

Master's degree in Research Psychology

Research report

University of the Witwatersrand

**The role of Family Dynamics in Schooling and Academic success: The stories of Black
Postgraduate Women.**

By

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Due date: 15 July 2016

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the master's degree in psychology (by coursework and research report) in the faculty of humanities, school of community and human development, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2016. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Agisanyang Otukile

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Otukile', with a small mark below it.

Date: 08 Nov 16

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Abstract

This study explored the stories of South African black female postgraduates, in particular, focusing on family dynamics in their childhoods and the role these relationships played in their academic development. South African higher education is a site of contestations as access opens up for students previously excluded from universities. However access and success continue to be racialized and gendered hence black women are unevenly represented in higher education particularly at postgraduate level. This study brings forth stories of women who have succeeded in this context, exploring questions of social and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1994). Thematic analysis highlights predominant themes across the narratives of these women. There is a very strong thread across the narratives that these women feel that their academic achievement is primarily due to hard work and a ‘natural’ or intrinsic intellectual talent that was recognised by their families and teachers from a young age. Despite the emphasis on individual aptitude, the findings also highlight participants’ recognition of the value of support from family in their schooling and even continuing into their lives as young adult postgraduate students. The nature of family dynamics in these women’s childhood and adult lives was revealed, including, the friendship that characterises daughter-mother relationships, the absence of fathers, and the role of grandmothers and other members of the extended family and community networks . It is worth noting that all participants talk of the sudden movement from public township schools to private or Model C schools that disrupts their narratives of schooling. The lack of reading in the childhood homes of some of these women contradicts the common assumption that a reading home environment is vital for the development of the appropriate cultural capital necessary for academic success. Instead, it is evident that these multigenerational families provide a range of support that allows learning to take place, including emotional and financial support, providing critical social capital.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The South African Department of Higher Education and various universities have employed efforts to increase graduate rates and, more especially, to address racialized and gendered skewing in participation in Higher Education as a result of unequal schooling. (Council for higher education, 2010). Being a black woman in this context means confronting the double challenges of race and gender oppression (Mama, 1995; Ndlovu, 2012) despite this, success stories exist and this study offers narratives of this particular cohort of women, black postgraduate students.

According to Fram, Miller- Cribbs & Horn (2007, p.309), “race and socioeconomic status gaps in children's academic achievement are a concerning social justice issue”. There is a growing body of literature in the South African context that recognises that the social, economic effects of racism and other forms of social oppression have made it difficult for higher education to increase access and success for all students (Howie & Scherman, 2008; Frempong, Reddy & Kanjee, 2011; Jansen, 2005; Economist paper, 2010). Similar findings have been confirmed in the US context (Braun, Wang, Jenkins, & Weinbaum, 2006; Condrón, Tope, Steidl & Freeman, 2013; Brackens, 2013). Research in the US suggests that children who attend poor schools struggle academically (Bankston & Caldas, 1998) and this is partly due to the effects of social segregation and unequal access to schooling which is highly racialized in the US context (Darling- Hammond, 2004; Reardon, 2003).

In South Africa, the history of racial oppression and unequal schooling skews access to higher education, and participation and success rates reflect this (Loots, Ts' ephe, & Walker, 2016.) The National Plan for Higher Education found that South African's graduation rate is 15 % making it the lowest in the world (Letseka & Maile, 2008). The “graduation rate for white students is more than double that of black students” (Letseka & Maile, 2008, p.3). Nonetheless, some black students successfully overcome these enormous

barriers. One possibility is that while schools may not effectively provide appropriate learning and teaching, or the appropriate cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1994) families, communities and other social networks may provide particular forms of social capital (Coleman, 1988) that support the academic development of children. This study aims to contribute to this area of research by exploring retrospective narrative accounts of family relationships of black post-graduate women and how they have played a role in their schooling and academic achievement.

Despite democracy, this thesis was written at a time where thousands of students from across the country, including prestigious previously White universities (Wits, UCT and Rhodes) in South Africa are protesting against fee increments which exclude many students from higher education institutions. Students who are being excluded in this context tend to be black students because of the racialized socio-economic structure of South Africa. The student movement reflects the perpetual injustices and inequalities in the system.

There is an ongoing problem of the ‘missing middle’ in South Africa, becoming particularly pertinent at the time of conducting this research. The ‘missing middle’ refers to students who are denied funding because they are ‘too rich’ but they cannot afford to pay University fees (How & Butler, 2016; Letseka Brier & Visser 2009). Despite students coming from middle income families their parents cannot afford to pay for their fees (Butler-Adam, 2016). This works to further stretch the gap between the rich and poor and creates more challenges, especially for black students (Letseka et al, 2009). These students have mainly attended relatively good schools, indicating that their families are probably part of the ‘emerging black middle class’ (Letseka et al, 2009), which disqualifies them from government financial aid. However, they clearly still struggle financially and have often made enormous sacrifices to gain access.

Georgiou's (1995) research in Cyprus showed that school achievement was significantly related to one's family of origin's socioeconomic level. This relationship is most clearly articulated in Bourdieu's (1994) notion of cultural capital whereby financial capital translates into the kind of cultural capital that is valued in society, preparing children for school and, in turn, reproducing the unequal class hierarchy of society. In addition, social capital creates a platform and social networks that are useful for success and academic development, and emotional capital offers support that is vital for academic development and hence access to educational opportunities including ultimately university study. Social and emotional capital are, like cultural capital, usually highly intertwined with economic capital. However, in contemporary South Africa, where the historical legacy of apartheid is being challenged, we may find disjuncture between different forms of capital, e.g. forms of social and emotional capital that are relatively disconnected from economic capital and conventionally valued cultural capital.

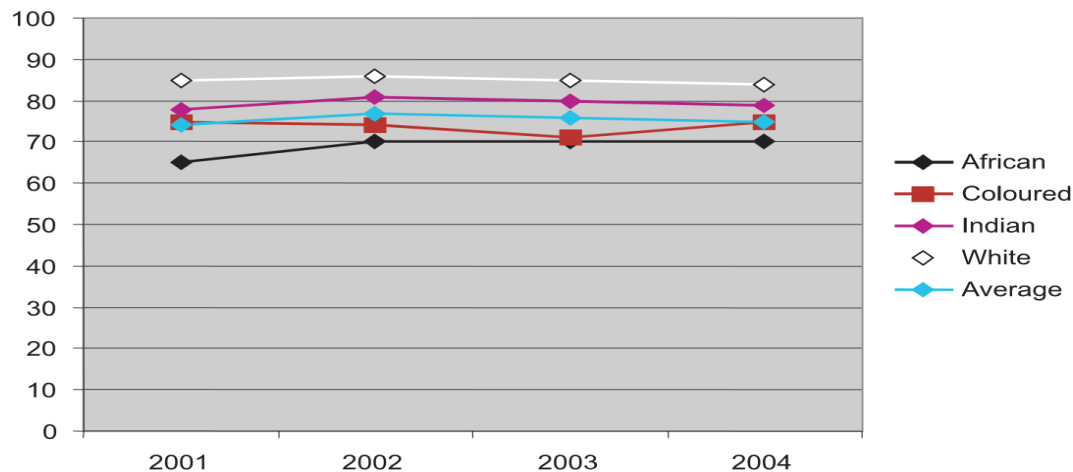
At a time like this time when challenges to the status quo are being put in place to help create gender and racial equity, it is important to bring forth success stories to pave a way for upcoming generations. There is a knowledge gap on success stories from women's perspectives. Studies have been conducted (DHET, 2013; NPC, 2012; Bhorat, Mayet & Visser, 2010; Council of Higher Education, 2009) on the number of black women in South Africa who have managed to graduate but it is important to understand what they perceive played a role in their success and in particular, to explore the role of family in their schooling. It is essential for a wide range of methodologies to be used to understand academic success for black women; this study provides themes across the women's narratives which creates a platform for other studies.

The research to date has confirmed that South Africa does not have enough numbers of highly skilled people in different professions especially at postgraduate level, (Council of

Higher Education, 2009). There is a demand for South African graduates and according to the CHE report (2009, p. 1) it is vital to, “Increase the production of postgraduate students in order for the country to remain competitive and to be able to generate knowledge that is responsive to a wide range of societal needs”. Universities may become a powerful platform for change, and this study provides detail on the experiences of University women who are doing postgraduate studies.

1.1 Schooling and Higher Education

Historically, tertiary education in South Africa was developed along exclusionary and separate lines because of apartheid policy. However, as far back as the late eighties /early nineties, Agar (1990, p.435), “traditionally white universities have admitted an increasing number of non-traditional or black students into their student body”. However, in this context the number of black students dropping out at white universities was extremely high when compared with the dropout rate of white students at the same institutions, and this pattern is continued decades into democracy. In the early 2000s, the “average graduation rate for white students is more than double that of black students” (Letseka and Maile, 2008, p.1). This means that there were underlying variables which worked to exclude black students, reiterating the same divide that apartheid law created. The figure below gives an overview of graduation rates by ‘race’ and the black population remains below the national average of graduates. Between 2001 and 2002 and 2003 there is a slight increase in throughput rates for black students but from then till 2004 the graduation rate of black students stays unchanged.

Figure 1: Higher education undergraduate success rates by race, 2000-2004

Source: Education Statistics in South Africa at a Glance: 2001-2004. Department of Education, 2005

In 1993, Durham deliberated on some of the challenges of school education in South Africa; some of these include teacher-learner ratio, lack of good quality education and lack of discipline. The introduction of Model C schools (prior 1996) meant that a few black parents were able to access better quality schools for their children (May, 1995). However, most parents were unable to make this ‘choice’ because of lack of finances, maintaining and increasing the gap between the rich and the poor. Table one below present South African census statistics showing the distribution of wealth across races over a decade (2001 – 2011). Even though the numbers have increased from 2001, their white counterparts earn on average five times more than black Africans per year. This racialized inequality has a direct impact on the quality of schooling to which children have access and therefore on uneven patterns of academic success in South Africa (Durham, 1993).

Table 1: Average annual household income (in Rands) by population group of household head in 2001 and 2011.

Population group	2001	2011
Black African	22,522	60,613
Coloured	51,440	112,172
Indian/ Asian	102,606	251,541
White	193,820	365,134

Source: South Africa Census, 2011

Walton et al. (2015) indicates a need to understand the different schooling systems in South Africa. The same view is held by Fleisch (2008, p.2), who points out that the country consists of former white and Indian schools which have been found to “produce the majority of University entrants and graduates” whereas “the majority of poor black children continue to receive ‘inferior schooling’” (Taylor, Van der Berg & Mabogoane, 2013, p.4). South Africa’s academic performance compared to other countries is still low, with the “average South African grade nine children performing between two and three grade levels lower than the average Grade Eight child from other middle-income countries” (Spaull, 2013, p, 4).

According to the national plan for higher Education in South Africa (2001), during the late apartheid years, racial inequalities far outweighed those based on gender with respect to education. In 1990, the school patterns of both girls and boys remain the same with a slight difference. Among Black Africans, for example, the boys outnumbered the girls in primary schools, however girls outnumber boys at secondary. In 1994, the number of girls and boys at primary school was slightly different and girls continued to occupy smaller numbers every year. This rate of boys and girls remain the same throughout the years.

National senior certificate results reveal that boys have higher pass rates when compared to girls. “It seems that although more young women than men are attempting the examination, a smaller proportion manage to pass” (Makiwane, Ndinda, Moolman & Khalema, 2016, p.3). This study adopted Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital. According to him, particular forms of cultural capital are commensurate with particular forms of knowledge production and economic value in society (Bourdieu, 1994). Middle class home environments and schooling systems reproduce these forms of cultural capital and hence impact on preparation for higher education. Exploring the stories of successful black women will be useful in the hopes of acquiring important information to assist young women succeed in the future.

1.2 A demographic profile of participation and success in Higher Education

Census (2011) data from Statistics South Africa found that in 2011 the country's population was 51 770 560 and comprising of 26 581 769 (51.3%) females and 25 188 791 (48.7%) males. Gauteng Province has the highest population with 12.3 million people (23, 7%) of South Africa’s total population. Around 1million people have moved to Gauteng in large numbers highlighting movement from rural areas to more urban areas.

The South African government aims "to secure and advance high-level research capacity which can ensure both the continuation of self-initiated, open-ended intellectual inquiry, and the sustained application of research activities to technological improvement and social development" (White Paper, 1997, p, 127). One of the primary aims as stated by the white paper is to increase the graduate output, especially doctoral graduates.

In order to achieve this aim, more students need to graduate and continue to do postgraduate studies. According to the national plan,(2001) report, there have been a variety of programmes and initiatives locally and outside South Africa aimed at increasing graduate

rates for Master's and PhDs (Bradbury & Kiguwa, 2012; Letseka & Maile, 2008; Lourens, 2013). Similar to the white paper report (DHET 2013), the national development plan, (NPC, 2012) also proposed plans to “increase quantity, quality and equity of student participation and academic performance within universities” (Vithal & Murray, 2015, p, 219).

According to a report specially prepared by the (Council of higher education, 2009), progress has been made in accommodating students from all races and genders hence more students are enrolling at Universities. However, universities that enrol the largest numbers of postgraduate students are the historically white and advantaged institutions, e.g. Wits University.

In 2000, 49 391 students were enrolled for postgraduate studies at different South African universities (CHE, 2009). The number has slightly between 2000 and 2004 (from 49 391 to 59 857) but later went down to 54 494 in 2005. At Master's level, there was a steady increase of first-enrolments between 2000 and 2003 (from 14 162 to 19 352), but they reduced to 17 398 in 2005. Ongoing postgraduate enrolments increased across all race groups but particularly the proportion of students who were black increased from 35% in 2000 to 48% in 2005. However, these figures still indicate that black Africans are under-represented at postgraduate level. Munroe et al (2015) postulate that, regardless of an increasing number of black South Africans in higher education, the same cannot be said about graduation and success rates of black students.

In 1997, the Department of Education started putting measures in place to enhance the academic achievement of rates of black students (DoE 1997). However, Bhorat, Mayet & Visser, (2010, p, 97) established that “for every African female who graduated, two dropped out whereas for every white female student who dropped out, three graduated”. Similarly, Zewotir, North & Murray, (2011) found that black students specifically, are more likely to fail than their white counterparts. When male and female students are compared, female

students are more likely to outperform their male peers (Sikwhari, 2007) although this is not the case across all disciplines, with women continuing to be under-represented in the science, engineering and technology (SET) disciplines (Moletsane & Reddy, 2011; De la Rey, 2015).

