowledging and critically examining my role as a researcher. By transparently documenting my positionality, biases and their impact on the research process, this reflexivity statement aimed to enhance the validity and reliability of the study's findings. Continued reflexivity will also inform future research endeavours, ensuring a nuanced and ethical approach to qualitative inquiry within the field of community-based counselling psychology.

## 3.7 Conclusion

This chapter outlined a rigorous qualitative approach designed to explore the nuanced experiences of young Indian adults regarding the contributions of their grandparents towards the development of academic resilience. The research questions centred on understanding how

grandparents' stories and experiences fostered resilience among participants. The qualitative paradigm, specifically an interpretive framework, explored the subjective perceptions and interpretations of the participants, capturing the intricate dynamics of familial storytelling and its impact on academic perseverance. The chosen methodology addressed the complexity and richness of the participants' narratives through in-depth interviews, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of themes - like cultural values, educational beliefs and personal resilience. Further, the methodological approach prioritised the authenticity of participant voices and their unique cultural contexts, emphasising the interpretative nature of qualitative inquiry.

# Chapter 4
# Findings and Discussion

## 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, an overview of the identified themes is provided, presenting and interpreting the outcomes of the research. In addition, key themes are highlighted as well as the patterns and insights derived from them. Each theme explained is organised according to the main research question and sub-questions. In examining the themes derived from the research data, several key aspects emerged that demonstrate the complex interplay between grandparents' influence on the development of academic resilience among young Indian adults in South Africa. These findings highlight the significance of intergenerational relationships and the transmission of cultural values and beliefs. The findings also emphasise shaping the academic resilience of young adults, particularly within the context of South Africa's socio-historical background.

Further, this chapter discusses the findings considering its relevance to existing literature, theoretical frameworks and broader social contexts. It explores how the identified themes contribute to our understanding of academic resilience and offers insights into potential strategies for supporting young adults facing academic challenges. Through this integrated approach, the findings and discussion chapter offer a rich exploration of the study’s research outcomes.

This section provides a consideration of some of the themes and subthemes that emerged from the narratives of the participants. Offering an understanding of young Indian adult’s experiences, perspectives, and the role of grandparents in fostering academic resilience. Through thematic analysis, several themes were identified, which include the theme of intergenerational transmission of resilience capturing the subthemes of family legacy passed down, grandparents facing adversity due to a disadvantaged past. Theme two that was identified was nurturing supportive relationships, which discusses the subthemes of understanding family dynamics, family dynamics and relationship with grandparents and intergenerational communication. Theme three discusses fostering personal growth and empowerment with the subthemes of encouragement and empowerment of grandparents and learning morals and values from grandparents. Lastly, Theme four focuses on developing adaptive coping mechanisms from grandparents, with the subthemes of learning balance from

grandparents and learning coping strategies from grandparents. A thematic framework is presented in the table below:

*4.1.1 Thematic Framework*

| Theme: | Subthemes: |
|---|---|
| **Theme 1: Intergenerational Transmission of Resilience** | Family Legacy Passed Down<br>Grandparents Facing Adversity Due to a Disadvantaged Past |
| **Theme 2: Nurturing Supportive Relationships** | Understanding Family Dynamics<br>Intergenerational Communication |
| **Theme 3: Fostering Personal Growth and Empowerment** | Encouragement and Empowerment of Grandparents<br>Learning Morals and Values from Grandparents |
| **Theme 4: Developing Adaptive Coping Mechanisms** | Learning Balance from Grandparents<br>Learning Coping Strategies from Grandparents |

## 4.2 Intergenerational transmission of resilience

The theme of intergenerational transmission of resilience emphasised the capacity of an individual to overcome adversity and challenges. The participants' narratives suggest the significant role of learned empathy from grandparents, as young adults drew upon the wisdom and experiences of their grandparents to navigate interpersonal relationships and understand others' perspectives within the different themes. Two subthemes were identified as part of the participants experiences with intergenerational transmission of resilience from their grandparents; subtheme one being family legacy passed down and subtheme two being grandparents facing adversity due to a disadvantaged past.

*4.2.1 Family Legacy Passed Down*

The transmission of family legacy, tradition, and values from grandparents, emerged as a significant theme in the research study. Participants described how their grandparents played a central role in passing down cultural heritage, values and traditions from generation to generation. Through storytelling, rituals and shared experiences, participants learned important lessons about resilience, perseverance and cultural identity from their grandparents. For example, some participants recounted how their grandparents' stories of endurance and resilience during difficult times, instilled a sense of pride in their cultural heritage and motivated them to carry their family legacy forward.

**Participant A:**

> He was very strict with his children, but to me as an individual, he was very caring and not as strict, obviously you have to be strict. Culturally based or religious he never once forced us. He would not say don't eat pork. Don't eat beef. Don't do this. Don't do that. There was always a teaching behind it. So, he always ate all. He never ate pork, but he always ate beef. He used to like his steaks and things like that. He always said it's my choice. You don't have to follow in my shoes. But this is the principle behind the culture, you need to decide.

Family legacy, traditions and values are often shaped by its historical and cultural contexts. Participant A highlighted how her grandfather navigated cultural and religious teachings with a blend of strictness and compassion. While deeply rooted in cultural principles, her grandfather emphasised the importance of understanding the reasoning behind practices, such as abstaining from certain foods. Participant A further explained that this allowed her the freedom to make her own choices regarding principles she was taught. According to Freeman et al. (2021) autonomy creates a sense of freedom for young people around decision making and exploration of these decisions regarding culture and religion. The approach of her grandfather highlighted the significance of principles over blind obedience. For Participant A, her grandfather's approach inspired her to critically think about the practices, both culturally and traditionally, that she now implements in her own life. In this context, she evaluates the reason behind dietary restrictions and choice in abstaining from certain foods during cultural events. Resultingly, she researches the symbolic or health related significance of these choices while still maintaining flexibility in her personal beliefs and lifestyle. Participant A implements this advice further by respecting the autonomy of others and by showing understanding and

empathy towards the choices of others. In addition, she encourages those around her to explore their own reasoning behind practices and is open to learning about others' traditions. Through her grandfather's emphasis on understanding why certain practices are important she was able to find value and appreciate these practices enough to continue these in her current life as well as commit to passing the relevance of these practices to generations to come. Participant A discussed how this helped to foster both cultural pride and personal autonomy for her.

**Participant C:**

> There was a bit of a question as to whether they would return to India or whether they would stay here and because of that dilemma, there weren't proper integrative systems of education for Indians in South Africa, especially because those Indians wanted to maintain their linguistic and cultural heritage, which the South African well, the South African apartheid government at that point, was not responsive to. To a certain extent, grandparent had to focus on those areas and pass it on to their families.

Participant C's account illustrated the broader socio-political challenges faced by grandparents, particularly during the apartheid era in South Africa. Participant C described how the lack of integrative systems of education for the Indian community, coupled with the uncertainty of whether to remain in South Africa or return to India, compelled grandparents to take on the responsibility of preserving linguistic and cultural heritage within their families. This responsibility required both resilience and ingenuity to ensure that traditions survived amidst systemic exclusion. Other participants shared how they have made a commitment and have taken initiative to continuing these traditions. Chance (2021) describes that continuing traditions can be done through creating supportive community platforms where information about these traditions is shared. Such communities exist on social media platforms and through community organisations such as church groups and other religious affiliations. In these community groups, members are also encouraged to share the histories of their traditions and how their grandparents may have advised them to carry out these traditions.

**Participant B:**

> I'll start with my maternal grandparents, so I call used to call them Nani and Nana. They would still call my Nani to come assist with prayers and stuff like that because she knew the rituals. She knew what to do when a woman gave birth and you know just the cultural things. During these events and rituals, they would all speak and sing in Hindi and my sister and I also are very

> keen in learning so very interesting how you see these things basically being passed through generation to generation without it directly being told. We would stand around and listen to them trying to understand.

**Participant A:**

> So, I called my grandmother Amma.

In this context, participants had fond memories of their grandparents speaking in their native language with other elders and the participants being able to learn a few words or phrases through observation. In addition to this, grandparents would watch movies, have conversations, listen to music or radio stations, sing or carry out traditional prayers in their native languages such as Tamil or Hindi. Participants were further encouraged to preserve their linguistic heritage through the language used when addressing their family members. For example, by referring to grandparents as ‘Nani’, ‘Nana or ‘Amma’. Uncles and aunts are also referred to as ‘Mama’, ‘Athe’ or Mousie’, these and many other calling names help to preserve some of the language used by Indian grandparents and previous generations (Prasad, 2024). Grandparents instilled a balance between physical, social and cultural growth, ensuring that younger generations not only maintained a connection to their heritage but also thrived in broader societal contexts. Participant I provided a glimpse into how grandparents prioritised well-rounded childhood development. The participant describes how this was carried out by encouraging participation and engagement in sports and cultural activities. Grandparents instilled a balance between physical, social and cultural growth, ensuring that younger generations not only maintained a connection to their heritage but also thrived in broader societal contexts. Cultural nuances and traditions are deeply understood through linguistic connection (Prasad, 2024).

**Participant I:**

> They will, however, be quite insistent that we had a well-rounded childhood development because they encourage sport and cultural activity and things like that. Sports at school and cultural activity after.

**Participant B:**

> I remember hockey. After hockey practise one time, my Nana - who never played hockey before just bear that in mind- he said to me in the car you need to hold your hockey stick a little bit

> higher and that's the thing. I look back and remember, because he was right, like even though he never played this sport, it was just him observing and wanting me to do well and supporting you rather than, you know, breaking me down and making me feel like I don't know what I'm doing.

**Participant B:**

> My Nani absolutely loved fashion. No matter her age, she would always stay true to her fashion. She fully believed in being a fashionista. At times instead of adhering completely to Western standards of dressing, she would wear Punjabis, which to me at like as a child. I'd never quite understood it, looking back, I understand it was her way of standing out and her way of staying true to herself, our culture and traditions.

Participants described how their grandparents encouraged them to be well-rounded by supporting them during their sporting fixtures, cultural activities and academic pursuits, taking a keen interest in these activities. This helped participants to adapt to adversities around preserving cultural values and traditions whilst fitting into the demands of their Western based schooling. For example, participants shared how they would participate in school sports and after school or during weekends would attend Indian dance classes. Other participants would attend lessons outside of school to learn Tamil or Hindi, according to their grandparent's native language or were encouraged to take an interest in Indian traditional clothing or fashion. Grandparents also supported their grandchildren by driving them to these activities or attending their events, recitals or concerts.

Through these activities, participants found an appreciation and pride of their cultural legacies, encouraging them to pass this on to the generations that will precede them. An appreciation and understanding of cultural legacies strengthen the ties within a community and to its heritage (Prasad, 2024). These quotes collectively reveal the various ways in which grandparents shaped their grandchildren's identities through a delicate interplay of guidance, perseverance and adaptation to historical adversities.

### *4.2.2 Grandparents Facing Adversity Due to a Disadvantaged Past*

Naidoo and van Schalkwyk (2021) argue that the legacy of apartheid has had a profound impact on the educational experiences and opportunities available to individuals in South Africa. Grandparents' experiences of overcoming these obstacles become invaluable lessons in

resilience for their grandchildren (Phasha, 2020). For example, some participants shared how their grandmother's resilience during forced removals under apartheid taught them the importance of adaptability and perseverance. These stories demonstrate how grandparents' experiences of navigating adversity become embedded in the family's history, shaping the values and beliefs that are conveyed to younger generations. By sharing their struggles and triumphs, grandparents not only provide hope but also demonstrate the possibility of achieving academic success despite formidable odds. Further, listening to their grandparents' narratives of these experiences, an appreciation and value for education was roused in participants. Participants engraved these narratives in their minds as they pursued their own academic journeys, inspired by their grandparents' perseverance when navigating adversity during the apartheid era. This legacy of resilience was then displayed by participants own perseverance when faced with adversities. In addition, participants shared how obstacles such as failure, financial difficulties and societal pressure did not hinder their own determination when it came to pursuing their studies.

The study's findings also emphasised the significance of cultural heritage in this intergenerational transmission of resilience. Grandparents play a crucial role in passing down values, traditions and a sense of belonging, providing young adults with a strong sense of identity and a framework for navigating the complexities of life and pursuing academic goals with confidence (Phasha, 2020). This aligns with Desai's (2018) assertion that cultural nuances within the South African Indian community, including values and beliefs surrounding education, play a crucial role in shaping resilience. Participants in this study frequently emphasised the importance of these values; respect for elders, perseverance and the pursuit of education, which were instilled through stories, religious teachings and participation in cultural events. This highlights how the transmission of cultural values and a sense of belonging provides young adults with a strong foundation for navigating challenges and achieving academic success. It further resonates with the concept of cultural resilience, which is the ability to maintain and adapt cultural identity amidst adversity (Desai, 2018).

Many participants recounted the profound impact of their grandparents' experiences with poverty, discrimination and political persecution. These narratives illuminated how such hardships not only shaped their grandparents' worldviews but also played a crucial role in fostering resilience (Gwele et al., 2024). The stories of struggle and survival passed down through generations served as a testament to the enduring strength of the human spirit, and not

only reflected the personal challenges faced by their grandparents but also revealed the broader social and political forces that influenced their lives. This offered valuable insights into how adversity can shape individual and collective identity (Nuti, 2019). Evidently, many grandparents shared stories of growing up under the apartheid regime and how the system forced them to deal with difficult circumstances. These discourses they then shared with their grandchildren and was considered a source of inspiration and to be resilient in life.

In South Africa, the apartheid system was a macro system which influenced families and individuals by creating environments of systemic oppression and inequality (Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013). Structural policies restricted access to education and other opportunities, which reinforced a socio-political context designed to maintain inequality (Baker, 2019). However, despite these adversities, participants described that their grandparents cultivated resilience by instilling values of perseverance, community support and self-worth which has been passed down through generations. The quotes illustrate the challenges that participants' grandparents faced due to a disadvantaged past. These also shed light on the strength and resilience that emerged from those adversities.

**Participant B:**

> My grandparents have always been very supportive of me doing well, even if achieving, for example, 50%, they were very proud of me and I think that's when I realised when I grew up and I looked back is it's not what you achieve, it's basically how you achieve something and as long as you try. So, they did play a big role in the fact that I need to make sure that I'm proud of myself too, and that made it easier for me because no matter what I did, it was always going back to asking myself, am I happy? It's not about other people and that's very strange and in the Indian community because often we want to please people around us. So, the impact that they had was one that was very supportive, but also one that was constantly teaching me and gearing me up for the journey that they themselves had experienced, which was to be resilient in all cases, to not react to certain things. And I think from seeing them experience certain things in their lives. And almost witnessing how they have made a success of themselves.

**Participant B:**

> I have always been very academically inclined but my grandparent's instilled resilience through adversity, I'm now very academic-orientated and that changed for me when I reached university in my undergrad. The reason it changed is because I was unable to cope. I couldn't balance

> between social life. I couldn't balance between the academic life, and I also couldn't balance with the pressure that I put on myself to always achieve. At some point, I'd lost track of my goal, which was to do well, and I did struggle a bit with a mental decline. I did experience depression. I did experience societal pressure. Unfortunately, at the time for me, I was held back. But I pushed forward. I managed to get myself back into a bit of space and I think the reason that I'm sharing that is because I've now, got a different understanding of academic resilience and success.

Participant B described how her grandparents' lived experiences of hardship became a source of inspiration, particularly in navigating academic pressures and societal expectations. She reflected on the support and values instilled by her grandparents, who emphasised perseverance and self-worth over external validation - even in a community where pleasing others often took precedence. This perspective allowed Participant B to reconnect with her goals and develop a more holistic understanding of resilience, which were rooted in the lessons that her grandparents modelled. Participant B's narrative highlights how intergenerational discourses became a source of inspiration for navigating present challenges. It also demonstrates how the macrosystem of the apartheid system indirectly shaped the academic and personal development of grandparents and, subsequently, those of participants. Participant B's ability to reconnect with her goals and redefine her resilience through the lens of her grandparents' experiences, also demonstrate the interplay between macrosystemic influences and the agency of the individual.

**Participant D:**

> But resilience is hard. My grandmother raised four daughters through all that adversity, and she was very anxious, she was 7 years old when her father died in a car accident. My grandmother, she raised them alone you know. So, my grandfather, he was first a cleaner in the airlines and then he was the bathroom cleaner after that and then he became the desk clerk. From the desk clerk, he became those people that transport the bags and all of that. So yeah. So that's what he did. But he always says, you know how grandparents say I would walk far to get to school, in harsh conditions. His stories were always that, you know, it was always you must learn to always get up because if you stay down, you will never go anywhere.

Further, Participant D highlighted the persistence of a grandparent who started from a low-paying job as a cleaner and worked their way up as a single parent. Participant D recalled his grandparent's philosophy of 'getting back up no matter what', which became a recurring theme

in his stories. This served as a profound life lesson that inspired resilience in him when faced with challenges. His grandparents' experiences of navigating poverty and limited opportunities also reinforced the importance of effort and determination, leaving an enduring legacy.

**Participant F:**

> So, I technically carry both my paternal and maternal names within mine especially their teachings of adversity and values. So, it's very integral. I think it's so fitting to your research. Because it's like I carry both my grandparents with me in my academic journey.

Participant F's narrative also illustrated how the teachings of both paternal and maternal grandparents were deeply intertwined with their personal identity, character and academic journey. By symbolically carrying their grandparents' names and values, they underscored how those experiences of adversity shaped their perspective on resilience and perseverance - guiding them toward academic success and personal growth. This account reflects the importance of the microsystem in shaping a person's identity and academic resilience as it encompasses the immediate environments and relationships, such as family and peers, of the individual. In this sense, Participant F described how the teachings of her grandparents were embedded in daily interactions and family bonds, which formed the core of her identity. In turn, this shaped her response to challenges as the close relationships within her microsystem provided a foundation for guidance and support which enabled her to overcome adversity. In addition, Participant F shared how carrying her grandparents' names were a symbolic act that highlighted the role of intergenerational transmission within the microsystem. This is consistent with the ecological theory that the quality and nature of interactions within the microsystem of the individual can directly influence the development and trajectory of the individual. Her ability to integrate these values into her academic journey demonstrates the way in which a supportive microsystem can encourage resilience.

**Participant A:**

> "No matter how tough life gets, if you don't pick yourself up, put on your boots, and fight back, it will keep pushing you down". This was the philosophy he lived by. He and his family resided in a place known as 'Fitas,' which is difficult to fully explain. During the apartheid era, many people were relocated to areas like Lenasia and Lenasia South, and 'Fitas' referred to the informal settlements near the railway lines in Lenasia. These were makeshift shelters, built quickly and without much planning, in what could be described as camps. It was only later

> when they were permitted to purchase property and gain stable employment, that he was able to make progress. He eventually bought the plot where my grandmother still lives today. Despite the hardships he endured and the many battles he faced, he was always there for me.

**Participant B:**

> My Nana and Nani grew up in what is now known as Marabastad in Pretoria, an area that was predominantly occupied by Indian and coloured communities during the apartheid era. They were among the first to settle in Laudium, and interestingly, my grandfather's family was among the pioneers there. My great-grandparents, along with my Nana's parents, had immigrated from India, and my great-grandmother played a significant role in the community by starting the first Hindi school. It's fascinating to reflect on the way our learning is deeply rooted in these experiences. My mother learned to speak Hindi not because anyone explicitly taught her, but because she observed my grandmother and great-grandmother teaching others. This sense of cultural preservation and education occurred alongside the challenges of poverty and discrimination that shaped our lives. Despite these hardships, the resilience of my ancestors in creating educational opportunities for future generations is something that continues to influence us today.