Female students doing postgraduate studies make up 50% of all Honours enrolments. However, only 46% were enrolled in 2005 and 40 at doctoral level in 2005. There were no differences in the rate of male and female Master's students in 2000 or 2005.

At Doctoral level, female students graduated a little faster in 2000 compared with male students (4.4 years and 4.7 respectively). In the year 2005, there were no differences in the time taken to complete degrees (4.7 years). White students make up large percentage of graduates at both Master's and Doctoral levels.

As far as institutions are concerned, “the largest proportion of Master’s graduates ‘relative to all student graduates’ at an institution is found at UCT (18%), SU (17%) and WITS (15%)”, CHE, 2009). These numbers are quite small which means the small number of postgraduates available can be considered as academically successful. UCT and WITS are alleged to financially exclude black students by increasing tuition and fees (Barnes, 2006). Stellenbosch on the other hand has been criticised for using Afrikaans as a medium of instruction thereby excluding more black students (Gillomee, 2009).

Walton, Bowman & Osman (2015) discuss one of the main contributors to University access in South Africa. They make a distinction between University acceptance and access. According to them, students face two challenges: the first is the struggle to get academically accepted to prestigious and highly competitive institutions; the second challenge is accessing it which tends to be expensive (Walton et al., 2015). The outcome then becomes the inability to register because of financial strain. Beyond this, the Council on Higher Education statistics show that access to University does not always mean success, with high dropout rates that remain racially skewed. The concepts of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1994) and

epistemological access (Morrow, 1999) have been useful to interpret the reasons for this; many black students who have received poor quality schooling enter higher education without the appropriate cultural capital that will enable access not just to the institution but access to the epistemologies and forms of knowledge of University study. (South Africa, 20 years after apartheid is recovering from apartheid and oppression of black people but black students may still carry little appropriate cultural capital (Sablonniere, Auger, Taylor, Crush & Mc Donald, 2013).

Previous published studies are primarily focused on issues around under achievement and trying to improve pass rates (e.g. Van der Flier, 2003; CHE, 2013; Machika, 2012 & Letseka & Maila, 2008). While such work focused on learning-teaching issues is critical, this study shifts attention to understanding and bridging the information gap on black students' challenges and experiences, particularly those less visible social aspects that support success. Research on the subject has been mostly restricted to the number of black female students doing postgraduate studies (Council on higher education, 2009; Education Library News, 2010) and while the numbers are important, quantitative data provide only a partial view. Therefore, more needs to be done order to gain a better understanding of postgraduate education in South Africa. A qualitative study on the other hand allows for in-depth information, making this study relevant in exploring challenges and the stories behind academic success (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

The question of black women postgraduate students in South Africa encompasses issues of not just gender and race but “class, culture, urban, education, language and other variables” (Albertyn, 1994). Given these structural barriers to success, the success of particular individual black women may offer us important insights. Shifting the focus away from schooling and cultural capital, (while acknowledging the critical role that these play) this study focuses on other possible sources of support that may have contributed to the

academic success of this group of women, by focusing particularly on families and social capital. The South African context is characterised by racial and gender inequalities which have translated into low quality education for the poor and disintegration of families through migrant labour and poor housing provision in cities. Even though studies (e.g. Bray et al 2007) have shown the importance of financial support and family relationships for academic success, access has opened up for previously excluded citizens. This means that despite the challenges and structural inequalities of the apartheid legacy, many more black people are now able to access higher education at universities. But the challenge remains as the apartheid aftermath of poverty is still evident in these families (Barbrian et al 2013). The retrospective accounts of these women's schooling journeys offers us a way to see the dynamics that have played a significant role in their academic development to higher education.

The next chapter presents an overview of literature about families, schooling and higher education in South Africa, including some literature from elsewhere for comparative purposes. Chapter two also introduces the theoretical framework that informed the study, drawing on and extending Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, to explore different forms of capital, particularly focusing on social capital.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Theoretical framework

This study explored how family dynamics and relationships play a role in learning across the lives of black female postgraduates students at the University of Witwatersrand. According to Letseka & Maile (2008, p.1) “Black students are generally underrepresented at universities; a demographic reality that promises to reproduce racial inequalities well into the future”. These inequalities at universities may work to perpetuate racial inequalities, increasing the gap between the poor and the rich in a racialized way. The high dropout rate of black students in South African universities has been largely accounted for by 'disadvantaged' school education (Agar, 1990).

“In the South African context, academic success, to a large extent, can be seen as a measure of resilience, even though in other societies it might be considered an ordinary developmental task” (Dass-Brailsford, 2012, p.576). According to Werner (2001, p.576), “resiliency is culturally determined as a ‘normal’ developmental task in one society may not be the case for another”. It may be ‘ordinary’ in one community to go to University and get a degree but among black South Africans society where there is a history of poverty, this becomes a big achievement considering unequal schooling opportunities.

Besides resilience, studies have shown that “if the person perceives that the event is contingent upon his own behaviour or his own relatively permanent characteristics, we have termed this belief, a belief in internal control” Rotter (1966, p.1). This means that individuals are most likely to attribute their success to internal locus of control (Miller & Ross, 1975).

However, in addition to individual qualities such as resilience and locus of control, academic success or failure, it is strongly affected by the intergenerational transmission of capital: economic, cultural and social. Cultural capital is a concept developed by Bourdieu, (1986) to try and understand how privilege and inequality are reproduced across generations.

Economic capital is translated into various forms of capital. Objectified capital, in the form of objects and materials, for example, access to books and the internet facilitate success in educational institutions. Embodied capital is at the level of the body, this means it is characterised by bodily physical features such as, race and accent. These forms of embodied capital either enable or prevent access to resources required to succeed. This is intertwined with institutional capital which reiterates certain forms of being. This means that, in addition to financial difficulties, a black student coming from the township who has attended a township school (carrying less institutional capital) without the ‘proper’ cultural literacy is most likely to struggle. He or she carries less embodied capital because they are black and second language speakers of English, have less access to objectified capital. This shows how the different types of cultural capital are intertwined and translate into each other and therefore, the poor tend to remain poor while the rich become richer.

2.1 Cultural capital

This study was informed by Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital. To date, a fair amount of work has been done on cultural capital (Tramonte & Willms, 2010; Lareau & Weininger, 2003; Lamont & Lareau, 1988; Kingston, 2001; Jaeger, 2011; Goldthorpe, 2007 & Grayson, 2005) and how it may produce particular knowledge, meanings and access to particular education and schooling. In particular, in South Africa, this concept has been used to analyse individuals’ unpreparedness or preparedness for higher education, leading to either drop outs or academic success respectively (e.g. Boughey, 2002; Bradbury & Kiguwa, 2012; Heymann & Carollisen, 2011.)

Pierre Bourdieu (1986) developed the concept of cultural capital to explain the differences in children’s educational outcomes in France. If an individual does not carry some kind of objectified capital they may not get access to the resources they may need to achieve

or to perform effectively (Bourdieu, 1986). Different approaches and theories agree that the ‘accepted rules’ of academic discourse that unlock knowledge and power are particularly middle class in origin (Bernstein, 1966; Bourdieu, 1994; Gee, 1990, & Street, 2001). In South Africa, access to cultural capital is highly racialized, that is, it’s been differentiated on the basis of membership to a racial group which creates barriers that may prevent black children from succeeding at school because of associated lack of resources at schools and challenging financial circumstances (Heymann & Carrollisen, 2011). In addition, the inequalities in South African schooling also remain gendered in particular fields of study e.g. science, engineering and technology (Poulsen, 2006).

Studies on access and success in higher education in South Africa have often focused on proficiency in the language of learning and how it plays a significant part in acquiring knowledge and impacts academic progress at University (Webb, 2001; Butler, & Nan Dyk, 2004). With 11 official languages, most black students from South Africa have English as their second language (Leslie & Sanja, 2014). However, the language question entails not just proficiency in the medium of instruction but also ‘academic literacy’ (Boughey, 2002; Leibowitz, 2005) or access to the rules of the academic game, the possession of appropriate cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1994). Similarly, international studies assert that language proficiency is an essential part of the ‘social class-related’ discourse that students acquire in order to succeed in their studies (Hornberger & Chick, 2001; Lankshear, 1997). In regards to language and under preparedness, various studies have shown that black South African students are increasingly unprepared for higher education studies (Tinto, 1993; Foxcroft & Stumpf, 2005; Kivilu, 2006) and this impacts access and success at University (Bradbury & Miller, 2011).

Black students are now able to access white dominated Universities which have historically been advantaged in terms of resources making it conducive for students to do

well. Selod and Zenou, (2002, p.1) found that “despite the tuition fees imposed by whites, some black pupils may attend the private school”. They further attest to the fact that “Black and white families are heterogeneous both in income and ability and simultaneously decide where to locate in the city and which school (private or public) to send their children.” (Selod & Zenou, 2002, p.352). This means that some black parents are now able to send their children to good schools, however, the lower income people may still be struggling to get access because of poor schools in the townships (Lemon, 1999, Selod & Zenou, 2002).

2.2 Social capital

In the context of South Africa, a country with a history of racism and gender oppression and multiple barriers, success stories do exist. While cultural capital is certainly important and has been the focus of many studies (e.g. Bradbury and Kiguwa, 2012, Alexander, 1997) a dimension that may perhaps have been side-lined but may particularly be relevant in the context of South African higher education, is that of social capital. Social capital is comprised of “obligations, expectations, information channels and social norms” (Coleman, 1988, p.95). All these forms of social capital work together to form necessary capital needed to succeed. Coleman, (1988) presents family background as having three components namely; financial capital, human capital and social capital. According to Coleman, these components may make it easier for a child to succeed.

Clarke (1894) found that in the United States, family psycho-social patterns are significant factors associated with children’s educational attainment. Other studies (Debord, Griffin & Clark, 1977; Hout & Morgan, 1975 & Picou, 1973) found that academic achievement is related to parental encouragement for white American children but the comparable association was not found among African American children. The disparities among white American children and African American children paved a way to think of

black women students in South Africa. Sartain (1989) postulates that children become more academically successful when their parents have a positive attitude towards school and some studies assert that the more involved the parents are with the school system, the more children succeed in their studies (Comer, 1988; Flaxman & Inger, 1991). This is evidence that social capital or the social attitudes and practices of parents may allow for particular knowledge and abilities imperative for academic success. Over the past decade, several studies in the United States have investigated academic achievement and conclude that parent behaviours were significantly associated with children's educational development (Comer, 1988; Dye, 1989; Mannan & Blackwell, 1992; Davies, 1991; Clark, 1984). However there is a literature gap in South African parent behaviours and their role on children's educational development. From an earlier assertion, South Africa has a history of race and gender inequalities, prejudice, multi-cultural society, high rates of alcohol abuse (Parry, Pluddemann, Steyn, Bradshaw, Norman, & Laubscher, 2005) and reports high rates of sexual and domestic abuse cases among families (Seedat, Van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla & Ratele, 2009). It is therefore important to investigate how the different factors both positive and negative affect parents' behaviours towards children in terms of schooling especially on a black female child.

Other family dynamics should also be explored, for example, how sibling relationships play a role in learning. The Wisconsin Model, used to understand the connection of early childhood, educational experience and lifelong learning failed to explain educational attainment of African American children who, because of cultural differences in family structures and, particularly socio-economic status, may not experience direct parental involvement in their schooling, Kerckhoff and Campbell (1977). This study explored potential sources of social capital offered by families, including multigenerational roles drawing on and developing Bourdieu's (1994) theory, Coleman's (1988) approach focuses on parents'

social networks and the impact of relationships between parents and their children (Harphan, 2003; Leonard, 2005; Morrow, 1999).

Coleman, (1988) following Bourdieu, (1986) emphasized the importance of “associational life” which “describes the conditions that define the context where individuals rely on social networks and kinship relationships to survive and access resources” (Odendaal, 2008, p 58). Dewey, in (Plagens, 2010) similarly says that while knowledge is important it may only be useful if an individual is connected with others in a meaningful way (Plagens, 2010). Social capital elucidates that social networks of relationships between people may create a useful platform, increasing their chances of being successful. The theory suggests that relationships are crucial for success (Field, 2011).

De Haan (2010) found that family size is negatively correlated with school performance. He found that the more children there are in a family, the less the child’s years of schooling (De Haan, 2010). Other studies have also confirmed this negative relationship (Belmont & Marolla, 1973; Blake, 1981; Hanushek, 1992). These studies however failed to consider multiple family forms, e.g. extended families and other networks that may play a very significant role in South African children’s lives (Bray & Brandt, 2007).

Financial capital speaks to income and resources that make it convenient for a child to actually study e.g. paying fees; human capital is the parents’ level of education which can help provide a learning environment to collaborate and enhance development. Social capital refers to the networks and relationships between people that serve to facilitate access to various other forms of capital, including educational access and associated social mobility (Coleman, 1988). Coleman explains how individual attainment is affected by family, that is “whether parents are separated, mothers work or not, families belong to particular ethnic or cultural communities, are new or long established migrants, move frequently, communicate with their children, are the variables that make up positive or negative social capital” (Fine

1999, p.5). He used these factors to interrogate success at school. The researcher adopted Coleman's conceptualisation (following Bourdieu) of social capital and how it may affect learning. It will also account for sibling relationships, other family members and their role in learning.

2.3 Families

Unlike in the western nuclear family, the African extended family includes a far wide range of family members, (Ross, 1996). A study conducted by Bohman, Vasuthevan, Van Wyk, & Ekman, (2007) in South African townships found in many families, the elderly are the ones taking care of the family on a monthly pension. This shows that a 'nuclear' family assumption in the South African context maybe a misrepresentation of family. (Burman, 2008, p.111) addresses this problematic assumption in psychological research: "most developmental psychological research conformed to dominant familial assumptions of the nuclear family containing a male breadwinner and female child carer". In consideration of the misleading assumption of the nuclear family, (the study adopted Wright & Leahey's, (2005) definition of family: "family is who they say they are" (p.60). Similarly, Hanson, Gedaly-Duff & Kaakinen (2005), state that "members of the family are self-defined" (p.7). Multi-generational families are common in the South African context and grandparents continue to take care of their grandchildren. Schatz (2007, p. 148) attributes these responsibilities to be "in part a continuation of the apartheid era stretched and dispersed families". Migration studies report that the incidence of the elderly women in multi-generational families playing the primary caregiving role is due to both low socio-economic status and African traditions (Lombard & Kruger, 2009). In all contexts the relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren have been found to be important (Bengtson, 2001). Studies have found that the extended family structure is prevalent amongst people from the lower socio-economic status while the nuclear family is mostly found in people of the high socio-economic status (e.g.