Participant A recounted their grandparent's life in 'Fitas', a harsh informal settlement during apartheid. Despite the overwhelming difficulties of displacement and instability, their grandparent managed to secure property and provide stability for their family. Through this, the participant emphasised the philosophy instilled by their grandparent; no matter the challenges, one must continue to fight back and persist. This philosophy, born from personal struggle, not only shaped her grandparent's life but also profoundly influenced the participant's understanding of resilience. Participant B detailed her grandparents' role as pioneers in the community and the cultural and educational contributions of their great-grandparents. Despite facing systemic discrimination and poverty, their family valued education and cultural preservation, such as establishing the first school in the area. These efforts inspired future generations to value learning and heritage, even as they contended with ongoing challenges. The value of education serves as a pathway to community development, social mobility and empowerment of the Indian community (Alexender, 2013). Through the narratives of grandparents, participants gained a better understanding of how education can be a powerful tool for overcoming socio-economic barriers (Vally, 2022). These narratives encouraged participants to prioritise learning to improve their circumstances, rooted in the belief that

educational success can provide better opportunities for participants and the generations to come (Bagea, 2023). The educational success fostered a sense of pride and identity in participants who believed that through hard work and a commitment to their academic journeys, they could attain success (IIyas, 2023).

**Participant F**

> Both of my grandfathers were very big into cricket, and they had such a history. My dad's dad actually played professionally during apartheid. This was a huge deal during that time. I learned all those techniques from them, which impacted me so much and subsequently, my Granny's also saw that potential within me as well. So, they push me in so many different aspects. It made me to an extent, invincible, especially at my young age.

Furthermore, Participant F elaborated on the direct influence of their grandparents' participation in sports and activism during apartheid. Their grandparents' ability to navigate oppression while nurturing talent and ambition, became a guiding force in shaping participants' development and self-belief. These accounts collectively reveal how the adversity faced by grandparents, whether through economic hardship, systemic racism or personal loss, became a powerful source of life lessons (Bose, 2020). The stories of perseverance, cultural preservation and triumph against despite all the challenges, deeply influenced participants and taught them to embrace resilience as an essential part of their own identities and journeys (Pellas, 2023). As participants encountered the narratives of their grandparents' personal experiences of overcoming adversity, a sense of perseverance and belief in resilience were instilled in them. Participants were inspired to work towards their goals and build these qualities into their own identities and journeys (Pellas, 2023). These narratives further created a bond between grandparents and their grandchildren, offering a space for identity development and growth (Mallery, 2022).

### 4.3 Nurturing Supportive Relationships

The family dynamic, particularly the supportive relationship between participants and their grandparents, emerged as a pivotal factor in shaping participants' resilience. This theme explores how these familial bonds foster strength and perseverance in the face of adversity. Central to this theme are two key sub-themes, first understanding family dynamics and second, intergenerational communication.

*4.3.1 Understanding Family Dynamics*

At the foundation of a family lies their values instilled by generations of traditions, practices and teachings (Theron, 2015). In the Indian community, grandparents serve as custodians of cultural heritage and wisdom. Bonds formed through familial ties extend to the participants broader network of support; thus, individuals embrace their family legacy through their grandparents, which helps them define their own path. Participants also described how their parents played a vital role in encouraging their relationships with their grandparents. Parents of the participants fostered relationships between grandchildren and grandparents by involving them in the raising and nurturing their children. Participants described that their parents were responsible for providing access to their grandparents, and as participants grew up, they valued spending time with their grandparents because of this.

Nine out of the ten participants shared that their grandparents were active in raising them and lived with them for a large portion of their lives. Participants who had lost one or both their parents shared how difficult it was for them to grow up without a parent and expressed their gratitude for their grandparents who had stepped into the role of primary caregivers. Some participants shared that their grandparents were responsible for most of their childcare due to their parents either working very demanding jobs, or because their parents could not financially or emotionally support them.

**Participant A:**

> I came back to my grandfather with my brother because my mother kicked my father out, she just couldn't look after us. We had no money. So, for four and a half years or so we really struggled, and it got to a point where we ate like, you know, butter bread and like black tea and stuff like that My mother was like, no, she can't do that. So, we went back to live with my grandfather.

**Participant D:**

> I lost my mother as well. Like my mother took her life because she lost her mother, and she was having difficulty dealing with that. And it, it just became a bit much.

**Participant G:**

> My mum passed away when I was one year, nine months. Um and my dad at that stage. I think he was 20 or 21 or something like that. So, my mom, before passing away, she said to my

> grandfather that he should grow me up because, you know, she doesn't trust my dad as such. my grandma has to do everything on our own, and obviously that also had its challenges as well, you know? So, I think that created more famous on my education was actually more important. But also, she made provision for me in that. My education was fully funded there was also not that financial burden.

At the most basic level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, grandparents contributed to meeting the physiological needs of participants through the provision of food, shelter and clothing (Hussain, 2023). This was reflected in the findings, as many participants shared that they lived with their grandparents, who had worked hard to build businesses and were financially able to support them when their parents could not. Often, participants shared that their grandparents would provide for them until their parents were able to do so. Participant A described how her grandparents provided her with shelter, food and school fees when her mother was unable to. Participant D describes how his grandparents played a role in fulfilling his safety needs by caring for him in the absence of his mother. In this sense, his grandparents were able to foster a sense of connection and belonging as they were actively involved in his childhood and adolescence, offering him emotional support.

**Participant D:**

> My grandfather would check up on me and ask how's college going? What are you doing now? What's ecology? He became really supportive. My granny was always super supportive of me and whatever I wanted to do. Like even when I told her I'm changing from this to this. She would say do whatever makes you happy. It had a big role to play, because they were not saying I need to do this, or study this, get this job. But they were like you follow your path, study psychology if that's what you want to do. Live your life how you want to. It was more community pressure to be more stable as a man. It wasn't really socially acceptable sometimes, right? But the thing I admired that my grandfather no matter how big the task or how difficult the journey ahead of him he just did it. To have the support of someone who is so resilient and has also faced so much adversity has helped me to pushed forward and continue to live, thrive and achieve, it gave me hope that I can do whatever I wanted to which I really needed now as I apply for my masters.

Moving up Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Participant D shared that his grandparents contributed to his self-esteem by providing support, interest, advice, guidance and encouragement which helped him find confidence in his identity (Ding, 2024). He shared that he chose to study

psychology for himself and not because someone else wanted him to pursue this field. He further explained that he practiced understanding towards himself during his academic journey, which resulted in him learning more about himself. These experiences demonstrate the role of the participant's grandparents in encouraging him to reach his full potential; striving for self-actualisation through cultivating new interest and goals as he proceeds on his academic journey (Fowler, 2019). Since the interviews, Participant D also disclosed that he was able to secure a placement in a Masters' programme, highlighting how he was able to proceed on his academic journey by applying for this programme that was a goal of his ultimately pushing him towards self-actualisation by furthering his career.

Further, an interesting finding of the study was that of gender roles. Participant D shared how securing a place in the master's programme was important for his self-actualisation as he was often encouraged to work towards being financially stable, as a male in his community. Other participants shared on gender roles that they encountered as well; they described the harsh gender roles that were enforced on both males and females by the community. Participants shared how their grandparents navigated these and changed the narratives when it came to the participants.

**Participant A:**

> The woman in the community, they don't know the world. Let's be honest. I just mean out of that area because it's all about getting married. Having your kids deciding then and there or are you going to work in a call centre or are you going to be the stereotypical Indian lady who comes from Lenasia, and my grandparents always said, you know 'lens' is just 'lens'. It's a small place you need to see outside regardless of whether it's just past lineage or South only. You need to see the world to believe that marrying a man is not everything.

Participants shared that most of their grandparents married very young - some as young as at the age of fifteen. Male participants in this study shared that the men within their families faced great pressure when it came to financial stability. They described how their grandfathers were expected to provide for the whole family, occasionally including taking care of extended family members as well. On the other hand, grandmothers were expected to maintain all the childcare and household responsibilities. Participants further shared how their grandmothers were not allowed to work or study. However, they were able to practice resilience and determination and often started small businesses using their skills. For example, grandmothers kept small

livestock and sold meat and vegetables or sew clothing that was then sold to neighbours. Participant A shared that despite limitations created by gender roles, her grandmother secured a job as a chef. In addition, other participants shared that their grandmothers offered childcare services to the community.

**Participant A:**

> My granny didn't want to get married. She didn't want to be that lady. They got married at 15 and just popped out kids, she didn't want to be that woman. She had my mom when she was 16 and my grandfather was very controlling. So, he didn't want her to work. And you know their masculinity. But she (my grandmother) always said she wanted to study. She wanted to get her licence. She wanted to get a job. She wanted to do more with life. So, what she did was, she got a job as a chef.

**Participant G:**

> My grandfather had his own business and stuff, so. Education wise, I don't even think he finished matric, to be honest with you. I highly doubt that my Gran also didn't. They got married when she was 16/15/16. He was a tall, intimidating man. But there was a softness which people didn't see that side of him.