Makiwane, Makoe, Botsis & Vawada, 2015). This means that elderly people provide a range of support, including financial, spiritual and emotional support (Edmond, Mammen & Miller, 2004). In a society where there is an increasing number of female headed households, and “45 percent of these female headed families live below the ‘lower bound’ poverty line”, (Armstrong, Lekezwa & Siebrits, 2008, p.13) this is necessary. It allows single mothers to seek jobs and leave their children under the care of other family members.

Bronfenbrenner (2009) suggests that, in order for children to grow academically and perform better, parents must provide adequate supervision, support and encouragement. Many studies (Heymann & Carolissen, 2012; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Spiegler & Bednarek, 2013; Pagliarulo, 2004) found that emotional support is very important when transitioning into University.

According to Mokrova, Obrien, Calkins, Leerkes and Marcovitch (2012, p.617), “children who develop persistence in the pre-school years are likely to function more effectively during the transition into school”. Also parents tend to “structure interactions with their children in a way that supports their own values and the development of behaviours that they view as important for success in their cultural group”, (Mokrova et al, 2012, p. 618). Socio cultural theory elucidates that familial situations of any given socio-economic status play a major role in parenting practices and this leads to diverse child outcomes (Mokrova, Obrien, Calkins, Leerkes & Marcovitch, 2012). This is consistent with Kohn’s assertion that different socio-economic status give birth to a variety of life conditions and demands, (Kohn, 1979). Therefore people from different socio-economic status form different meanings and views of “what it takes to lead a good, successful life” (Mokrova, Obrien, Calkins, Leerkes & Marcovitch, 2012, p 619). Family values may play a role in the academic development of children. According to Mokrova, Obrien, Calkins, Leerkes and Marcovitch, (2012, p.617),

“children who develop persistence in the pre-school years are likely to function more effectively during the transition into school”.

2.3.1 Parental roles: Mothers and fathers

Parents are significant in children’s lives (Bray et al, 2007). This therefore suggests the importance of parent-child relationship. In South Africa, there is a high rate of father absence (Nduna & Sikweyiya, 2015) and single parent home headed by females (Mokrova et al, 2012). It is important to note that, the relationship between both mother and fathers with children may be affected by sex identification. Gender may play a role in children’s closeness to one parent than the other due to same sex role models (Starrels, 1994; Siegal 1987). This means that girls may be drawn to getting closer to mothers and vice versa. In this context, this may be contentious because fathers are already absent making the mother the only parent available. The role of mothering which is traditionally conceptualised as nurturing in relation to the disciplinary and financial role of fathers, (Richter, 2006) is also changing. In popular contemporary discourse, mothers are frequently referred to as ‘best friends’ to their daughters (Rose, 1999).

According to Rose (1999), the perception that a mother is a ‘best friend’ depicts a fairness and compliance between the two parties. The mother –daughter friendship relationship happens because of reciprocated understanding (Burn, 2006). “Girls’ friendships are based on rules of mutual intimacy and reciprocal commitment” (Aapola, Gonick & Harris, 2005, p.117). However, this friendship between mothers and daughters may not be as equal as it ostensibly appears and may play a subtle disciplinary role. According to Burn (2006, p. 30), “girls are, within the boundaries of best friends are expected to be ‘good girls’ as they ought to display the characteristics typically associated with being a nice girl”. Feminism however argues against the ‘good girl discourse’ that works to prevent and restrict women from succeeding at a later stage (Baker, 2010).

By contrast with this significant role for mothers, according to Padi, Nduna, Khonou & Kholopane, (2014) and Reynolds, (2009) the rate of father absence in the South African context, is increasing. This is conceptualised in different ways including, “father absence and unknown, absent but known, absent and undisclosed, and unknown and deceased” (Padi et al 2014, p. 44). However, studies have found that there is silence among South African youth about this inadequate fathering, this silence has been attributed to “sign of respect and gratitude and to maintain family and kinship bonds” (Nduna and Sikweyiya, 2013, p. 536). The absence of fathers is also confirmed by Morrell (2006) who claims that dysfunctional relationships between fathers and children are increasing and particularly prevalent among poor black families.

2.3.2 Family practices and reading

Previous studies in the United States have provided some evidence that pleasure reading enhances academic development. Greney and Hegarty (1987) found that when children are exposed to reading materials at home, it creates a positive helpful reading environment. Several studies have advocated for reading as necessary for building early reading skills and promoting academic development. (Faires, Nicols & Rickelman, 2000; Dick, 2001). Johnson, Bornman and Alant, (2010) found that US children from well-educated homes with access to reading material are more likely to enjoy reading which then improves their reading skills. In their view, reading is necessary for academic success and development. .

Bray and Brandt (2007) argues that reading for pleasure enhances vocabulary, cultural literacy needed to succeed later on in schooling. Reading for pleasure is not only important for improving grammar and writing skills, (Clark & Rumbold, 2006) but it also plays a pivotal role in self-exploration and understanding of oneself. Several studies allude to similar positive effects of reading (e.g. Richardson & Eccles 2007; Ross, 1999; Salter & Brooke,

2007). This may explain why there is low retention rate of black students at University level and only a few manage to succeed. They may not possess some of the necessary capital needed to enhance their learning making it difficult for them to adjust to the University environment. “Reading is important in the learning context not only because it affords readers independent access to information in an increasingly information-driven society, but more importantly because it is a powerful learning tool, a means of constructing meaning and acquiring new knowledge” (Pretorius, 2002, p.169). Enhancing reading can help in preparing students for further studies especially in developing countries like South Africa. “Reading is not simply an additional tool that students need at tertiary level - it constitutes the very process whereby learning occurs” (Pretorius, 2002, p.169).

Pleasure reading has been found as a predictor of academic development because it does not only enhance reading skills but also provides a positive stimulus for children’s reading (Anderson, 2000). Banda (2003, p. 106) stresses “the importance of understanding the literacy practices that groups and communities engage in before introducing interventions”. In 2003, Banda found that “literacy practices are linked to demographic, geographical, attitudinal, linguistic, cultural and socio-economic factors” (p. 106).

Television viewing amongst children has increased (Postman, 1985) which creates less time for children to engage in reading. However, this may not necessarily be entirely negative as television may offer important language skills, (Huston, Murphy, St Peters, Piaton, Scantlin, Kotler, 2001). This may be important to note especially for children who have English as their second language. “The level of media literacy development in preschool children is related to their overall information literacy development level” (Hains, Kirinic, Pletanec, 2007 p, 80). In contradiction, Hancox, Milne & Poulton, (2005) found that television viewing is associated with low academic development.

One study indicated that the parents' expectation for their children to academically succeed may motivate them to provide books and academic games for their children and even take them to the library (Anderson, 2000). Also, when children observe their parents reading, they are more likely to reiterate their behaviour, the reading atmosphere provides a positive stimulus for children's reading (Anderson, 2000). More research needs to be done to find out about the role of parents who have low levels of schooling or education, or do not have enough capital to provide easy access to reading resources. In the South African context, discrepancies between parents' access to schooling and that of the post-94 generation are sometimes quite dramatic. .

In the United Kingdom context, Irwin and Elley (2011) believe that regardless of socio-economic status, most parents' value happiness and good education. They state that the only difference comes in "terms of values of self-direction", (p 480). Kohn (1986) suggests that parents' occupation and socio-economic status play a role in the kind of values they subscribe to. Lower status jobs tend to value conformity and following rules while higher status jobs value independent and self-direction attributes. This means that parents working in these jobs may instil the same values in their children which is translated in their work ethic and contribute to reproducing the gap between the rich and poor (Kohn, 1986).

Also relationships with friends and teachers have been found to predict academic motivation and self-esteem (Ryan, Stiller & Lynch, 1994). According to Erickson (1959), when children go through the transition phase of adolescence, it is important that they have a supportive structure with significant others, for example, family. He attests to the idea that exploration plays a crucial role in adolescent transition. It is to be noted that according to the theory, in order to complete the transition, children need to be able to explore their environment and this exploratory space is useful in "consolidating and remaking personal identity" (Erickson, 1959). Grotevant (1987) also believed that an exploratory space allows for

identity process to take place. Erickson further asserts that a culture which a person grows plays a huge role in their psychosocial development. This is an important theory to think about childhood experiences of academically successful women because at each stage of development, a basic strength develops for example “competence, hope and will” (Cross, 2004). This alludes to the idea that academic development is not tied to just a few variables but rather research should investigate the culture and practices that allows learning to take place.

2.4 Experiences of black female students in South African universities

A study conducted by Bradbury and Kiguwa (2012) in the South African context revealed that female students University experiences were quite ambivalent in that they felt a sense of institutional pride(as Wits students) but also felt “not at home” in the work and social spaces of campus. Miller, Bradbury and Pedley (1998, p. 103) assert that “Although it is possible to identify, delineate, and erect fences around educational institutions, the institution of education as a process of learning, understanding and generating meaning cannot be isolated from the other strands that together constitute the socio-cultural web that we call society.” This is very important in thinking about black women students and how the family and society have played a role in their academic development.

According to Ndlovu, (2012), women are always more than ‘just’ women and black people are more than just black. This is because black women are not just faced with racial inequality but also gender inequality. “In the South African context, academic success, to a large extent, can be seen as a measure of resiliency, even though in other societies it might be considered as an ordinary developmental task” (Dass- Brails ford, 2012, p.576). According to (Werner, 2001), resiliency is culturally determined as a ‘normal’ developmental task in one society may not be the case for another. It may be ordinary in one society to go to University

and get a degree but in a black society where there is a history of poverty, this becomes a big achievement considering unequal schooling opportunities.

A University is a space for transition away from home as a child and it “leans towards the future of adulthood” (Bradbury & Kiguwa, 2012, p.2). It was revealed that experiences of Wits female students were highly racialized despite claims by the University to make it a “home for everyone”. Bradbury and Kiguwa (2012) explain how hegemonic masculinity in the University space works to control the movement of women which impacts their academic citizenship.

Dass- Brailsford (2005) asserts that women who have “characteristics of being goal-oriented, having initiative and motivation and experiencing the self as a possessing a measure of agency” (p.580) are more likely to succeed. Walkerdine, Lucey and Melody (2001) write about 'I can have everything' girls who face extraordinary shifts in family and education, but continue to struggle with pressures of wealth, poverty, class and ethnicity. The book demonstrates this by showing how young women's quest for self-invention is regulated by both unconscious processes and socio-economic constraints. They argue that class is highly critical variable in understanding what it is to be a young woman in western culture (UK). This study visits the world of these women and tries to make sense of the position of black women in the South African context.

According to Munro, Vithal and Murray (2015, p. 218) “variations in race, gender, financial aid allocation, and matriculation English symbol are significantly associated with increased odds of exceptional academic achievement”. They developed a model of the socio demographic and educational variables associated with exceptional academic achievement which showed that white females are most likely to succeed in their academics compared to other groups. However, despite the systematic biases of gender and race, black women do succeed against the odds. Researching these success stories may help improve conditions and

influence policy in ways that would enhance the chances for academic success for more black women students. Like Rivera (2005, p.83), “without serious, sustained attention to the goals of excellence in academic achievement and consequences tied to not reaching these goals, no real improvement is likely to happen in the education of those on the bottom of the achievement gap”.

Chapter 2 was focused on the literature review and theory that informed the study. The theoretical framework entails focusing on transmission across generations of multiple forms of capital: economic, cultural and social. These forms of capital are inter-related in intersecting ways and usually work together to reproduce inequality. However, in the context of post-apartheid South African society there may be disjuncture between these forms of capital introducing some possibilities for social mobility. The literature review covered families in the South African context with a particular focus on parental roles and some of the family practices that exist in homes that help children’s academic development, e.g. reading. The literature revealed the experiences of black female students in South African universities to get a background on the University space for black women. The next chapter, focuses on the methodology of the study and describes the participant cohort, the methods of data collection (narrative interviewing) and the methods of data analysis (thematic and visual analysis) and includes a reflective piece.

Chapter 3: Method

The study aimed to shed light on the role of family relations in the schooling histories of successful black women postgraduate students. The study took a narrative approach. Narrative interviewing allows participants to be reflective and connect their life experiences together; therefore allowing the researcher to be transported into the participants own experiences creating an understanding (Selohilwe, 2010; Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000; Bates, 2005)

A narrative paradigm is important for this kind of research because of its ability to allow participants to be retrospective. Meaningful stories are created by understanding how experiences of the past lead to the present and possible future (McAdams, 2001). Narratives are explained by Riessman, (2008) as a way people assert meaning to their lives. So “life is lived forward but can only be understood backwards” (Kierkegaard, cited in Crites, 1986, p.165). A narrative offers a comprehensive and holistic understanding allowing for new information that the researcher may not be aware of. This approach is very important because the study is exploratory and is more concerned with exploring relationships and processes (Marshall & Rossman, 1999) also, the participants are in control of the information they share making them the ‘experts’ of knowledge. Narrative interviewing allowed the researcher to ask questions about the past and present of successful black postgraduate women within their cultural context (Selohilwe, 2010). The interviews enable participants to explain in detail their view on academic development as well as the role played by family. Creswell (1998) posits that qualitative research is important in revealing patterns in people’s opinions, as well as getting insight on how the participants develop meaning from their surroundings, and how the meaning they attach to their surroundings influences their behaviour. This study attempted to understand how black female students have made meaning of their families and

how their families had played a role in their academic development. The research design allowed for the analysis of different stories told by the women in relation to the topic.

3.1 Research Questions

Primary research question.

- What is the nature of family dynamics and relationships in the childhood experiences of academically successful black women?

Secondary questions.

- Who was responsible for their learning as children and what roles did these people play? (For example, who helped with assignments and school work; what careers and role models were accessible to them as children; what play activities encouraged them to attend to school work).
- What did parents expect their daughters to be and accomplish? In particular what are the female roles and gender dynamics present in the family?
- What school experiences and other relationship experiences are identified as significant?
- What are the family values and rules that allowed learning to take place?