Participants, especially the females, reported that these narratives of endurance from their grandmothers encouraged them to focus on their academic success and prospective careers. Some female participants shared that their grandparents encouraged them to set aside the idea of marriage and reassured them that there was no expectation for them to marry at a young age. This was a great relief for participants, allowing them to focus on their academic careers with their grandparents' support and guidance, free from societal guilt or pressure. Participant G discussed the importance of what masculinity meant to his grandfather who appeared intimidating on the outside. Yet, Participant G stated that he knew a very different side to his grandfather which in turn helped him to navigate his own masculine identity. These narratives represent a shift in gender relations and masculinities which are often shaped by rigid cultural and societal expectations (Sivakumar & Manimekalai, 2021). For this reason, gender norms have been created within the Indian community that have burdened young adults. Sivakumar and Manimekalai (2021) argue that through the involvement of men and women within the Indian community, barriers toward a gender-balanced society can be addressed as these barriers include stereotypical attitudes within families. Thus, through the effective engagement of

grandparents regarding the reflections of inequality that is shaped by gender expectations, change can be promoted in the lives of younger generations (Sivakumar & Manimekalai, 2021).

### *4.3.2 Intergenerational Communication*

Participants described how open and honest communication with their grandparents facilitated mutual understanding, trust and respect. Through meaningful conversations and shared experiences, participants gained valuable insights into their grandparents' perspectives. These included values and life experiences, fostering a sense of connection and belonging. For example, some participants shared stories of their grandparents' willingness to listen, validate and support them during difficult times, which strengthened their bond and resilience. Participants often accentuated the significant influence of their grandparents' stories, which provided not only historical context but also moral and emotional guidance. These narratives were often formed by the resistance to external challenges, reinforcing a sense of identity and continuity. In particular, grandparents' experiences with migration, discrimination and hardship shaped their grandchildren's understanding of resilience, providing them with models of perseverance in their own lives. In addition, these experiences were often shared in informal, day-to-day exchanges that characterised family life.

**Participant C:**

> Talking to my grandparents feels different from talking to anyone else—they listen and understand. I can share things with them openly, and they always offer advice that somehow connects back to what I'm going through at school or with friends. That support and understanding give me confidence and a sense of stability; it's like knowing someone always has my back, no matter what happens, and it has grounded me as well and taught me a lot about life.

**Participant F:**

> The impact of open communication within the family, particularly with grandparents, was profoundly supportive. Through regular conversations, my grandparents provided constant encouragement, reminding me that I, too, would endure difficult times. There were many instances when the stress felt overwhelming, particularly as I advanced in my education, where smaller class sizes often amplified the sense of isolation. During these moments, the open communication with my grandparents became a lifeline. They not only shared their hardships but also offered words of reassurance, reinforcing my strength and reminding me that I was not

> alone in facing challenges. Their support and encouragement became a source of resilience, helping me to navigate the pressures of both academic and personal growth.

Participant C emphasised the unique quality of conversations with their grandparents, highlighting how these exchanges provided a sense of stability and confidence. By offering advice that was both practical and deeply empathetic, their grandparents created an environment of unwavering support. This further grounded the participant and reinforced their sense of self amidst challenges with school and social dynamics. Thus, having someone 'in their corner' became a cornerstone for their emotional resilience. Participant F delved further into the role of open communication within the family, particularly during moments of academic- and personal -stress. In this context, their grandparents not only served as a source of encouragement but also provided invaluable reassurance drawn from their own life experiences. The participant recounted how in times of isolation or overwhelming pressure, these candid conversations offered strength and perspective which reminded them of their capacity to endure and thrive. These narratives, often rooted in hardships became a beacon of hope and a reminder of the participant's ability to face adversity with courage.

**Participant J:**

> My grandmother always had something valuable to say, even though I was so young, I would hold on to all her words of wisdom, especially about God. We communicated so honestly about everything; she was so open about her life and hardships and that is partly what motivated me to work hard and not give up.

Furthermore, Participant J reflected on the wisdom imparted by her grandmother, who openly shared stories of her life and struggles alongside lessons about faith and perseverance. These honest and meaningful exchanges left a lasting impact, inspiring the participant to remain determined and committed to her goals. The grandmother's openness about her hardships not only fostered a deep connection but also provided a model of resilience and faith, motivating the participant to embrace challenges with determination. As grandparents are perceived as natural storytellers, stories of struggles alongside lessons of faith can significantly influence the mindset a young person and their self-perception (Thompson, 2024). According to Barnes (2020), stories that are shared by grandparents can cultivate a growth mindset and encourage individuals to foster resilience models whereby challenges are viewed as opportunities for growth and learning. This is evident in Participant J's account in that she was able to model

resilience from her grandmother's narratives and began viewing these challenges as opportunities for growth and learning through which she developed a strong belief in the power of perseverance. Pellas (2023), spoke to storytelling as a tool that encourages the nurturing of self-efficacy. Listening to stories of accomplishments and triumph, boosted their own self-belief and participants internalised the message that they could achieve great things. It further instilled in them that they could go beyond what their grandparents achieved because of their current access to education and other resources. Children who listen to their grandparent's narrative internalise that belief in themselves (Edwards, 2019).

## 4.4 Fostering Personal Growth and Empowerment

Two subthemes that were identified as part of the participants process of fostering personal growth and empowerment included their experiences of encouragement and empowerment from their grandparents and learning morals and values from their grandparents.

### *4.4.1 Encouragement and Empowerment of Grandparents*

Participants highlighted the significant role of their grandparents in providing encouragement and empowerment, particularly during challenging times. Many participants described how their grandparents' words of encouragement and belief in their abilities strengthened their confidence and resilience. In turn, this enabled them to overcome obstacles and pursue their academic goals. Accordingly, participants emphasised the importance of their grandparents' support in fostering a sense of agency and self-efficacy, empowering them to take ownership of their academics and strive for success. For example, some participants shared how their grandparents' words of wisdom, support and belief in their potential inspired them to persevere in the face of academic setbacks and challenges.

**Participant A:**

> She was such a goal-driven woman who through empowerment said that no man should ever make you feel that you are less. She said, 'you fight for what you want' and they encouraged me to pursue academics and excel and even though yes, my granny got married when she was 15, she still made sure she was fine. My granny taught me a lot as well, I was more their child than I was their grandchild.

**Participant B:**

> These things such as being determined academically, I learned largely from the advice of my grandparents just largely you know that you have what one of the things they would always tell me is that I have all of the resources available for me to be successful and if I'm not finding the available resources is. Then I needed to go and look elsewhere, so it was more about you know you always could be successful, or you have to do is look for the right thing or the right tools. I'm from my grandmom.

**Participant J:**

> So, when I saw this the reason I wanted to take this is because for my academic success specifically, I have to give credit to my grandparents, especially my mom's parents, because I always have used them as motivation.

Participant A spoke passionately about their grandmother's resilience and unwavering belief in empowerment, particularly in advocating for independence and strength. Her advice resonated deeply, inspiring the participant to pursue academic excellence despite societal- and personal - challenges. Participant C reflected on the practical, yet empowering advice imparted by their grandparents, particularly the notion of utilising available resources to achieve success. Participant J attributed her academic motivation and achievements to her maternal grandparents, whose lives served as a source of inspiration. By consistently looking to her grandparents for motivation, the participant was able to anchor her perseverance in a legacy of resilience and hard work. This familial connection became a driving force, shaping her academic journey and providing the encouragement needed to excel.

**Participant H:**

> My grandfather passed away when he was very young, but both of them were teachers. Teachers in a small town of Tongaat and they retire there in a school called Mitford. So going to that school, going into the office, I could actually see pictures of my grandparents on the wall.

Participants frequently shared stories of how their grandparents' unwavering belief in their abilities, their constant encouragement and their unwavering support, fuelled their confidence and motivated them to persevere through challenges. This emphasises the importance of having a growth mindset and self-efficacy in overcoming academic challenges (Naidoo & van

Schalkwyk, 2021). Participant H, for instance, also vividly recalled how his grandmother, who was a retired teacher, would spend hours helping him with his studies - patiently explaining concepts and celebrating his small victories. He explained that this continued encouragement instilled a deep sense of self-belief and a 'can-do' attitude that extended beyond academics.

**Participant G:**

> Oh, and my grandmas, yeah, she was just there. We had a good relationship; we spoke about everything. She would say that there wasn't anything that you can't handle. You could handle everything, and you would just take it as it comes, challenges are opportunities. I think that the love structure and support that they gave me, installed in me type of discipline.

Another example is participant G's grandmother, who had faced numerous obstacles in her own life, constantly reminded him that 'challenges are growth opportunities'. Her unwavering faith in his potential, empowered him to embrace challenges and view setbacks as temporary hurdles rather than insurmountable obstacles, instilling a type of discipline in him to look at situations in this manner. This highlights the role of grandparents in fostering a positive self-concept and self-efficacy in their grandchildren (Frisby & Vallade, 2021). Thus, by nurturing a belief in their potential, grandparents empower young adults to take ownership of their academic journeys and approach challenges with confidence and determination.

### *4.4.2 Learning Morals and Values from Grandparents*

The analysis of the findings accentuates the significant role grandparents play in shaping their grandchildren's lives through the transmission of core values - including respect, humility and cultural principles. Participants consistently mentioned how their grandparents instilled these values, which served as foundational guiding principles throughout their lives. Values not only provided a moral framework for navigating challenges but also contributed to the development of resilience and a strong sense of identity. Specifically, the emphasis on respect and humility emerged as central teaching. Grandparents insisted on the importance of maintaining respect and humility, regardless of circumstances. This contributed to participants' personal growth and facilitated positive interactions with others by fostering kindness, understanding and empathy.

Moreover, participants reported that these values were not merely taught in an abstract manner but were demonstrated through the lived experiences and actions of their grandparents. This

highlighted how values such as empathy and respect were not only theoretical but were actively applied in real-world contexts. These instances illustrate that the transmission of values through both teachings and actions can have a profound impact on participants' social and moral development, influencing not only personal success but also fostering positive social relationships. Participant J describes that her grandmother not only taught her practical skills such as embroidery, but through her grandmother's interactions with others she learnt the values of equality and respect.

**Participant J:**

> She would want to always teach me how to do things. She taught me how to do embroidery, so I made a pillow and at the same time teach me values of respect and equally through the way she interacted with other people with respect and kindness.