3.2 Participants and Sampling

The participants for the study were black women doing master's degree' in any faculty at the University of the Witwatersrand. The University is located in Gauteng province with a large population. The particular University was chosen was selected because of accessibility and familiarity to the researcher. The researcher recruited 10 women studying at the University of Witwatersrand to be part of this study. The researcher decided to drop one PHD student's interview from the data because nine participants were master's degree

students and this individual student thus changed the profile of the group. The interviews were conducted in English because all the participants were comfortable with the language and also at master's degree level English is the primary medium of instruction. Purposive sampling was used to select appropriate participants. The researcher distributed information sheets about the project at the postgraduate lab which is used by master's degree and PhD students and also at postgraduate residences. Snowballing was used to recruit participants and they were asked to recommend other postgraduate students who may be interested in taking part. The reason why postgraduate students were selected to take part in this study is because they are already by definition, academically successful, as they have completed their undergraduate as well as their honours degree and are part of a highly select group pursuing postgraduate studies. It was challenging to find and recruit PHD students since most of them are working and studying part time. Table two below presents the demographic profile of the participants. The group is skewed as it's made up of mostly from the humanities faculty, five participants are psychology master's degree students (across multiple programmes), one is doing master's degree in demographic studies, and one is an anthropology master's student. The last two represent the science faculty, doing pharmacy and medicine respectively. The ages of the women range from 22 to 31 years of age and they are studying full time. They are thus all relatively young master's degree students, below the mean age of master's degree students of 34 years, as reported by the CHE (Higher Education monitor, 2009).

The women are also single and none of them had children at the time of interviewing. One of the participants did not know her father hence noted as N/A under father's level of education. All the participants speak English as their second language and most of them speak Setswana as their first language, possibly as result of snowballing sampling as the researcher is Setswana speaking. All these dynamics may have played a role in their

narratives but above all the study was interested in their childhood experiences of academic development.

Table 2: Participants' information

Name	Age	Home Language	Type of high school	Number of siblings	Fathers level of education	Mothers level of education	Programme of Study
Bagorogile	25	Tswana	Public-private school	1	Matric	Honours	MA research psychology
Barwadi	25	Sotho	Public-private-public	1	Diploma	Diploma	MA research psychology
Lebogang	24	Tswana	Public school	4	Matric	Teacher	MA Counselling Psychology
Jane	22	Tswana	Public school	2	Matric	Matric	MA research psychology
Mamiki	23	Pedi	Public school	2	Grade 3	Matric	MA Anthropology
Bajuta	25	Pedi	Public school	0	Degree	Degree	MA Pharmacy
Paula	31	Zulu	Semi private	2	N/A	Matric	MSC medicine
Maitebolo	24	Tswana	Private school	0	DEGREE	Master's degree'	MA research psychology
Mohumagadi	22	Venda	Private school	2	DEGREE	N/A	MA demo studies

***Pseudonyms have been provided in line with ethical considerations for anonymity.**

3.3 Data Collection

Narrative interviewing technique was used to prompt storied responses from the participants. According to Selohilwe (2010, p.26) this is appropriate as it “captures the messiness of the lived world”. Selohilwe (2010, p. 40) further explains that the ‘past is used to explain the present, how the present is used to account for the past and how both the past and the present are used to construct the future’. A set of questions were used to invite conversation but the researcher was careful not to limit the direction of the interview, (see appendix A). The main role played by the researcher was to facilitate the interview by encouraging the participants to tell their stories of how they managed to do their post graduate studies. The researcher then analysed the data thematically to highlight common ideas across the interviews. The main reason for having these questions was to ensure all aspect of the topic were covered. After a careful and in depth literature search, the researcher used the literature review as a guide to generate probing questions ensuring that the participants elaborated accounts about particular experiences and stories (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

The researcher put out posters to invite eligible candidates for interviews. Potential participants were made aware of issues of confidentiality and the participant information sheets were given to potential participants to read and make decisions as to whether they wanted to participate, (please see Appendix B). Once participants indicated their willingness to participate in the study, they were asked to read and sign the participant informed consent form (see appendix C) and the audio informed form (See appendix D) indicating an agreement for the interview to be audio recorded. The interviews lasted fifty minutes to ninety minutes each. The audio recordings were then transcribed for later analysis. This qualitative design allowed for facilitated conversations to take place and for participants to

share their experiences and stories. The methodology was useful as it allowed questions about the past, present and future of black postgraduate women.

3.4 Ethics

The study adhered to all ethical concerns: ethics clearance was obtained from the University of Witwatersrand's psychology department Ethics Committee. The researcher only collected data after getting clearance. All participants were given the information sheet to read and asked if they fully understand and if not the researcher explained further and allowed questions from the participants. The researcher used pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants and they were made aware that the information they gave will be seen by the supervisor and may later be published or be presented at workshops. The data were stored safe in a password protected computer. The consent form assured the participants' confidentiality and informed them that they could withdraw at any time if they felt uncomfortable. However, measures were put in place in case the participants experienced emotional distress during the interview. In case of emotional or psychological distress, the participants were assured that they would be referred to a mental health professional at the counselling and careers development unit at Wits campus. The participants were further assured that they were under no obligation to give the answers to questions which they felt uncomfortable responding to.

3.5 Reflexivity

As a black female postgraduate student, I was well aware that my own experiences of family dynamics is relevant to the study and makes my experience similar to that of the participants. However I am not South African and was schooled in a different context and this presented some differences. Similar to Fay (1996) I do not believe that you have "to be one to understand and know one". He argues that we do not necessarily have to be one to know one,

but rather knowing requires reflection or “second order thinking” on the meaning of experiences (Fay, 1996). Being a black woman doing postgraduate studies has informed my interest and how I thought of my research questions but I was also guided by the literature, background of the subject and methodology used on prior research. Also, being a black academic positioned me to gain trust of the participants and elicit rich narratives. The knowledge I acquired from the women expanded with each interview I conducted. I became more familiar with the interview process and my skills improved as I carried out more interviews hence the first interviews were shorter than the rest. I had expectations of the kind of information that will be presented by participants from my experience as a black postgraduate woman and also from my understanding of literature but I kept an open mind and was able to allow new information and capture different experiences. In order to validate the data reported I was continuously reflective throughout the study.

3.6 Data Analysis

In order to analyse the women’s narratives, two kinds of analytic techniques were used in order to capture relevant information. The researcher used visual techniques to provide a structural analysis of the families of the participants and thematic analysis to describe and discuss the content of the narratives.

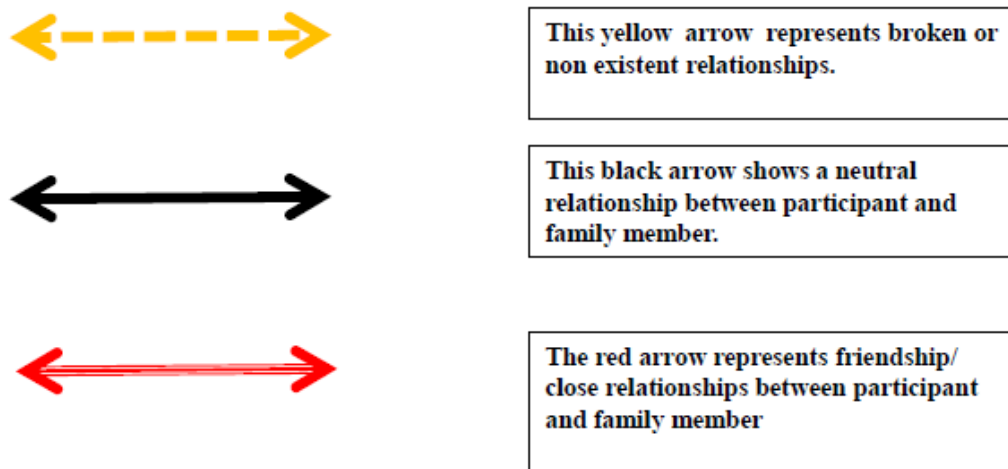
3.6.1 Structural and Visual analysis.

Visual techniques were particularly important in analysing the family structure of individual narratives. This technique allowed the researcher to determine the patterns and structure of families across participants. According to Kerr & Bowen (1988), in order to understand individuals, we cannot isolate them from their families because the family is an emotional unit and, because of this, if one part of the family unit system is not functioning well then it affects the whole system and all individuals within it. The opposite is true, if part

of the system, that is a family member, is doing well, e.g. succeeding in their studies, this success may be thought of as reflecting on the family as a whole, and the family system contributes to this individual academic development. Hence it's important to look at the structure and functioning of families in order to get a full picture of individual. Family diagrams for each participant drawn to depict different family relationships and emotional relationships that exist between the participant and their family members. The researcher drew the family diagrams from the narratives given by the participants about family and who they consider as family. "Family diagrams visually record the facts of functioning across at least three generations of the multigenerational family" (Butler, 2008, p. 170). Further, it presents information about emotional processes in the family and its structure. This technique is based on natural systems theory which says that individual emotional reactivity forms and plays a role in the functioning of the family (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). The idea was developed by Bowen (1988) and he explains the family as an emotional unit. In the South African context, this means that multi-generational connections may affect and influence behaviours of family members (Brown, 1999).

Family members, as defined by participants, are named in terms of their relationship to the participants and included in the diagram, for example, grandmother, uncle or mother. Family connections are shown by lines connecting the members of the family to the participant, with generations represented in hierarchical layers. The children are placed below the parental family line from the oldest to the youngest (sibling position), left to right. In Figure 2 below, the key is provided to illustrate how the quality of relationships between family members and the participant, is represented; red, represents a positive relationship, black, a neutral relationship, and a yellow dotted line represents a broken or negative relationship. Instances where there is no line means that the family member was mentioned but there are either deceased or no clear emotional relationship was noted.

Figure 2: Family Diagram key



The structural analysis of each individual family and the emotional relationships of the participants within the family system is visually presented and described in Chapter 4. Below is an example;

Figure 3: Family diagram example

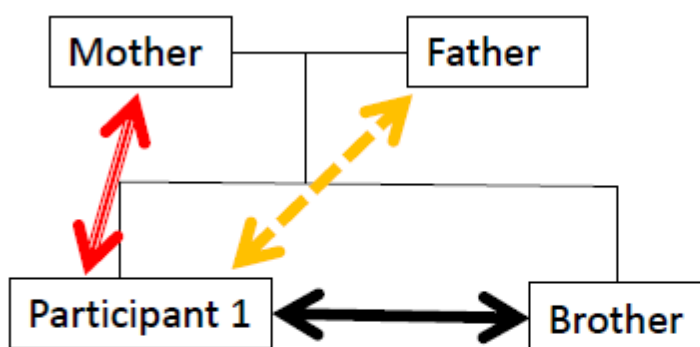


Figure 3 above shows a family of four made up of a mother father, the participant and her younger brother. The participant is first born hence her position on the left depicted on the diagram. The participant has a close knit relationship with her mother as depicted in a bold red arrow. The participant however has a 'neutral' relationship with her brother as depicted in a black arrow connecting her and the brother. The participant and her father have a distant or broken relationship as depicted in a yellow broken arrow.

The second layer of analysis focused on themes across the women's narratives about their experiences in terms of the role of family dynamics in their academic development.

3.6.2 Thematic analysis.

The nature of this study allowed the researcher to explore common themes from the different interviews as well as relate and answer initial research questions. Braun and Clarke, (2006) explains the advantage of this method of analysis, as a manageable and flexible approach to qualitative data. The aim for analysing the data thematically is to draw attention to specific content within the narratives given by participants (Riessman, 2008). Thematic analysis allows the researcher to carefully identify, analyse and report patterns across data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach captures the individuals within their context reflecting their perspectives and concerns (Selohilwe, 2010). The researcher was therefore able to question when meanings contradicted each other and report on the patterns of the data, creating an in-depth understanding the participants' meanings of their family and academic development experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher followed the six steps proposed by (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to analyse the data. The analysis was conducted using a six step process which involves, acquainting self with data by reading transcripts and listening to the recordings over and over. The next process includes producing codes across the data. The data were then used to find themes and each theme was revised. The next phase

includes giving the themes names and operationalizing them. This method is engaging for the reason that it offers a model for systematic qualitative analysis allowing the researcher to make meaningful conclusions from the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A theme in this kind of analysis is something that appears important in the data in relation to the focus of the research. The use of thematic analysis allowed; “interpretation of various aspects of the research topic” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.6) also, “organisation and a rich description of data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.6). The key benefit for analysing data thematically is that it can usefully summarize key characters of a large body of data therefore exposing patterns in the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In order to analyse the data, new themes were recorded and were analysed in relation to the literature review (Riessman, 2008; Brain & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic analysis enabled the researcher to discover and analyse family dynamics that play a role in the success of black female postgraduates. It allowed for social and psychological interpretations to be made, which were relevant to the role and influence of family relationships on the academic achievement of black women.

This chapter focused on the method of enquiry of the study. It indicated primary research questions and secondary questions that drove the study. Participants’ demographics were presented and the sampling process described. This chapter also presents a rationale for the data collection technique of narrative interviewing which allows the participants to tell the story of their childhoods and how they came to be where they are today. The ethical procedures are discussed and the investigator provides a reflexive piece about herself in relation to the research question. The two forms of analysis are presented in the following two chapters: chapter 4 presents a visual analysis of the participants’ family structures and

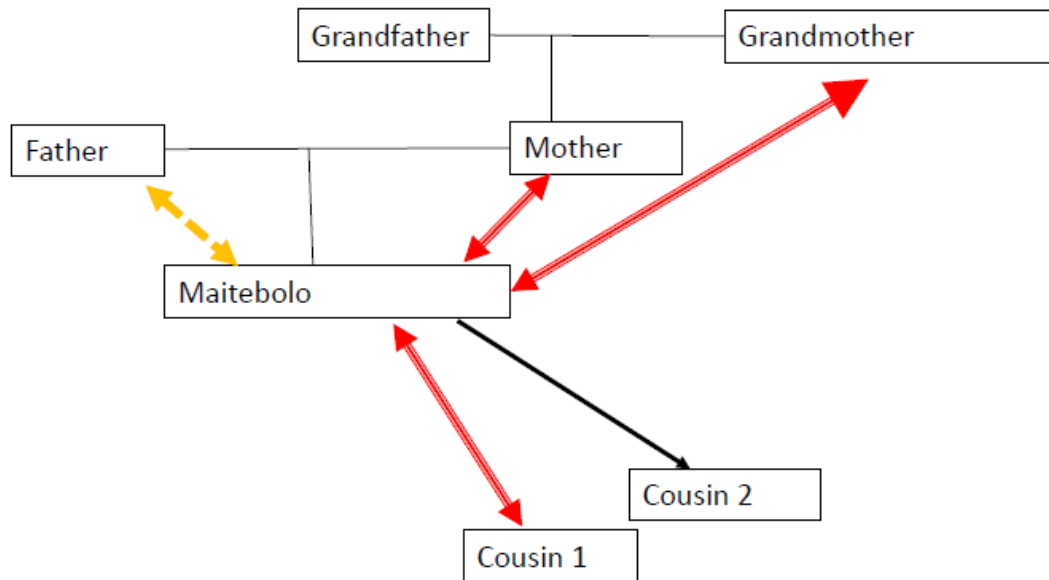
emotional relationships that exist between family members. A thematic analysis across the participants' narratives is presented in chapter five.

Chapter 4: Visual analysis of families

It is important to these women's profiles to get an understanding of idea of family and dynamics in the family that allowed learning to take place. Below is a family diagram for each participant and their narratives. The family diagrams offer an overview of the different family structures and relationships between family members. One of the main findings that the size of their families was relatively small (with the largest family consisting of four children) Studies have found that the smaller the family the more likely children are to academically succeed (Cancian & Reed, 2008). It is interesting to see that the structure of black families is undergoing changes which may include choices for smaller families. However, it should be noted that this refers on to the nuclear family and all of the participants' narratives of family, included multiple generations and extended family members beyond immediate siblings. It is therefore apparent that the conception of family is quite different to the narrow nuclear construct and that several people in the wider kinship network are important role players in the family system and in the lives of these young women.

1. Maitebolo's family

Figure 4 presents a family tree diagram of the Maitebolo's family.

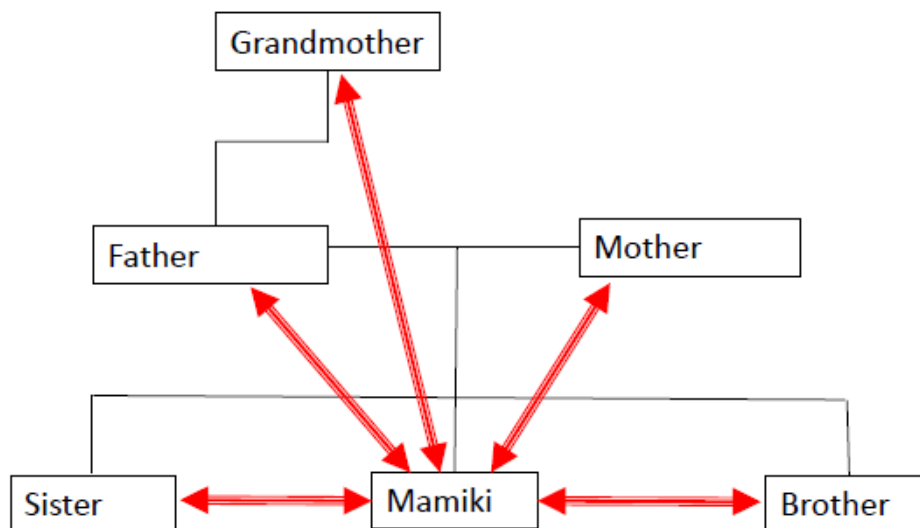


Maitebolo is 24 years old and an only child. Her parents are divorced and she stays with her mother full time. When asked about her family she mentions her cousins as part of the family even though they do not stay under the same roof. The diagram includes her cousins as part of her family. Maitebolo's definition of family illustrates the flawed and misleading assumption of the nuclear assumption of family (Hanson, et al. 2005 & Burman, 2008). When asked about her family's influence on her studies; she asks; *'My family as in immediate?'*. It is clear that she has her own idea of what family means which may be different from the 'common' assumption and she describes her extended family.

'I am the only child, my parents are divorced, so, Um ... I don't have siblings, I am the eldest of my cousins. I think the one who is second eldest to me is probably 15, so there is about a 10 year gap between my siblings, well, I mean my family in terms of cousins and myself, so am a loner' Maitebolo.

Maitebolo has a close relationship with her grandmother and mother as well as her cousin. She reports that her relationship with her father is distant and broken and that is partly due to her parents' divorce. Two cousins are included in the diagram, with a strong positive relationship to one of these, because Maitebolo referred to her as family, indicating that the nuclear sense of siblings is inaccurate for this participant.

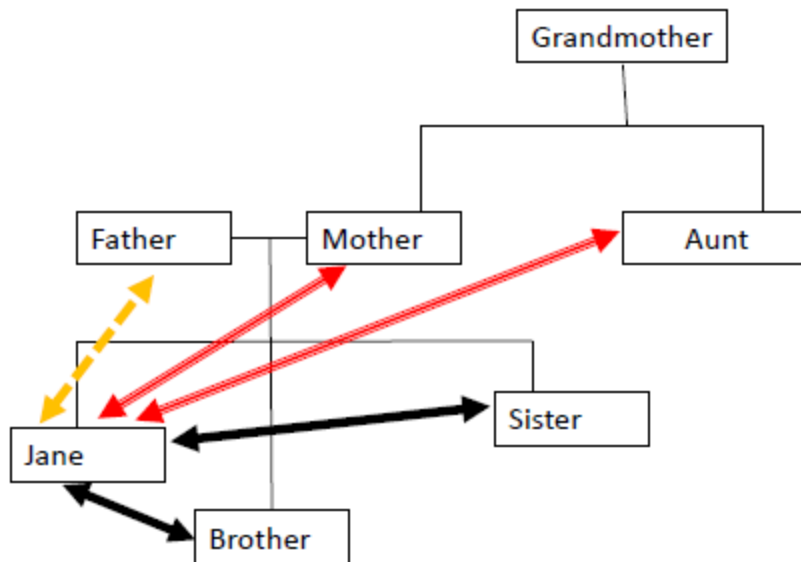
2. Figure 5: Mamiki's family Diagram



Mamiki is a middle child with two siblings, an older sister and younger brother. She comes from a family of six including her grandmother. Her family size is relatively small as with all the other women. Of all the 9 participants interviewed she is the only one who reported having a very friendship relationship with her father. Mamiki's family diagram also includes her grandmother as part of her family even though she has passed on but she took part in her upbringing. This presents multigenerational dynamics in terms of her upbringing. She explains that from all her siblings she is the only one who is 'academically inclined' which shows that even though her family may not offer have been able to offer her necessary social capital needed to succeed. Mamiki's mother is the breadwinner of the family

contradicting the common assumption that men are breadwinners. Mamiki reports a very relationship with all her siblings and parents.

3. Figure 6: Jane's family Diagram



Jane is first born and comes from what she says is a supportive family, and also includes some members of her extended family (her aunt and grandmother) as 'immediate' family. From the family diagram we can see that she has a very close relationship with her aunt who raised her at some point in her life.

'Ummm, I don't know. My family is... I think I can say it's quite close, the nuclear family and the relatives, we are quite close. Ja, they are very supportive people, I can say. For my aunt, when I came here, she took me in. I had, I lived with her. Even now I still live with her and she has been amazing. She is being supportive. "How is school? How is life?"' Jane.

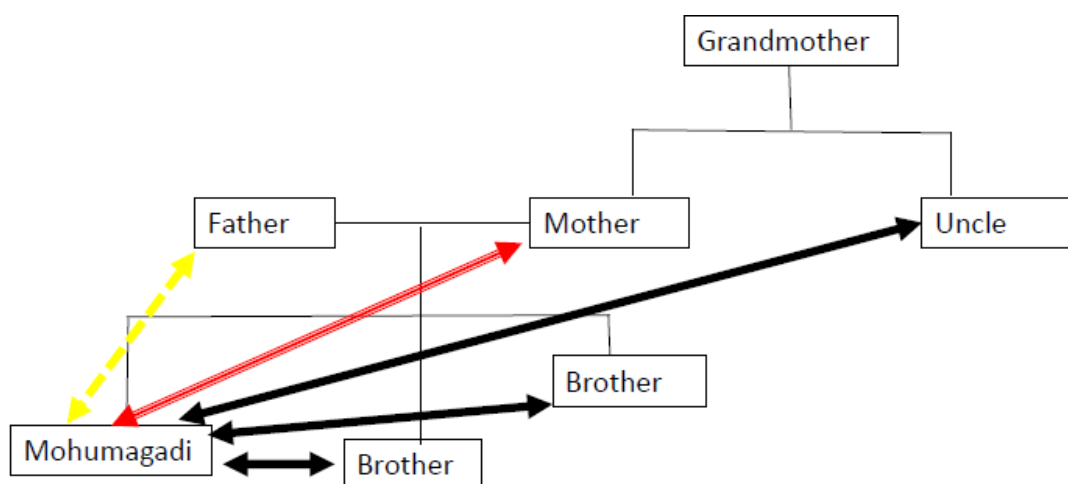
For Jane, 'family' definitely includes her aunt. This attests to the idea that indeed the nuclear familial assumption does not apply to all families. There is no distinction between

immediate family and extended family. She reports a friendship relationship with her mother and aunt which may be due to gender similarities.

'You know and I think even now because am doing my master's degree, my, the whole of my relatives have been supportive. Like, "Ooh, you know, she is making us proud" and everything. So when I have to go for my research, to find my people, I take them too, like, "Come, come and accompany me and find people". So, for me, I think it's not, it's not my degree, it's a family degree you know. We, I'm not just doing it for me but we are doing together to inspire them to go to school and I think I have done that, most of them, they do want to go to school. We help each other out, I help them apply ... they also help me with my school things' Jane.

She has a brother and a sister. At the time of interviewing her she was 22 years old, making her one of the two youngest participants. Jane has a neutral relationship with her brother and sister. However her relationship with her father is broken due to abuse and alcoholism.

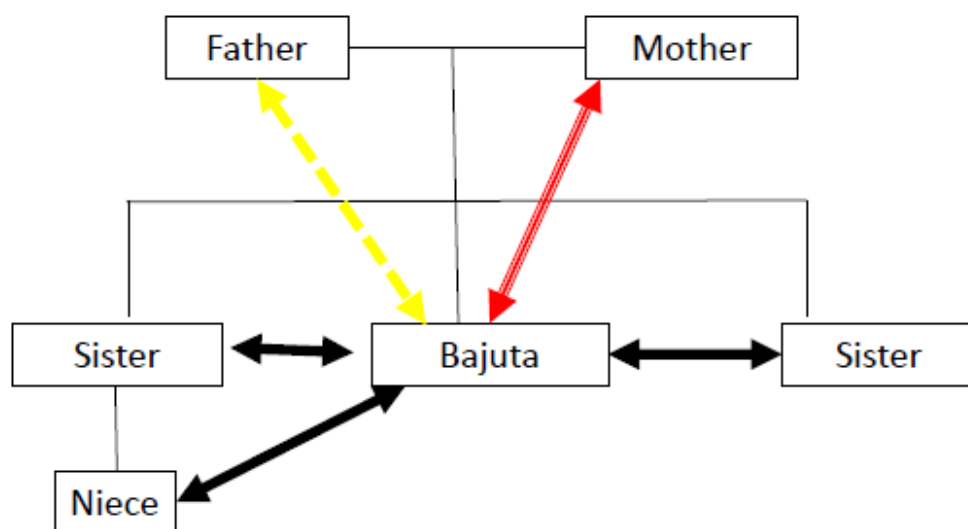
4. Figure 7 Mohumagadi's family Diagram



Mohumagadi is 22 year old, also the youngest of all participants. She comes from a family of five. She has two younger brothers, making her the first born. She is very close to her mother but her relationship with her father is non-existent. Her parents are separated and she stays with her mother and siblings. When talking about her family network she includes her grandmother and uncle as form part of her family, again nullifying the nuclear familial assumption. Her family size is relatively small but she has significant extended family networks, for example, her uncle who used to bring her books.

'Not really a bookshelf but well, sort of. I got books from somewhere. Like my uncle used to work in like a book distributor kind of thing. And he used to end up with lots of additional books or like rejects or something. They had mistakes or they couldn't actually go on, they couldn't distribute them anymore. I used to get a lot of those so I used to read those, ja' Mohumagadi.

5. Figure 8: Bajuta's family diagram



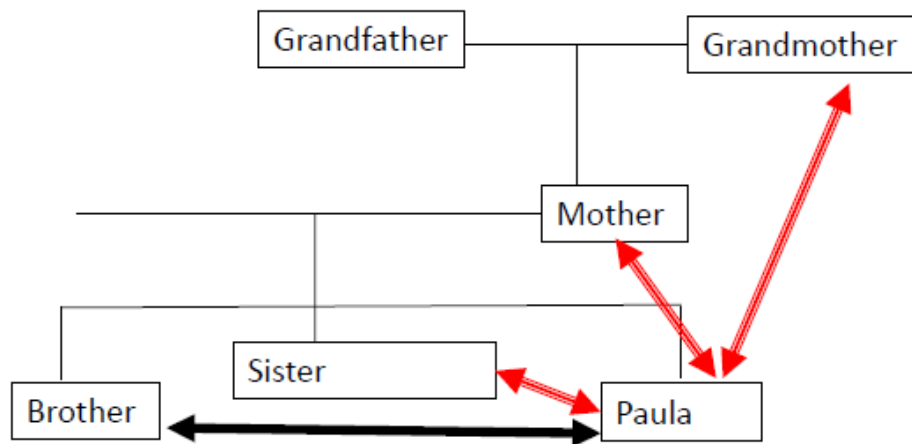
Bajuta is a 25 year old with two sisters and has a very close relationship with her mother. Her family is relatively small with 5 members. She is a middle child with two sisters and a niece who is part of her immediate family. According to Bowen (1988), Bajuta will likely present with identity crises. He says that middle children often feels left out and neglected. Bajuta seems to support this position as she explains that all her life she has been trying to get attention and be recognised.

‘Ahhh I think I was trying to prove a point. Am trying to... I don’t know I feel like my whole life I was just trying to say; see meeeeeee helloooo. I am youuuuuu, why don’t you pay attention because he was not there’ Bajuta.

Similar to the majority of participants and in line with the literature about dysfunctional relationships with fathers in black families, (Nduna and Sikweyiya, 2013) her relationship with her father is broken. Her father is present but is absent at the same time which creates this dysfunction. She is on the other hand very close to her mother, describing her as her ‘best friend.’