The role of cultural rituals and traditions in reinforcing values was emphasised by participants through their narratives on the intricate interplay between culture, identity and resilience (Martin, 2016). Through participation in religious ceremonies and cultural celebrations alongside their grandparents, participants were able to cultivate a deeper connection to their heritage, while also internalising important cultural values such as respect for elders and gratitude towards the community. These cultural practices provided participants with a sense of belonging and a more nuanced understanding of how values shape personal identity and behaviour, reinforcing the significance of cultural continuity in shaping moral development. Participants also shared how the connection to their heritage encouraged them to internalise values such as determination and a healthy work ethic. In turn, this shaped their identities in how they strive to overcome learning barriers or obstacles in their respective fields.

**Participant I:**

> We had to respond 'yes Grandpa' not ya or yep, it had to be 'yes Grandpa', and he would correct us. We couldn't just turn around start saying anything that came to mind. It had to be said in a certain way. We spoke with love, respect, kindness and things like that. The way we responded to them had to be a certain way, like the respect your elder's thing was and still is a big thing in my family.

Values such as respect for elders has encouraged participants to practice gratitude towards elders in their communities and their work environments, showing respect and kindness to those who offer them wisdom and guidance. Participants shared that valuing elders has further given them a platform to learn from others and not disregard people based on their age or any

other defining characteristic. As mentioned by Participant I when addressing her grandparents and other elders she was encouraged to be respectful, kind and things needed to be addressed in a particular manner. This value, as a whole, has given participants the ability to emotionally regulate themselves more effectively and demonstrate strong cognitive regulation (Fullerton et al., 2021).

These narratives from participants portrayed the impartation of valuable moral lessons and ethical values shared by their grandparents such as honesty, kindness etc. Grandparents can be seen as the architects of academic success and emotional well-being to grandchildren whose lives they have influenced (Ding, 2024). In the context of this study, grandparents provided guidance on academic tasks and encouraged participants to partake in cultural activities such as dance and music, which lead to the participants' creativity and cultural awareness being enhanced (Barbosa et al., 2021). In addition, participants fondly recalled memories in which they experienced unconditional love, support and guidance which helped them develop the skills and attitude they needed to succeed academically (Johnson, 2022).

## 4.5 Developing Adaptive Coping Mechanisms

Participants reflected on their experiences on developing adaptive coping mechanisms which contributed to their resilience and academic success. These mechanisms were encouraged by their grandparents through wisdom and guidance. Two subthemes emerged from the narratives, one being learning balance from grandparents and the other being leaning coping strategies from grandparents.

### *4.5.1 Learning Balance from Grandparents*

Balancing of priorities and responsibilities was a recurring theme in participants' narratives when considering their grandparents' influence. Many participants described how their grandparents' wisdom and guidance helped them navigate competing demands and maintain a sense of balance in their lives. Through observing their grandparents' time management skills and prioritisation strategies, participants were also able to learn valuable lessons about self-care, resilience and work-life balance. For example, some participants shared stories of their grandparents' ability to juggle multiple responsibilities while still prioritising family, community and personal well-being. One participant, for instance, shared how her grandmother, a skilled multitasker, taught her the importance of prioritising tasks, breaking

down large projects into smaller steps and taking breaks to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Participants also shared that their grandparents would appreciate and value small acts of self-care such as sitting in the sun or taking a walk. These experiences encouraged participants to find a balance between self-care and life demands.

**Participant C:**

> To be Indian and working at that point of time was difficult. He was more of a waiter and that was what he did for almost the entirety of his life. I think at some point he did function as a chef as well. My grandma, worked in sales. She worked for a company in Tongaat in Durban, and they would sell furniture. So, she was in furniture sales and then at a later point, the two of them on my paternal side, they also owned a restaurant which was set up by my great grandfather and I don't know how they did it, but they still managed to raise children, nonetheless.

**Participant F:**

> My grandfather, he worked odd jobs in construction and then he worked with the police and then he got another job somewhere else. He worked there for some time and raised my mother and her siblings. I am told it was hard, but they nailed it.

**Participant J:**

> He went into early retirement and juggled between family, us and he worked shifts as well. You know, just to provide for the family, because he was the head of the home and my dad's mom she didn't work. She was a housewife for some time. Then she was working, doing like, some catering and things like that. But from home, that kind of stuff. But then when she became a grandma that also added responsibility, but she still coped.

The theme of learning balance from grandparents illuminates how participants internalised critical life lessons about managing competing priorities through observing their grandparents' ability to navigate multifaceted responsibilities. Participant C reflected on how their paternal grandparents managed to raise children while simultaneously working demanding jobs, including waiting tables, sales and running a family-owned restaurant. Despite these overlapping commitments, their grandparents demonstrated resilience and adaptability, illustrating that balance could be achieved through hard work and prioritisation. This observation instilled appreciation for the importance of perseverance and effective time management in the participant. Similarly, Participant F shared their grandfather's ability to

sustain the family through various jobs, from construction work to a stint in law enforcement. The narrative highlights the resourcefulness and determination of grandparents who embraced multiple roles to ensure familial stability. This portrayal underscores how balancing work and family responsibilities served as a powerful example of resilience for younger generations, showing them that challenges can be met with determination and strategic effort.

Further, Participant J recounted how her grandfather, even after early retirement, juggled shifts and family obligations to provide for their household. She also described how working and studying was a tough experience for her and her grandparents' ability to perform multiple tasks shaped her own working style by encouraging her to take on less obligations. She described that she faced many challenges, and her grandfather helped her to understand that if she truly wanted something she needed to be determined in her pursuit. Her grandfather advised her to slow down and prioritise what was important to her. Through this, she was able to demonstrate a good work ethic, she prioritised doing what felt right and she was able to focus on her life goals. More importantly, she was encouraged by her grandparents who taught her how to prioritise happiness.

Finally, the findings revealed that grandparents' wisdom and guidance help grandchildren learn to balance priorities, manage time effectively and prioritise self-care. Participants described how their grandparents' advice and examples helped them navigate the competing demands of their academic and personal lives, fostering a sense of balance and well-being. This emphasises on the importance of work-life balance and self-care in promoting resilience and preventing burnout (Frisby & Vallade, 2021).

### *4.5.2 Learning Coping Strategies from Grandparents*

Coping strategies emerged as an essential aspect of participants' resilience-building process, with many attributing their ability to overcome challenges to the coping strategies learned from their grandparents. Participants described how their grandparents' stories and experiences provided valuable insights into effective coping mechanisms such as positive reframing, problem-solving, self-care and seeking social support from the community.

**Participant A:**

> My grandmother always told me, 'When life gets tough, find the silver lining.' She was great at reframing situations, teaching me to look for the positives, even in hard times. That mindset has helped me through many challenges.

**Participant B:**

> My grandpa taught me the importance of taking a step back and figuring out the solution rather than stressing over the problem. His approach to problem-solving, where he would calmly assess the situation and then act, has shaped how I handle obstacles today.

**Participant D:**

> Whenever things felt overwhelming, my grandma would remind me to take care of myself. She'd say, 'You can't help others if you don't take care of yourself first.' Her focus on self-care was something I took to heart and use whenever I feel burnt out.

**Participant F:**

> My grandparents were always there for me, especially when I needed emotional support. I remember my grandma saying, 'You don't have to carry your burdens alone; your family and community are here.' Their emphasis on seeking support from others has made me more comfortable reaching out when I need help.

Participant A recalled her grandparent's teaching to 'find the silver lining' when life became challenging. This demonstrated how reframing negative situations into opportunities for growth could offer solace in times of adversity. A positive mindset, especially in tough times, can shape an individual's approach to challenges, enabling them to maintain hope, even when faced with hardship. She further describes how hard she has worked in her field to be successful and obtain promotions within her category. She describes that she is passionate about women empowerment and takes pride in providing opportunities for others. Participant B described how her grandfather modelled a calm approach by taking a step back and thoughtfully evaluating a situation before acting. In doing this, he imparted a valuable lesson in managing stress and finding practical solutions without becoming overwhelmed. She describes herself as being passionate about psychology and through the lessons from her grandparents she has committed her life to advocating for mental health. For this reason, she runs a small charity organisation and has begun work to address the stigma that exists around mental health surrounding cultural preservation and misunderstandings. Through her own struggles with

balancing her academic and social life, she further explains how she struggled with a decline of her own mental health. However, drawing on some of what her grandparents instilled in her she was able to push forward and improve her well-being. Through her own experiences, she has defined academic resilience as a personal journey that surpasses intellect.

Further, Participant D shared how their grandmother's emphasis on self-care provided a vital coping tool, particularly during moments of burnout. Her advice, 'you can't help others if you don't take care of yourself first', resonated deeply with the participant, highlighting the importance of personal well-being in maintaining the strength needed to navigate challenges. Participant D also describes that he is a counsellor and has acquired a considerable deal of knowledge and experienced exceptional growth. As a counsellor he explains that he has an obligation and responsibility to show up and be present, wholeheartedly for his client's. Through his grandmother's words, he is often reminded that he can only help his clients if he takes care of himself first. He explained that he has to show up for himself and continue doing so, not only for himself but also for others. This emphasis on self-care was mirrored by Participant F, who recalled the emotional support her grandparents provided during difficult moments. Her grandmother's reminder that 'you don't have to carry your burdens alone; your family and community are here', emphasised the power of seeking social support when needed, reinforcing the importance of community connection. Participant F further described that she exceeded her own expectations academically as she has been headhunted and graduated with her Masters in record time. Her grandparents' words reminded her that she did not have to carry her burdens alone, which helped her in maintaining a work-life balance. She was also able to work during her studies, knowing she would have the emotional support she needed. Similar to her grandparents she faces her challenges head on and places great emphasis on the importance of community. She takes pride in her accomplishments especially given her age and is excited for what her future may hold.