‘Oooh my Goshhhhhh I love her to death. We talk on the phone all the time about everything. Yah, she is one of my friends slash mum’ Bajuta.

6. Figure 9: Paula's family diagram

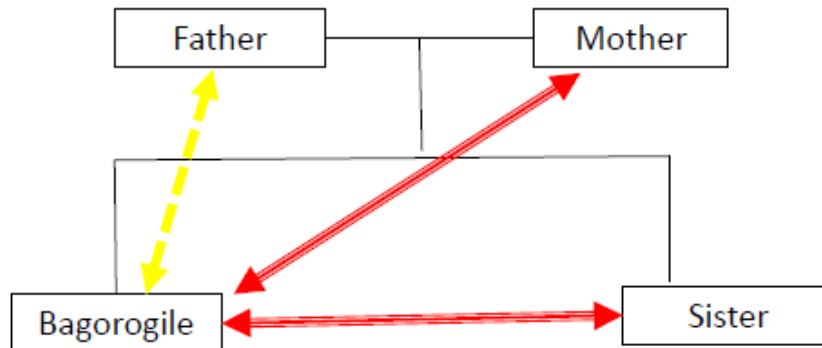


Paula was 31 years old at the time of interviewing making her the oldest of all participants. She comes from a family of five, she has one sister and a brother. She is lastborn in the family and at the time of her interviewing her mother and grandmother are deceased. But nonetheless they were alive in her upbringing and their absence in her current life was only disclosed at the end of her narrative. This is one of the significant effects of using narrative interviewing, because it allows participants to go back in time and form meanings about their lives in a storied form. She stayed with her grandmother when she was younger and then moved to stay with her mother when she was doing grade 8. She has never met her father, which Padi et al (2014) describe as 'father absence and unknown'. She has a neutral relationship with her brother which may partly be due to age difference and gender. However she reports a friendship relationship between her late grandmother and mother. She also has a close relationship with her older sister. She narrates a story about her family environment in her upbringing which discloses that she comes from an academically inclined family.

'Mhm not much hey ummm I was raised in a sort of you had to be independent right, but one thing that used to encourage me was my mum right. Like my mum... when I was in middle high school she went and she enrolled for a bachelor's degree in law in UNISA. I think... yah degree in law in UNISA so I think I started doing what she used to do like she used to wake up, you know at night around 3 and she would study right? So that really used to encourage me. I used to admire that and I also started doing that, you know, when I was in my grade 11 to 12... Yah so yah that actually seeing her study and stuff it made me actually take my... like school very seriously' Paula.

'Ahhh my brother went and studied law as well so seeing him also go to University also encouraged me. My sister went and did an IT whatever diploma course which also encouraged me to say, that you know what these people, you know... when you are living around people that are like studying and studying and they want to become better people. So you also want to follow in the same footsteps you know, you see what they do and you want to be like them and you want to even be better than them... so that to me I think that was an inspiration of seeing them. So I wanted to be, you know to be at that level and if I could I wanted to be better you know. So that I think that's something that encouraged me especially seeing my mum at that age... umm studying you know and yah it really encouraged me very much' Paula.

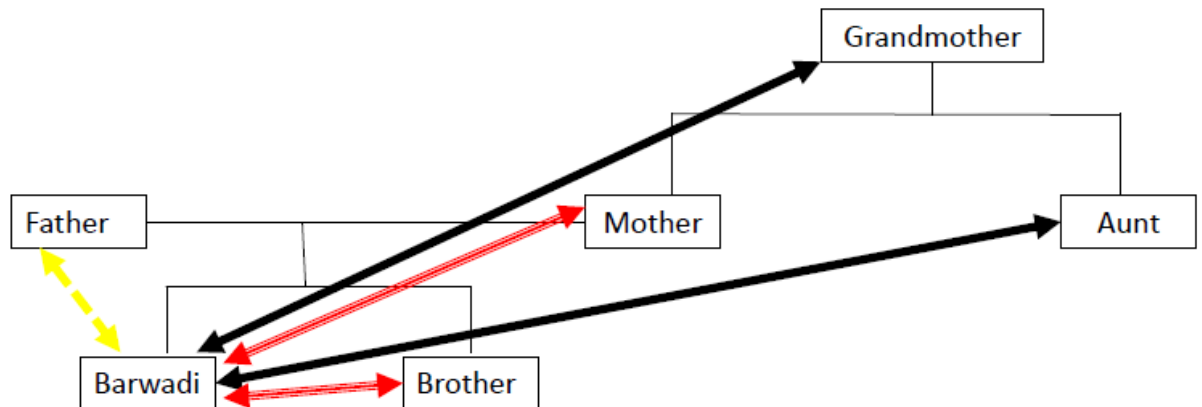
7. Figure 10: Bagorogile's family diagram,



Bagorogile is 25 years old and she comes from a small nuclear family comprised of her mother, father and sister. She is first born and has a close relationship with her mother and sister. Similar to the other women she has a distant relationship with father but not because of conflict but because he has always been away working and providing for the family so they never got to know each other well. Her father did not go to school but her mother has an honours degree. Different from all the other women's narratives, there is no mention of relatives and extended family in her narrative. She has a close relationship with her sister and refers to her mother as a friend like the other women.

'Mmmm I guess in my family am closest to my mother even though like we live with my dad but I think am closest to my mother and then dad is just dad. Like (laughs) he is a dad figure but yah I relate more to my mother and yah' Bagorogile.

8. Figure 11: Barwadi's family diagram

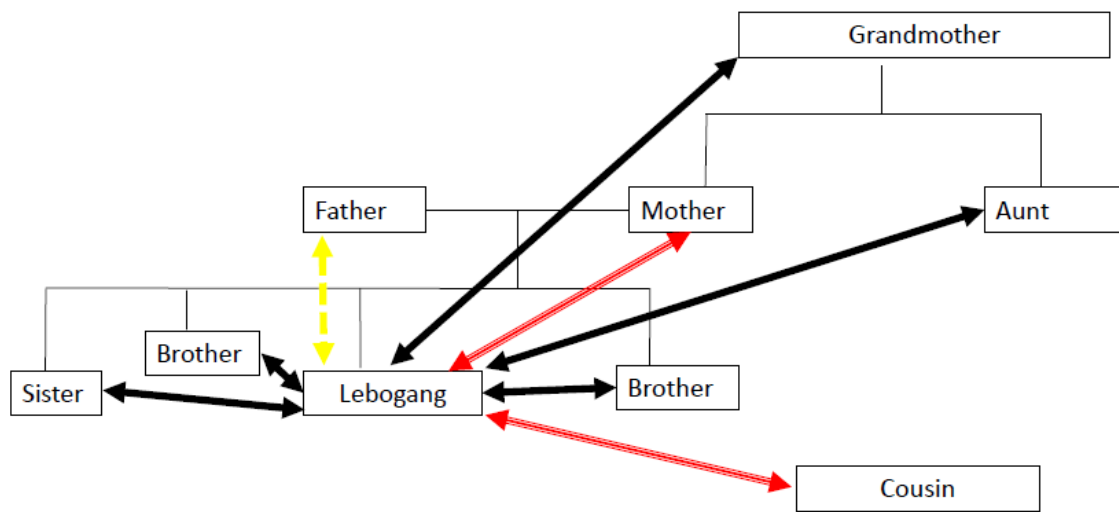


Barwadi is 26 years old and grew up in different households. She stayed with her aunt before relocating to stay with her paternal grandmother and later stayed with both her parents. She has a close relationship with her mother which is different to that with her father, as they have a distant relationship. She has a close relationship with her brother who is 11 years younger than her. She also explains a friendship relationship that exists between her and her mother. Her grandmother and aunt have both played a big role in her upbringing.

'So yah umm... I was surrounded by people who loved, who loved education, you know... my aunt, my father, my mother like you know. People who saw this bright child in me you know' Barwadi.

She is closely connected with her relatives or extended family which is echoed by most women in the study. She also reports a discordant relationship with her father over the years, she attributes this to lack of mutual understanding between her and her father. This affirms Padi et al, (2014) finding about fathers that are present and absent.

9. Figure 12: Lebogang's family diagram



Lebogang is 24 years old. She comes from a family comprised of her mother, father, 2 brothers, a sister, a cousin and grandmother. Her family is larger than all the other participants but is still relatively small. In her narrative she explains a close relationship with her siblings especially her older sister and cousin. She also explains her family dynamics and explains her father's absence in her schooling.

'They were... so that my dad would have to knock off very late at past 12 and by that time in primary you are sleeping. I don't think my dad ever helped me. There is no memory of my dad helping me with homework' Lebogang.

'At times ummm my, the only time which I spoke to my or I sort of talked to my dad about school work, I wasn't even in school. I wasn't even in school by that time, I was much younger and then I'd like write on a piece of paper and obviously in your world you are

this smart person who is making sense, and who is written things that I readable. That time there is no such a thing I mean it's just waves, waves, waves. Ah next line waves. And you like dad I remember very well I'll be with a black pen, and I'll be like dad look and then you know ah he would say; "you smart, you are smart" and then you'd feel really really smart but in terms of school umm my sister would help and my mother was also under pressure man, she was not too approachable' Lebogang.

She explains that she has a close relationship with her mother. Although she was not approachable when she was young, later, when she attended University, she relied on her for emotional support. In her case, when she was young, sibling relationships were very important and emotional support from her family. She has a distant relationship with her father and this is because her father worked 'grave yard' hours. She has a 'neutral' relationship with her grandmother, brothers, aunt, and sister but one relationship that stood out in her narrative was that with her cousin. She explains that her cousin inspired her to do postgraduate studies as she gave her support.

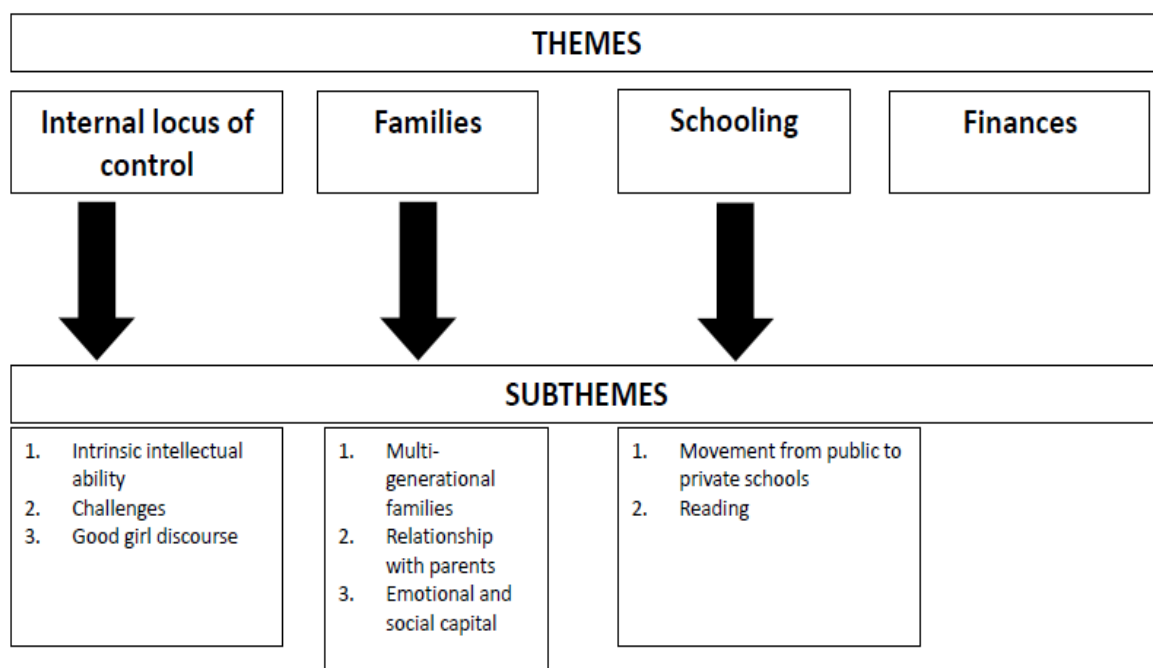
This chapter has presented a structural analysis of each woman's family utilizing a visual family diagram to represent the emotional relationships that exist between members as well as family membership, size and structure. This analysis revealed the relatively small family size across all participants, ranging from 1- 4 children. There was a strong presence of extended family members particularly grandmothers, in their narratives putting the relatively small number of children in the immediate family in a wider context. In terms of the emotional relationships, the women (with one exception) reported close relationships with their mothers and distant relationships with their fathers. The chapter thus offers an answer to the primary research question, describing the family dynamics and relationships in their childhood families. The next chapter presents themes across participant's narratives in order to

provide greater detailed response to the secondary research questions of family roles, relationships and to explore family values, particularly in relation to gender.

Chapter 5: Thematic Analysis

This chapter provides a thematic analysis of the experiences of female black postgraduate students primarily in terms of the nature and role of family dynamics in their academic development. The study identified 4 broad themes and nine subthemes as summarised in figure 13 below.

Figure 13: Broad themes and Subthemes



5.1 Internal locus of control

All the women interviewed referred to their own intrinsic ability that allowed them to succeed academically. Internal locus of control allowed these women to focus on their studies regardless of external challenges and they attribute this to their intrinsic intellectual ability. They explain negotiating their way and playing by the rules of the game in order to succeed. This meant that they had to know when to obey rules, which is revealed in the ‘good

girl discourse' theme, also when to go against the rules or be disobedient for example, when their parents wanted to choose which field of study they must enrol in. This alludes to a great deal of self-regulation and knowing when to assert their power, and when to exercise good girl behaviour and obey the rules. According to Rotter, (1966) people are most likely to attribute their success to internal permanent characteristics which in this case would be intrinsic intellectual ability. In their narratives they highlight an intrinsic ability that they explain as being almost 'natural'. This broad theme also encompasses some of the challenges they came across as black postgraduate women in this time in history, with an emphasis on their hard work and personality traits that enable them to overcome these challenges. Internal locus of control was exercised even though the family sometimes presented with contradicting beliefs and values.

5.1.1 Intrinsic intellectual intellect

The young women have not just succeeded in completing their degrees but they continued to do their postgraduate degrees despite challenges presented by their racialized and gendered positioning, and little appropriate cultural capital. Identifying some of the variables that have played a role in their academic success is very important. The young women talk about an inner drive and character that helped them succeed in their studies.

'Umm I don't really think much right now because although they did encourage me to apply and try to get into master's degree' they didn't really help me much with anything. I've always ahh been the kind of child that was self-sufficient so I've always been able to study on my own without much help. So they don't really worry about me, I guess they stopped worrying about me in matric (laughs), so from varsity ah from first year I've always just handled my academic life on my own. I don't ask for help much yah because what they studied, what my mum studied is completely different from what am studying so I can't really ask that much for help. Yah so I've

always been on my own studying and stuff and they trust me enough because I don't fail so(laughs) yah I've always just from varsity been on my own studying although they paid. They support me by paying fees and encouraging me to apply for the next degree but yah that's about it' Bagorogile.

All the women who were interviewed referred to their innate character as being effective in their success. There is almost that feeling of 'I was made for this' when talking about their academic success.

'I like the fact that I can learn new things so I have like a very eclectic personality'
Mamiki.

'Ummm personally like personality wise I think it's ah dedication it's not so nice but yah. That perseverance ummm and then my support structure which is my family but my friends, it's just that we've been talking about them but my friends as well they can be very supportive' Lebogang.

Dass- Brailsford (2005) asserts that successful students have “characteristics of being goal-oriented, having initiative and motivation and experiencing the self as a possessing a measure of agency” (p.580). The same assertion is made by Walkerdine et al, (2001) about women who possess goal oriented characteristics enabling them to face family and education challenges. When asked how they managed to succeed in their studies, many of the participants referred to themselves in terms that resonate with this view, and emphasised their own individual traits:

'Umm... high school was very difficult I was a very motivated person, extremely motivated and ah I wasn't always good in terms of friendship circles and perceptions people have about you because you get labelled. Because I feel like now it's really shaped me and it made me grow a thick skin which means that now when it really

counts, when my success and moving forward in my career when it counts it means that I don't have to deal with those things that I dealt with in high school. It means that I can just focus on the end goal and get to where I want to be' Maitebolo.

In their narratives, the participants describe themselves as being independent in their schooling from a younger age. They realise the importance of their parents and family throughout the journey, however they view themselves as the main contributors to and main agents of their academic development. However it is important to note that self-serving bias may be at play. This concept asserts that people attribute positive outcomes to internal causes while negative outcomes are attributed to external causes (Miller and Ross, 1975; Brown and Rogers, 1991). It is possible that these women are doing the same. These findings however support Dass Brailsford (2005) who argued that internal motivation is important for success. Some of the characteristics of successful black women founded by Dass Brailsford are similar to ones from this study. For example,

'...6 even from grade 4 actually I was very independent. I was a very independent worker and then obviously this was then heightened by the fact that I then transitioned into boarding school which requires for you to be very independent. So I didn't have... like my mum never set with me like she never checked my homework, she never checked if I had done my assignment or not....And I didn't need someone to double check me and I'd actually get annoyed if people were like "I want to check" because like of course am going to do my homework. That's what you're supposed to do. So even now like the influence now it's really the same thing. I've always been self-motivated like I do my work and I do what I need to do because it's for me and it's for my benefit and it's just because of the type of person that I am. So I've never been forced to sort of educate yourself; read. You know, you get the encouragement

and the push to do that but I was never forced or I never felt like I needed someone to tell me to do it' Maitebolo.

'I think the zeal you know, to want something you know and making sure that no matter what you will get it you know. Umm... yah I think that's what contributed mostly. The fact that I wanted to see and I interact with friends as well you know' Paula.

The participants viewed themselves as possessing agency when choosing their career path even if it contradicted their parents;

'No I guess I've always been ambitious but I think my ambition was more driven by having a father that didn't want me to study this thing because he said... ummm, he gave me negative emotions for doing it but because am stubborn I wanted to do it anyway. And not only because am stubborn but because it's something I love, I wanted to do it, so if someone says I can't do something I want to do it (laughs). So yah I think it was the negative emotions that forced me, not forced, propelled me to ah want to do it even more' Bagorogile.

The women also showed some sort of conviction to structure their lives the way they believe it should be. There is an element of autonomy in their stories and taking responsibility for their decisions and life in general. This contradicts the assumption that individuals need to have meaningful social networks to succeed (Field, 2011; Plagens, 2010). This also contradicts the women's later narrative about the importance of emotional and financial support.

'I don't know. I honestly I don't know, I honestly don't know how and people ask me this and they expect a fantastic story. I and I don't have one like I (.) I don't know I honestly. I think like when you really tell people like how did I get so like how did you

get so far when you not really not motivated per se, but you not like, you know like there is not like some brilliant story about how you made it out of the gutter da da da da and you are determined and hardworking or whatever. I think for me, I am very competitive. That's probably why I made it this far because I'd rather be in the middle than be the very last. Yah so whether, whether, like even with the programme I probably would have hated it by now and all like dropped out a long time ago but like whether or not I like something I'd rather be like semi good at it than suck at it. So then I'd work hard to sort of be in the middle or like ...So am very competitive like that and yah and but, I don't know why ahh I can't count the number of times I have thought of giving up hey (laughs). I do, when the going gets tough I feel like oooh guys (laughs) but I never do that I think I made it this far, so I think yah it demands that I keep going' Mamiki.

5.1.2 Challenges

In terms of challenges presented in their schooling, the women discuss problems with self-esteem which they attribute to lack of resources. This is similar to assertions made by Miller and Brown, (1971) about negative outcomes being attributed to external outcomes.

'Yah your lunchbox and you like eish me and my French and then you know people have like things like cheese and I mean those are the kind of memories that you feel like they actually damaged your self-esteem. You did not feel like; ah your parents should also do this, they should also do that but when you reflect you think that mmhm you shy-ed away from opening you scaftin (lunch box). Sometimes you claim that you are you are not hungry because you know that you have... you have your French everyday (bangs table)' Lebogang.

Lebogang narrates a story on her experiences at school when she was growing up. She talks about her father's absence and the sacrifices he had to make in order to provide for her and

the whole family. She continues to elaborate on the transition from earlier schooling and University life

'They were, so that my dad would have to knock off very late at past 12 and by that time in primary you are sleeping. I don't think my dad ever helped me. There is no memory of my dad helping me with homework. But I think you would... you would want to throw a hoo-ha about it but when I look back mina I feel like those are the circumstances, if he had to so that am here today at that time. You know our bond or ah... "Him" being able to nurture me was compromised because he had to save up a lot of mon [ey]. Now I see him a lot but he is at the same time able to provide for my education' Lebogang .

Lebogang also highlights the importance of having her University lectures show interest in her life and how the same was not the case when she was in primary and middle school. This shows that even though the women's intrinsic motivation have played a role in their academic success, there are other key stake holders and certain point in their lives who provided the necessary capital either social capital or emotional support. This is important to note because the University may therefore provide not only appropriate cultural capital but, critical social capital through recognition and relationships between students and more senior scholars. This is similar to Coleman, (1988) and Odendaal's (2008) assertion of the important role of "associational life" in supporting success.

'You see even that's why I got a culture shock when I got here (laughs) and lecturers ask me, show genuine interest in me because we never had that individual concern and are you okay, what you know if you didn't do your homework you line up for a smack before we find out what happened, why didn't you do your homework. So that loud music that you not used to I mean when I looked out my window at a flat at which I stayed in, now you see a lot of people past midnight, there you would see

cows. There is a difference you know there is a huge difference and that's where one easily loses their identity or actually also finds themselves. But mina (me) I would have liked to see when my parents come to parents meeting, they know my class, they know my teachers... ' Lebogang.

Deciding to continue to do master's degree' created a dilemma for most of the women because their parents expected them to start working and take care of the family. It is important to note that even though these women managed to succeed in their studies, they sometimes faced contradicting circumstances for examples parents wanting them to start working and not further their studies. According to literature, parents' involvement and interest in their children's studies is associated with academic success (Hill & Taylor, 2004; Debord, Griffin & Clark, 1977; Hout & Morgan, 1975 & Picou, 1973; Clark 1894). This makes this particular group of women unusual as they often had to persevere against the views of the same family they emotionally and financially depend on to focus on their studies. Although studies in the US (e.g. Sartain, 1989; Comer, 1988; Flaxman & Inger, 1991) found that children are more likely to succeed when their parents have a positive attitude towards their schooling these women were able to succeed despite their conflict with parents over their decisions.

'Because when I was in second year I decided that I wanted to be an academic. I wanted to become like a diplomat when I was like in first year I was like okay actually I wanted to be an academic. And it was a difficult thing I don't know like I wanted to do it I wanted to study further and everything but I was like oh my Gosh, will my mother even understand. What I want to do, you know, she worked so hard to take me to school and now I want to tell her I want to go to school for like a gazillion more years' Mohumagadi.

'Like 2 years but throughout when I was young I had more of my mother's support than my father's support. Ummm... interesting story because my father is in like the health sciences, he was not happy with me not wanting to pursue the sciences, I wanted to pursue the humanities so he thought of...at some point he stopped supporting me financially and all of that because of that reason' Mohumagadi.

Jane's family was initially not pleased with her furthering her studies but she chose to do it anyway and with time they started to accept it. She explains that because her mother has supported her through school, she is expected to start working and support her mother and family. This is found in many poor families where children go to school primarily to take care of their family. Black tax notion is a phenomenon where black people work to support and take care of their families and extended family which becomes a financial burden maintaining the gap between the rich and the poor (Mophosho, 2013).

'It was quite challenging for them to accept that am going to do this and then I think when time goes they started to see I loved it and they started to support it and then since then mother has been just supportive. Like no, but "when are you going to work?" Especially when I applied to honours am like; no time will come. You know am going to apply for master's degree' she is like aaah, (laughs) and I told her you know what am a child you are a parent please support me. You know there will be a time when I'll be able to support you and the time is coming. Right now I know it's hard, you know it's very hard and all the money has to come to me for transport and everything' Jane.

Socioeconomic inequality remains racialized in South Africa and is particularly prevalent in the provision of schooling and other social services (Fram et al, 2007; Howie & Scherman, 2008; Frempong et al, 2011). Lebogang discusses some of the challenges she

faced when she was attending a black disadvantaged school. She takes us through the environment of the school which confirms the assertion that academic success in black communities requires resilience to survive in conditions that are far from enabling (Dass-Brailsford, 2012).

'It's a black the school I went to is called Badisago, it's within Soshanguve. In a black dominated, not actually dominated its black it's a black school, black teachers, black everything, it's just black. And, ummm we are situated in place where obviously crimes... incidences of crime are quite high. And also amongst my peers there are those who had many symptoms of conduct disorder and whatever ODD. And I then I think I managed with my low self-esteem with students who would really bully me. Ah at that time I managed because at that time you feel like that's the life in that kind of the environment. You feel like it is okay, you feel deserving of that life. There is nothing different at your disposal so being bullied sometimes was like, why, why bother err crying about this this is the life' Lebogang.

Lebogang's talk of bullying is quite clearly linked to racialisation and a sense that racism undermines her self-worth and the ability to assert herself, and hence, she felt 'deserving' of being bullied. In her narrative there is almost a sense of feeling helpless. This gives us an idea of how children in the townships and poor backgrounds may eventually be naturalised into subservient positions through the effects of the harsh environment they find themselves in. The data show that being a successful black woman entails overcoming multiple challenges hindering success, such as issues of class, culture, gender inequality/violence and race (Albertyn, 1994).

5.1.3 Good girl discourse

The ‘good girl’ discourse was prevalent amongst the women which echoes Aapola et al. (2005) who assert that being friendly and obeying parents is considered ‘good girl’ behaviour. This good girl behaviour may have enabled them to succeed because it meant that they would carry out tasks assigned to them by teachers.

‘They’d want to hit all of us, I never even said a word, I was that quite girl who’d you know get a smack and I’d be happy and still respect my teachers’ Lebogang.

‘So I looked like the one that you know, I was that girl so they liked me’ Bajuta.

‘And you can’t go back to your parents because you were not raised to be that child that does that, you just appreciate what you have...’ Lebogang.

Bajuta talks about being liked by her teachers because she looked and behaved like a ‘nice girl’ providing her with some sort of social capital needed to succeed at the time. The women echo a lot of positivity and looking at things in a positive light from a young age. Lebogang talks about being respectful to her teachers and appreciating what she ‘had’. It seems being liked by teachers and being respectful to teachers carried a lot of capital needed for them to succeed as children. Feminist have however argued against the ‘good girl’ discourse and behaviour works to prevent women from succeeding (Baker, 2010). While this may be true, these women reveal a negotiation and balance between knowing when to assert their power in situations and knowing when to be obedient for their own benefit.

5.2 Family

Despite the emphasis on individual characteristics and agentic action described above, all the women spoke of family as an important space for support. It is evident that these families possessed an unusual social capital in the form of emotional support needed to help these

women succeed academically. It is evident that all of these families contribute critical social capital in the forms of financial and emotional support needed to help these women succeed academically.

'Mhm hmm what kind of support do they give you?' Interviewer.

'Well they I mean I guess emotional support, financial support and the spiritual so yah' Bajuta.

Even though most of the women's parents were not themselves highly educated and could not therefore contribute much by way of relevant cultural capital for success, there were other support structures in place that contributed to their success. Lebogang and Bajuta reflect on the importance of this support despite their families having little understanding of University and little sense of what it is they are studying or why.

'So I'd say those are the, the key stake holders in my life for my career academic development. I couldn't have done it without my family, I think without others I can sort of manage, but I owe, maybe it's because am too family oriented but I feel like if it wasn't for them. It wouldn't have happened as much as they didn't know who Freud was' Lebogang.

The women were invited to define family according to their own understanding and who they say is family (Wright & Leahey, 2005). It was very clear that for most participants grandparents were included in this definition, confirming Bray & Brandt's (2007) finding that the extended family plays a significant role in South African children's lives. For example;

'And yah but generally my family is supportive, most of my family members are... like my grandmother and all of them. Even though they have never been educated and they know nothing of what am doing. Yah they are generally supportive although now

they like okay, “when are you going to start working?” But they are like oh no that’s great’ Bajuta.

‘You know what am saying, my parents were just cheering. And they didn’t know, I think my dad clarified what psychology is recently. I think early this year he was like ahhhh what do you do again? And like mum it was hard am going to sleep and she’ll be like no baby, its fine and it’s going to be okay and I feel like although my parents don’t know the pressure of academics it helped me because I never felt I couldn’t use the pressure from them as well as the academics combined’ Lebogang.