**Participant J:**

> My grandmother had a way of finding peace in difficult times, she encouraged writing, and she would say, 'Take a deep breath, calm your mind, and everything else will follow.' Her ability to stay calm and focused, even when things were hard, taught me how to cope with stress healthily.

Lastly, Participant J reflected on how their grandmother's ability to maintain peace during difficult times became a profound source of wisdom regarding coping. Her calming advice, 'take a deep breath, calm your mind, and everything else will follow', encapsulated a strategy of mindfulness and focused breathing that taught the participant to manage stress in a healthy, composed manner. Participant J also explained that she is a trainee accountant who is working towards her goal of becoming a chartered accountant. She mentioned that considering the demands of her field, her grandmother's advice of mindfulness has helped prepare her for the challenges of working and studying in the industry. Participant J further shared how her grandmother encouraged her to journal about her feelings and experiences, helping her process her emotions and develop coping strategies.

### 4.6 Connecting the Findings to the Theoretical Framework

The findings of this study emphasise the significant role grandparents play in fostering academic resilience among young Indian adults in South Africa, reflecting various dimensions of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), resilience is shaped by interactions within different environmental systems that include the microsystem, mesosystem, and macrosystem. This study illustrated how these layers of influence converge to support the development of resilience, particularly through the relationships and teachings provided by grandparents.

A central theme that emerged was the role of grandparents in fostering personal growth and empowerment. Through their encouragement, grandparents nurtured self-efficacy and instilled a growth mindset, which are essential for navigating challenges and achieving academic success (Naidoo & van Schalkwyk, 2021). This empowerment exemplifies the concept of scaffolding, where grandparents serve as crucial figures within the microsystem who provide the necessary support for cognitive and emotional development (Vygotsky, 1978). The transmission of values such as perseverance, hard work and the importance of education, reflects the broader influence of the macrosystem, highlighting how cultural and societal values shape individual development. This aligns with previous research suggesting that cultural values, especially those related to education and achievement, play a critical role in fostering resilience (Desai, 2018).

Moreover, the study's findings underscore the importance of nurturing supportive relationships within the microsystem, particularly the grandparent-grandchild bond. Many participants

described their grandparents as sources of love, trust and encouragement, which greatly contributed to their resilience. These relationships were described as emotionally supportive and marked by mutual respect, providing a strong foundation for academic and personal growth. One participant recalled how her grandmother's unwavering belief in her abilities helped her overcome self-doubt and stay focused on her academic goals. Another shared how his grandfather's patient guidance and emotional support enabled him to navigate the challenges of adolescence while maintaining academic motivation. These accounts align with existing literature, which highlight the role of grandparents as emotional anchors - especially in situations where parental involvement may be limited (Mtshali, 2015; Phasha, 2010).

In addition to emotional support, the study also emphasised the role of intergenerational communication in fostering resilience. Open and honest conversations between grandparents and grandchildren were found to strengthen relationships, build mutual trust and facilitate the transmission of valuable life lessons. Participants shared how these dialogues helped them navigate academic struggles, gain insights into perseverance and develop coping strategies. One participant noted that discussing his academic challenges with his grandfather led to meaningful exchanges about resilience, ultimately empowering him to persist in the face of obstacles. These findings resonate with the literature on the importance of intergenerational communication in resilience building (De Wet & Osman, 2019; Martin, 2016). Through open dialogue, grandparents not only provide emotional support but also pass down cultural values and knowledge, enhancing young adults' sense of continuity and connection to their heritage.

Further, the study's findings demonstrate the dynamic interaction between various systems within Bronfenbrenner's framework, where grandparents, by providing nurturing relationships and empowering guidance, contribute to the development of academic resilience. These relationships, enriched by intergenerational communication and cultural transmission, create a supportive environment that fosters personal growth and equips young adults with the tools to navigate academic challenges successfully. Considering this, the role of grandparents in shaping resilience goes beyond immediate family dynamics, reflecting broader cultural values and societal influences that promote the development of resilient, self-efficacious individuals.

### 4.7 Connecting the Findings and Answering the Research Questions

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the factors contributing to academic resilience among young Indian adults in South Africa, directly addressing the research

questions that guided this investigation. The narratives shared by participants revealed several key themes that emphasise the role of grandparents in fostering academic resilience. One of the primary themes emphasised personal growth and empowerment, which was nurtured by grandparents through the promotion of self-efficacy and instilling moral values. These elements were consistent with the research question exploring which themes contribute to academic resilience as communicated through grandparents' stories. This also aligns with the work of Martin (2016) and O'Connor (2022), who emphasised the importance of fostering personal growth and empowerment in building resilience. Thus, grandparents play a significant role in guiding young adults toward a balanced and purposeful life, nurturing their self-efficacy, and helping them develop the necessary resilience to overcome challenges.

Furthermore, the stories shared by the grandparents reflected a set of values and beliefs that reinforced perseverance, hard work, the importance of education, a strong sense of community and family, and the importance of balance and self-care. These values, transmitted through intergenerational storytelling and lived experiences, resonated with Desai's (2018) assertion that cultural nuances - specifically values related to education and success - play a critical role in shaping resilience. The study found that these cultural values, passed down by grandparents, not only shaped participants' academic pursuits but also influenced their broader approach to life, encouraging a positive outlook on achievement and success.

Moreover, the findings highlighted how grandparents' stories provided participants with valuable coping strategies to manage both academic and personal challenges. The lessons taught by grandparents about overcoming adversity, managing stress, maintaining a positive outlook and prioritising well-being, were integral in equipping young adults with the tools and mindset needed to navigate difficulties. This directly addresses the research question, 'How have these stories encouraged young adults to cope with academic or personal challenges?' and aligns with the literature on adaptive coping strategies as discussed by Naidoo and van Schalkwyk (2021).

The overall analysis demonstrated that the themes of personal growth, empowerment and the transmission of cultural values are key components in building academic resilience. Grandparents not only imparted values that emphasised perseverance, education and family, but also provided practical lessons on coping. This enabled participants to thrive in their academic endeavours. By equipping young adults with valuable strategies for overcoming adversity, managing stress and prioritising well-being, the stories and experiences shared by

grandparents play a crucial role in promoting resilience. These findings offer comprehensive answers to the research questions, highlighting the essential role of grandparents in shaping academic resilience through intergenerational storytelling and cultural transmission.

# Chapter 5
## Summary of findings

The summary of findings presents a synopsis the findings and discussion, and reflects on the methodological considerations, limitations of the study and avenues for future research. It therefore aims to provide a brief analysis of the research findings and their implications for theory, practice and policy.

The study revealed the influence of grandparents' personal experiences with adversity. For this reason, participants reported on experiences of their grandparent's facing poverty, discrimination or political persecution, highlighting how these experiences shaped their worldview and resilience, passing it down to their grandchildren. For example, Participant A shared how her grandmother, who grew up in poverty, instilled in her the importance of resourcefulness and making the most of limited opportunities. These narratives, often filled with hardship and struggle, demonstrate the strength and resilience of the human spirit - inspiring young adults to persevere in the face of their challenges. They also highlight the power of intergenerational learning where grandparents serve as "historians" who share values, morals and lessons through their life stories (Martin, 2016; O'Connor, 2022).

Additional findings such as connecting to supportive relationships and adaptive coping mechanisms are interwoven within the broader theme of intergenerational transmission of resilience. These are further nurtured and reinforced through the supportive relationships that participants described having with their grandparents. Considering, the study's findings highlighted the importance of close and trusting relationships characterised by open communication, mutual respect and emotional support (Naidoo & van Schalkwyk, 2021). These relationships create a safe space for young adults to share their struggles, seek guidance and receive encouragement, fostering a sense of belonging and security that contributes to their academic resilience. Moreover, the study's findings revealed how grandparents contribute to the personal growth and empowerment of their grandchildren. Grandparents encourage and instil confidence, fostering a sense of self-efficacy and a belief in their grandchildren's ability to succeed (Theron, 2015). They also impart valuable life lessons, guiding moral development and instilling ethical principles that contribute to a sense of purpose and resilience in the face of challenges. Thus, wisdom imparted from grandparents extend to helping their grandchildren find balance in their lives and manage their time effectively.

Further, the findings of this study demonstrated how grandparents play a crucial role in helping their grandchildren develop adaptive coping mechanisms. Through their stories and experiences, grandparents foster empathy and compassion, encourage self-reflection and introspection, and impart valuable lessons about conflict resolution and effective coping strategies. This aligns with the broader literature on academic resilience, which recognises the importance of equipping individuals with adaptive coping strategies to navigate stressors and setbacks effectively (Naidoo & van Schalkwyk, 2021). In the context of this study, participants shared how their grandparents' stories of overcoming adversity instilled a sense of empathy and compassion, enabling them to better understand and connect with others. This echoes the findings of Martin (2016) and O'Connor (2022) regarding the role of grandparents in transmitting values and fostering prosocial behaviours. An exploration of academic resilience calls for a holistic approach that considers the interconnectedness of the individual, their family and societal factors (Martin, 2016). This resonates with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory that pertain to the microsystem (family) and the macrosystem (broader social context) as grandparents' stories often reflect societal challenges and historical injustices, providing young adults with insights into the experiences of others.

Furthermore, the study's findings revealed that grandparents encourage self-reflection and introspection in their grandchildren, helping them to develop a deeper understanding of their own emotions, strengths and weaknesses. This aligns with the literature's emphasis on self-reflection as a key mechanism for building resilience (Frisby & Vallade, 2021). In addition, encouraging introspection can be seen as an example of grandparents' scaffold learning within the microsystem, fostering the development of crucial cognitive skills that contribute to resilience (Bronfenbrenner 1979). In essence, by sharing their own experiences and offering guidance, grandparents equip their grandchildren with the skills they need to navigate interpersonal conflicts constructively and develop a repertoire of tools for managing stress and overcoming challenges. This mirrors the emphasis on the importance of adaptive coping strategies in promoting resilience and well-being (Naidoo & van Schalkwyk, 2021).

Guidance from grandparents also aligns with the mesosystem level of Bronfenbrenner's theory, as it reflects the interaction between the family microsystem and other contexts, such as school and community. These skills and insights equip young adults with the tools they need to navigate challenges, manage stress and maintain a positive outlook, ultimately strengthening their resilience in the face of academic adversity. The adversity that grandparents faced during

a disadvantaged past, was prevalent in participants' narratives. Further highlighting the resilience and strength exhibited by their grandparents in overcoming hardships. In turn, these narratives provided valuable lessons about resilience, determination and perseverance, inspiring participants to adopt similar attitudes in their own lives. Thus, participants described how their grandparents' experiences of resilience and triumph over adversity instilled a sense of pride and resilience in their own identities, motivating them to overcome challenges and pursue academic success. Participants frequently shared how their grandparents' stories and experiences fostered empathy and compassion, enhancing their emotional intelligence and resilience. This resonates with the literature on intergenerational learning, which highlights the role of grandparents in transmitting values and fostering prosocial behaviours (Martin, 2016; O'Connor, 2022). For example, one participant recounted how her grandmother's experiences of discrimination during apartheid instilled in her a strong sense of empathy for marginalised communities. Another participant shared how his grandfather's stories of overcoming poverty taught him the importance of compassion and helping those in need. These narratives demonstrate how grandparents, through their lived experiences and storytelling, can impart valuable lessons in empathy and compassion, contributing to young adults' emotional intelligence and fostering a sense of connectedness and social responsibility.

The study's findings also revealed that grandparents encourage self-reflection and introspection in their grandchildren, helping them develop a deeper understanding of their own emotions, strengths and weaknesses. This aligns with the literature's emphasis on self-reflection as a key mechanism for building resilience (Frisby & Vallade, 2021). Participant G described how his grandfather's insightful questions prompted him to reflect on his behaviour and identify areas for personal growth. This encouragement of introspection can be seen as an example of grandparent's scaffold learning within the microsystem (Vygotsky, 1978), fostering the development of crucial cognitive skills that contribute to resilience (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998).

Furthermore, the study's findings highlighted how grandparents' experiences of overcoming adversity serve as valuable teaching moments for building resilience in their grandchildren. Participants shared how their grandparents' stories of resilience, perseverance and determination inspired them to adopt similar attitudes in their own lives. This finding aligns with the literature's emphasis on the importance of role models and mentors in shaping young people's development (Frisby & Vallade, 2021). The study also found that grandparents impart

valuable lessons about conflict resolution, emphasising empathy, active listening and compromise. This finding echoes the literature's recognition of the importance of interpersonal skills in navigating academic and social challenges (De Wet & Osman, 2019). Participants shared how their grandparents' guidance and example helped them learn to resolve conflicts peacefully and respectfully. One participant recounted how his grandfather's calm and patient approach to conflict resolution inspired him to manage disagreements with empathy and understanding.

Lastly, the study's findings highlighted how grandparents' experiences provide insights into effective coping mechanisms such as positive reframing, problem-solving and seeking social support. This aligns with the emphasis on the importance of adaptive coping strategies in promoting resilience and well-being (Naidoo & van Schalkwyk, 2021). Participants shared how their grandparents' advice and example helped them develop a repertoire of coping strategies to manage stress and overcome challenges. One participant, for instance, described how her grandmother taught her the importance of maintaining a positive outlook in difficult situations. Another participant recounted how his grandfather's problem-solving skills inspired him to break down challenges into smaller, more manageable steps.

### 5.1 Reflexivity

Reflexivity was a self-conscious process integral to the data collection and research process. It entailed rejecting the objective or subjective binary perspective that could inform the researcher's stance (Cousin, 2013), allowing for a shift from objective truth-finding to an emotionally and theoretically invested approach (Cousin, 2013). According to Jelsma and Clow (2005), reflexivity involves continuously examining oneself during the research process. The researcher needed to assess their relationship with the participants and how this might impact data collection. Debriefing was considered to help the researcher manage any emotional impact from working with participants (Jelsma & Clow, 2005). This was achieved through reflecting on the experiences with participants and of the researcher. I reflected through conversations surrounding my own prejudgements, thoughts and ideas before, during and after the research. I made use of reflective tasks such as writing through journaling to keep an account of my feelings whilst engaging with data. There was a sense of pride and honour that was felt when writing this report because of the nature of the data that was shared. Reflecting on my personal experiences with my grandparents and elders in my community I felt determined to share the narratives of the participants in a manner that would represent them

and their grandparents genuinely. I was honoured to be given the opportunity to share the voices of these participants.

An interesting reflection after conducting the study which was different to a preconceived idea of my own, was that of grandparents who were able to adapt their ideas around traditions and cultures when addressing contemporary situations. This practice seemingly made it easier for young adults to relate to their grandparents. This was a significant reflection for me as it helped me to reflect on my interactions with elders in the community and their personal growth when addressing current day problems that require them to critically think about ways to incorporate old traditions or cultural considerations with new concepts. This gave me a deeper appreciation and respect for elders who are able to do this and thus promote advocacy for growth and change in our community.

In this study, the researcher identified with the positionality of being an Indian South African female. The researcher and participants shared some similarities in their experiences with their grandparents and within the Indian community as a whole. This helped to create meaning of the experiences for both the researcher and participant and quickly build rapport during the interview. To mitigate subjectivity the researcher reflected on their own experiences, feelings and relationships during the data collection process. These reflections assisted the researcher in remaining objective by separating their personal experiences and engaging with the data shared by the participant. This gave the participant the platform to share their data and honour the stories of their grandparents with genuine interests from the researcher. Participants preconceptions about the researcher's identity were shared in some interviews and the researcher mitigated this by being honest and professional with participants, sharing genuine information whilst ensuring that the focus of the interview was on the participants experiences and perceptions. I was conscious of this dynamic throughout data collection and ensured to acknowledge that their understanding of the topic was an opportunity for learning as it was limited.

### 5.2. Methodological Considerations and Limitations

Qualitative interviews allowed for an in-depth exploration of topics shared by participants. One specific way the researcher achieved ethical integrity and safeguarded participants' confidentiality was by implementing a multi-layered consent process. This process ensured that participants fully understood the nature of the study, their right to withdraw at any point without

consequence and the measures in place to protect their personal information. The researcher also used pseudonyms and de-identified any identifiable information during both the data collection and reporting phases, ensuring that participants' identities remained protected. Additionally, after gathering personal narratives that included sensitive information, the researcher carefully considered how to present the findings in a way that was both respectful and empowering, avoiding any re-traumatisation or distress. By fostering an environment of trust and transparency, the researcher was able to mitigate potential harm and prioritise participant well-being throughout the study. This commitment to ethical practice not only preserved the integrity of the research process but also honoured the vulnerability and humanity of those who shared their stories.

One of the limits to qualitative research and thematic content analysis is that it is time consuming. Due to the detailed and in-depth process of data collection, analysis and the interpretation of data, this research was time consuming. A limitation to this study was the nature of the research and the small sample size of the study. This limited the study as findings cannot be generalised or represent the entire population of Indian young adults in South Africa. Generalisability was not a goal of the study and despite this limitation the overall findings presented has contributed to the body of knowledge of grandparent's contributions towards the academic resilience of young adults within the Indian community through the voices of the participants. A further limitation is researcher bias due to the researchers own preconceived ideas and perspectives. Despite these limitations, through reflexivity, ethical considerations, planning through using a sample strategy and using a rigorous data analysis method, reliability was enhanced, limitations were mitigated, and the findings of this research offers valuable contributions to a body of knowledge on academic resilience in young adults within the Indian community in South Africa.

### 5.3 Implications for Practice and Future Research

The implications of this study extend far beyond the boundaries of academic research, offering valuable contributions to community-based interventions and educational practices. By shedding light on the crucial role grandparents play in fostering academic resilience among young adults, this study emphasises the essential nature of intergenerational relationships in nurturing personal and academic growth. The narratives shared by grandparents often carry a wealth of cultural knowledge, values and life experiences that shape young adults' worldviews

and aspirations. These insights suggest that educational policies should consider the familial and cultural contexts in which students are embedded, recognising that the resilience of young learners is not solely an individual endeavour but a collective one - nurtured by family, community and cultural continuity. For instance, educational frameworks that integrate intergenerational perspectives could be designed to encourage stronger family involvement in students' academic lives, underlining the role of grandparents as important figures in resilience-building. Moreover, by acknowledging the role of familial influences, such policies might also advocate for support systems that strengthen family networks, especially for students who may not have direct parental support due to various socio-economic challenges.

This study only included members of the Indian community; future research could explore findings to more than one racial group. It is suggested that future research explores the comparative perspectives across different cultural contexts to understand how the intergenerational transfer of resilience manifests across diverse familial structures. For example, examining how different cultural groups approach grandparental involvement in shaping academic resilience could provide valuable insights into the universal and culturally specific ways in which storytelling and familial support contribute to educational outcomes. In addition, investigating the long-term impact of grandparental narratives on academic trajectories could illuminate how these early experiences influence career development, personal identity and future resilience over time. Future research could explore the narratives of grandparents of grandchildren who have achieved academic success as this study did not include meaningful insights from the perspective of the grandparents. This could limit the relevance of this students interviewing the grandparents may provide information that could be compared the information shared from this study.

One particularly promising area for future exploration is the role of digital storytelling where platforms preserve and transmit cultural narratives. In an increasingly digital world, platforms like podcasts, social media and video blogs could serve as innovative tools for intergenerational knowledge transfer, allowing grandparents and other elders to share their stories with a broader audience. Exploring how these digital spaces influence young adults’ perceptions of their cultural heritage, resilience and academic identity could open new avenues for understanding how technology intersects with traditional forms of knowledge sharing.

### 5.4 Conclusion

This study examined the experiences that contribute to academic resilience among young Indian adults in South Africa, with a particular focus on the important role of grandparents. The findings tell a powerful story of how resilience is passed down through generations, where grandparents - through their stories, guidance and experiences - help equip their grandchildren with the mindset and skills to face challenges and succeed in their studies. The research shows that both personal and contextual factors shape resilience. Grandparents' stories of overcoming hardships during apartheid, their sharing of cultural traditions and their experiences with poverty and discrimination, all play a crucial part in creating a foundation of resilience that younger generations inherit. In addition, the relationships, personal growth and coping strategies nurtured by grandparents, provide a supportive environment - helping young adults feel more confident in facing difficulties and reaching their academic goals.

This study contributes to a deeper understanding of what fosters academic resilience within the South African Indian community, emphasising the essential role grandparents play in shaping their grandchildren's perspectives, values and ability to cope. By recognising the importance of passing down resilience, we can design support systems and programmes that help young people overcome challenges and succeed in their academic pursuits. The findings also remind us of the value of the wisdom and experiences of older generations and the critical role they play in shaping the resilience and success of young people in South Africa.

# Chapter 6
# Conclusion of the study

This qualitative study investigated the interplay of personal, familial and societal factors that contribute to the development of academic resilience among young Indian adults in South Africa. A purposive sampling method was employed to select participants likely to provide rich and insightful information. Participants were selected based on specific criteria, including age; Indian South African heritage; a strong relationship with a grandparent and current enrolment in a tertiary institution. Purposive sampling ensured that the sample was diverse in age, gender, socioeconomic status and geographic location. Through in-depth interviews, the research sought to explore participants' lived experiences, with a particular emphasis on the influential role of grandparents. By engaging in open-ended conversations, the researcher was able to delve into the complexities of their lives, capturing their unique perspectives and lived experiences. This qualitative approach provided valuable insights into the factors that contribute to academic resilience, particularly the role of grandparents in shaping their grandchildren's worldview, values and coping mechanisms.

A key finding of this study was the significant role of intergenerational transmission of resilience. Grandparents, through their lived experiences of adversity, cultural heritage and community resilience, instilled in their grandchildren the values, skills and coping mechanisms necessary to navigate academic challenges. The supportive relationships, personal growth and adaptive coping mechanisms fostered by grandparents created a nurturing environment where young adults felt empowered to pursue their academic goals. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory provided a valuable theoretical framework to analyse the complex interplay of individual, familial and societal factors influencing academic resilience. The study also demonstrated how the Indian community has navigated systemic challenges and leveraged familial and communal support to promote educational attainment and social mobility.

The findings of this study have significant implications for future research and practice. Further research could explore the long-term impact of intergenerational relationships on academic achievement and mental health. Additionally, interventions could be developed to strengthen intergenerational relationships and promote the transmission of resilience within families and communities. By recognising and valuing the intergenerational transmission of resilience, we can create interventions and support systems that empower young people to overcome adversity and achieve academic success.

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# 8. Appendices

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
PSYCHOLOGY

## 8.1 Appendix A: Information Sheet

Dear Participant,

My name is Josephine Padarath. I am completing my Master's in Community-based Counselling psychology at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. As part of my degree requirements, I will be conducting a research project, in which I am exploring experiences of academic resilience in young Indian adults developed through the stories of their grandparents.

I am inviting you to participate in a recorded interview, this interview will involve participating in an interview in which you will be sharing your experiences of academic resilience developed through the stories of your grandparents. The interview session will be an hour in duration. For participants living far away or those who cannot attend face-to-face interviews at the University of Witwatersrand, alternative means of communication such as video calls using Microsoft Teams will be made available.

There are no direct benefits related to participation in this research. In addition, no penalties or disadvantages are related to non-participation into the study. Withdrawal from the study at any point will be allowed. The interview will be confidential and the information you share will be kept securely. I will be using a false name to represent your participation in my final research report. If you experience any distress or discomfort during the interview, the interview will stop and continue when you are able to do so.

Referrals to psychological support will be provided, if necessary, after the interview. These services are free of charge and can be accessed by contacting, 0800 567 567 from Monday to Sunday 8am-8pm (The South African Depression and Anxiety Group) or 0861 322 322 Lifeline Pretoria 24 Hour line (Lifeline) A summary of the study will be shared with you if you wish to receive a copy of it.

If you have questions and need clarification on this research, please contact me or my supervisor, using contact details included below:

Josephine Padarath – 084 665 5525/ josephinepadarath@gmail.com

Malose Langa- (011) 717 4536/ Malose.Langa@wits.ac.za

Your permission and assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Josephine Padarath

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## 8.2 Appendix B: Participant Letter Concerning the Nature of the Interview

Dear participant,

Thank you for agreeing to be part of my research. Below are guiding questions to facilitate your interview and gather your experiences. However, these questions are only a guide as you are encouraged to add any other aspect not covered in these questions to enrich the contents of the unstructured interview.

**Primary Question:**

What are your perceptions of academic resilience through the experiences of your grandparents?

**Secondary Questions**

1. Please tell me about your grandparents (i.e., description of personality, person he/she is/was)?
2. Please describe the relationship you had with your grandparent/s?
3. How long did you live with them or how did you spend time with them?
4. How has your experience or perception of academic success and resilience been encouraged by them? (i.e., opportunities and challenges)
5. How have their experiences affected your academic pursuit and resilience?
6. How did they encourage academic resilience for you? Are there stories they shared to encourage academic resilience?

Thank you once again for participating in this research.

With gratitude,

Josephine Padarath.

## 8.3 Appendix C: Interview Plan (Schedule)

1. **Initiation and Interview Session**

- Duration: One hour
- Contents: Introducing the topic and initiating the process of research by explaining the aims, objectives, and rationale of the study. In addition, clients' ethical rights will be discussed, and informed written content will be obtained. The risks and benefits for participation and measures that will be taken to ensure the client's safety and confidentiality will be explained. The process of the interviews will also be discussed (uninterrupted interview, listening, making notes and how this relates to research questions, and methods). All the above will be carried out in a manner that will allow for rapport and an effective working alliance to be established between each participant and the researcher.
- Explaining guiding questions and their purpose as well as the recording process.
- Main Narration: uninterrupted interview and probing after coda.
- Questioning: use words used by the interviewee and notes made to fill in the gaps and generate new and additional information. No why questions will be asked or opinions, attitudes and causes questions. In addition, no cross examination will be performed during this phase.
- Concluding: this phase will be informal and will include why questions to provide context to the overall narrative through small talks.

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**8.4 Appendix D: Consent for Participation**

I,_____ (full name), consent to participate in an interview that will require me to provide information on my perceptions of academic resilience through the experiences of my grandparents.

Following are my contact details in case the researcher intends to contact me to schedule an interview.

Cell phone number: _____

Email Address: _____

If you are interested in participating in this interview, kindly fill in the information above and return the form to me in person or using the following email address: josephinepadarath@gmail.com

I, _____, have read and understood the information provided to me on the nature and process of the research project on my perceptions of academic resilience through the experiences of my grandparents. I understand that I will be participating in this study voluntarily and that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time if I wish to do so. I understand that I will not be disadvantaged in any way for choosing to withdraw from the study if I choose to do so. I also understand that the information I will provide to the researcher will be kept confidential and not disclosed to any third party without my written consent. I give permission to the researcher to use extracts of my own words into the final report of the study. By crossing the boxes below, I give consent to:

☐ Participate in this study.

☐ To have the content of my interviews included in the final report.

☐ To have data from my interview archived for further use by another researcher.

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

**Informed Consent to Participate in a Recorded Interview**

I, _____, give consent for my interview to be audio recorded. I understand that contents of the interviews will be transcribed for further analysis and that my name will be kept anonymous. I also understand that my identity will not be revealed in the final report, and that access to the contents of the interview will be kept in a password protected file. I understand that the contents of my interview will be archived once the research project is completed. By crossing the boxes below, I give consent to:

☐ Have my interview recorded.

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

## 8.5 Appendix E: Ethical Clearance Certificate

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**SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ETHICS COMMITTEE**
**CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)**

| | |
|---|---|
| **CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE** | **PROTOCOL NUMBER: MACC/23/07** |
| **PROJECT TITLE:** | Exploring experiences of academic resilience in Young Indian Adults developed through the stories of their grandparents. |
| **INVESTIGATOR** | Padarath Josephine (867583) |
| **SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR** | SHCD/Psychology |
| **DATE CONSIDERED** | 16 May 2023 |
| **DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE** | Approved unconditionally |
| **RISK LEVEL** | Minimal Risk |
| **EXPIRY DATE** | 31 December 2025 |
| **ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE** 23 May 2023 | **CHAIRPERSON** _ _____ (Dr Aline Ferreira Correia) |

cc: Prof. Malose Langa (Supervisor)

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**DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR**

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I/we fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, I/we undertake to submit an amendment of the protocol to the Committee.

_____ _____/_____/_____

**Signature** **Date**

**8.6 Appendix F: Advert**

# CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

## "YOUNG INDIAN ADULTS PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC RESILIENCE THROUGH THE EXPERIENCES OF THEIR GRANDPARENTS"

We are looking for participants to partake in a study which explores the experiences of Indian young adults perceptions of academic resilience that was encouraged through the experiences of their grandparents.

To be included in this study, participants must be Indian, have been raised or have lived with their grandparents, must have obtained a qualification or degree and must be over the age of 18.

Please share this post with anyone that may meet the criteria. This study is conducted through WITS university.

Contact 0846655525 or josephinepadarath@gmail.com to participate