5.2.1 Relationships with parents

Fathers were primarily absent in the narratives of these young women, confirming the literature about fatherhood in South Africa (Padi et al 2014; Nduna, et al 2015; Mokrova et al, 2012). Even when participants live with their fathers, eight out of 9 report distant (or even negative relationships with their fathers. In stark contrast, all the women talked about their mother as their ‘best friend’ or having this friendship with their mothers. Similar to a study conducted by Burn (2006, p.141), the participants “construct their mother- daughter relationship as friendship”. These women came from different families but there was an agreement in terms of mother-daughter relationship. Maitebolo explains taking an adult role which indicates a level of equality in their relationship.

‘But with them divorcing she became... the dynamics changed, single parent household, the dynamic changes. So you move from being, so my mum moved from being a disciplinarian to a far more liberal in her upbringing of me. But then also because I was in boarding school, it was different. So because of the single parent household you move from being a daughter to being a confidant to being ummm almost like you become partners with your single parent. Because like it teaches you

to grow up very quickly and to take responsibility because now you realise that there should be another parent to sharing the load but there isn't another parent. So that means that there should be another adult to help so even if you are a child, you have to become the adult. So you grow into that role, you step into the shoes of being an adult so I think am far more than a daughter' Maitebolo.

It is possible that the absence of fathers creates a new dynamic in families, where children have to take on adult roles as a way of compensating for the missing adult. Gender may also play a role in these relationships between daughters and mothers, both in the sense of providing same-sex role models (Starrels, 1994; Siegal, 1987) and by re-inscribing and performing gendered notions of what makes for a good relationship: sharing of intimacies and attending to emotional wellbeing of one another (Rose, 1999). As Bajuta passionately exclaims about her mother:

'Oooh my Goshhhhhh, I love her to death. We talk on the phone all the time about everything. Yah she is one of my friends slash mum' Bajuta.

Conversely, her father seems almost invisible in her story:

'My father...haaa is he even breathing? (Laughs) It's not the same it's not the same...I don't know am very confused about him, am trying to figure him out because there was a time okay when I was growing up there was a time when I didn't like him and also at the same time it was during the time when he was also not there' Bajuta.

It was almost impossible for these women to talk about their relationships with their mothers without contrasting this with their (none) relationships with their fathers. Even though these women have succeeded independent from their fathers, their narratives echo the absence of fatherhood. In other words, their absence is very present (Reynolds, 2009; Frosh,

Phoenix& Pattman, 2002). Lebogang highlights the friendship relationship that exists between her and her mother:

'My, my mother... she is the one who would get phone calls, am like mama I wrote a test sometimes without getting the results because sometimes am an anxious person, apparently... and she would talk me through, she will, I mean every time I wrote a test even before whether it was going to be good or bad, every time I wrote a test I spoke to my mother, she is the one that I called. I never really called my brothers or my siblings, my grandmother is the one who will be like no, it means you did not study you know (laughs) so I didn't even bother' Lebogang.

Despite Lebogang's earlier comment (see Chapter Four, page 52) about her mother being 'unapproachable' when she was younger, she explains that she depended on her for emotional support. Unlike her mother, her grandmother is depicted as the strict one and handles her anxiety differently. It is to be noted that multi-generational dynamics may play a role in this. It is possible that conceptualising the mother-daughter relationship as friendship is a new dynamic that has been brought about by changes in family systems, perhaps even specifically the absence of fathers or, from the mother's point of view, a partner with whom to share emotional closeness (Bowen, 1974) emerging. Barwadi similarly characterises her relationships with her mother in this way:

'That one... like my mother, my mother is a very open person. She is very open, she is very open minded like we can talk about whatever. So I know with her I can say whatever and yah we have a very good relationship, we very close' Barwadi.

This echoes Rose's (1999) assumption that the daughter-mother relationship is indicative of the level of "equality and compliance" between the two parties. Barwadi talks about some level of understanding between her and her mother and being able to openly

discuss anything with her. Bagorogile contrasts this closeness with her mother in a description of her father that is simply flat, present, but no more:

'Mmmm I guess in my family am closest to my mother even though like we live with my dad but I think am closest to my mother, and then dad is just dad, like ha-ha he is a dad figure but yah I relate more to my mother and yah' Bagorogile.

“Dad is just dad” suggests that there is no communication and openness as depicted in her relationship with her mother. Like most families in South Africa, Maitebolo’s mother is a single parent which is common amongst black families (Padi et al, 2014). She reports a good relationship with her mother and grandmother as they have provided both emotional and financial support which enabled her to focus on her studies.

'Ummm... well financially my mother is been paying my school fees from the get go and she is a single parent and I think she's done a fantastic job. You know umm school fees are really not cheap. So this entire time she has been fully supporting me and I might add that she is wanted to do that umm, every time I say maybe I should get funding and things like that she will be like no no no, and I think it's because she had a bad experience where in her master's degree' year she couldn't, her parents couldn't afford to pay for her and so she had to take a student loan and for a very long time even well into her forties, she was still paying for this student loan so I think she was really trying to avoid that kind of pressure for me and she was always like no don't worry about it, I'll make a plan umm just study make sure that you get your degree' Maitebolo.

She mentions her mother as a great source of support. Different from the common assumption that fathers are breadwinners, Mamiki comes from a family where her mother is the sole provider. Mamiki’s narrative also emphasises the breadwinner role for her mother:

'Right now she is the single breadwinner, she is the rock, before her it was my grandmother who was strict but her strictness sort of messaged to a madness I guess because it instilled in you like self-discipline and principles and yah' Mamiki.

Like the other women she reports a close relationship with her mother and says she gets the most support from her, both financially and emotionally. However, unlike the other participants, Mamiki reports a positive relationship with her father.

'Me and my dad are, we have this like, we didn't, it's not a complicated relationship, but he, he would teach me stuff like cars and how to fix an engine, not the stuff that I really needed but different stuff that I was like there for...Like yah so, that was my dad so he taught me music, he taught me good music, he taught me books because he was also like an avid reader' Mamiki.

Jane explains that even though her mother didn't have enough to give her, she needed support from her which propelled her to succeed in her studies.

'Even the little that she has and giving it to you, it's amazing, I don't need anything else, I just need, I needed that support, people to be there' Jane.

It is evident in all the narratives that even when mothers were providing emotional support played a big role in terms of encouraging the women as well as helping them to focus on their studies. While the women report good relationship with their mothers, the opposite was revealed when discussing fathers and their role in their lives. While mothers were described as friends, fathers were described as either feared or absent. This confirms findings by (Morrell, 2006) of dysfunctional father relationships and fatherhood absence in black families.

'So I was very afraid of my father and though you'd always see me with him I don't think I was that close to him you know, ok I knew what my father wanted and that's what I did, I knew what he wanted me to do I knew that he didn't want me to come after 5, I knew that I had to study. I knew that I was not supposed to be with boys in the street so all those things... I didn't do what I knew that he doesn't want' Barwadi.

Barwadi's relationship with her father is characterized by rules and dos and don'ts. Unlike her relationship with her mother where there is equality and negotiation between the two parties, there is none between her and her father. There is an expectation of accountability from her father which may have played a role in her success and internal locus of control.

Jane's relationship with her father is very conflicted. She was close to her father when she was young but they grew apart. The main reason for this conflicted relationship is his father's drinking that she identifies as causing conflicts and straining the father-daughter relationship.

'He drinks a lot, I can't stand him; I think he brings out the worst in me (laughs). And he is my father and I love him but I love him at a distance' Jane.

She has a distant relationship with her father and it's mainly because of his absence and alcohol abuse. Despite this challenge, Jane states that she loves her father.

Bajuta's father has another family and there is confusion on who he really belongs to as a father and, according to her, he does not do his job as a father and provider:

'(Laughs) I have half-sisters and all these things so I think my mum sometimes would mention these things that, cause he didn't... like, I don't remember him buying me a single thing, you see. He was never there so that's why my mum had to work this hard, he didn't buy us anything at all and he takes care of his other family so we

thought he liked them more than us. So I think in my mind I was trying to be like, you know, me too, here I am. So I think up to this day ha-ha so I think am still trying to like, look at me, I can do it too, am like you' Bajuta.

However, despite her distance from her father and her sense that he has deserted her and her mother, she acknowledges some contribution from her father in relation to her schoolwork and academic success. She grew up reading a lot and she shared the same interest with her father.

'We had encyclopaedias, ahhh what was this other book, I forgot what it's called Gosh, as you like this.... Something, something Mary gold. He liked a lot of Shakespeare but then he also at the same time he liked reading criminal law for some reason I don't know that is so weird in my mind. But I remember spending a lot of time on the encyclopaedias because it had a lot of cool pictures' Bajuta.

Grandparents, aunts, uncles and parents in these women's narratives are regarded as family which means that they were actively involved in the upbringing offering different kinds of support systems needed to succeed academically. So there are different generations involved in the upbringing of these women hence the subtheme multigenerational and extended families.

5.2.2 Multigenerational and extended families

Most studies fail to consider multiple family forms, e.g. extended families and other networks that may play a very significant role in South African children's lives (Bray and Brandt, 2007). The idea of "social capital" elucidates that social networks of relationships between people may create a useful platform, increasing their chances of being successful (Bourdieu, 1994; Coleman, 1988; Field, 2011). It was clear throughout the study that the extended family and elders were involved in the upbringing of these women providing them

with the requisite social capital. While school may not effectively provide appropriate learning and teaching, and families and communities may not have access to the usually appropriate social networks that increase access to opportunities, the extended family may nonetheless provide particular forms of social capital (Bourdieu, 1994) such as emotional support and motivational encouragement.

'After X school, so then I was just very independent and then my family saw me on weekends and all that, so my sister, and... and although my grandmother is in Rustenburg and I hardly saw her. I think they were very supportive or they supported my parents in terms of the logistics. Yah so not too involved in academics per se. Like do your honors or why can't you do your honors, (.) with your assignments and stuff like that but she probably umm tried to make the resources that I needed available and my grandmother as well' Lebogang.

'Aaah you know grandparents, I think my grandparents don't really know what am doing, like they know am studying and they know am doing my master's degree but they are not quite sure what. Just because my mum is a clinical psychologist and am not going to that field at all. So I want to do lecturing so but they don't really know what this is called, the details of my degree or my course just because like they don't understand how it differs from the path my mum took. So in terms of that they just called and be like ooh that's so good, I tell them my mark, how am doing and they are very happy and I think that is linked with a lot of this discourse around you know if you study get a good job so I sometimes think that they are just happy that am not dropping out' Maitebolo.

Grandmothers, cousins and aunts are mentioned as in the narratives as either helping with emotional support or financial support. So any support that they could not find in their immediate family was readily available from any member of the family.

'I think my grandmother umm sort of gave me emotional support you know. Like when things were not going well and she would really offer, yah I think emotional, financial support as well, so ja my granny really ja contributed as well, you know, ja' Paula.

'And they didn't know, I think my dad clarified what psychology is recently. I think early this year he was like ahhhh what do you do again? (Laughs) You know' Lebogang.

Mamiki grew up in two separate homes and got close to both her grandmother and parents.

'I actually grew up in two different households, so like, I, I stayed, because, because my parents lived in town and but my grandmother lived in location and because it was a township school. And they had to be closer to it, so like between ummm from Monday to Friday I lived with my grandmother and then Friday afternoon until Sunday then I was... umm I was with my mom and dad in town' Mamiki.

Mamiki grew up surrounded by what she calls 'strong women' however, there is a clear difference between her grandmother's parenting style and her parents' style, with grandmother more strict and her parents more 'liberal'. She feels that her parents' approach has equipped her with an 'open-minded' attitude.

'Am very open mind, am very like (.)Am constantly constructing and reconstructing myself, I don't, I think that has a lot to do with that upbringing because you know. They, my parents say you become whoever you say you are so like you... for me right now I don't believe in having a set sort of like knowing what's coming next. I hate the

fact having my life like planned out for me, I hate the fact that ah I hate planning ahead because I want to be cognizant about you know like the life, life can give you type thing. So I think that has a lot to do with their liberal upbringing. You become more open minded to these things, you become more accepting of people, you accept people for who they say they are and you treat them with respect' Mamiki.

The narratives of these women confirm Selohilwe's (2010) finding that a multi-generational family is still a common family structure in South Africa. It is evident that elders (particularly grandmothers) played a major role in the upbringing and emotional support of the women.

5.2.3 Emotional and social capital

Parents are labelled as 'supporters', and according to women, the support was not necessarily academic but it was as equally important. The extra support includes financial or emotional support. They seem to attribute their parents' absence in their schooling to poverty and they do not hold them responsible, rather they believe their parents expectations of them regarding schooling was enough to drive them to work harder. There seems to be an invisible rule from parents that children had to work hard at school and fulfil their responsibilities as students and they were accountable for their studies.

By contrast with studies conducted elsewhere in the world e.g. (Adams & Baronberg, 2014; Georgiou, 1995), this study found that most of the women had parents who were not fully involved in their schooling but rather provided other sorts of support besides academic support.

'So I'd say those are the, the key stake holders in my life, for my career, academic development. I couldn't have done it without my family, I think without others I can

sort of manage, but I owe, maybe it's because am too family oriented but I feel like if it wasn't for them, it wouldn't have happened, as much as they didn't know who Freud is' Lebogang.

Throughout the narratives given by these women, they mention parental support as the main contributor to their academic development. But it is important to explore what support means to them and what kind of support was relevant to their academic development.

'And yah but generally my family is supportive, most of my family members are, like my grandmother and all of them. Even though they have never been educated and they know nothing of what am doing' Mohumagadi.

This study revealed that emotional support is very important when transitioning into University and overall success at University. This is similar to studies finding by (Heymann & Carolissen, 2012; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Spiegler & Bednarek, 2013, Pagliarulo, 2004). Lebogang says that even though her parents and family didn't know who 'Freud' was, their support encouraged her to persist on her academic journey,

'My my mother she is the one who would get phone calls, am like mama I wrote a test, sometimes without getting the results because sometimes am an anxious person apparently... psychologist... they diagnose you they think they know you just diagnose you. So I mean if they are right, so I had my anxiety issues and you know if I wrote a test I'd call my mother and she would talk me through, she will I mean every time I wrote a test even before whether it was going to be good or bad every time I wrote a test I spoke to my mother. I needed to have her talk to me and it wasn't something which eish I need my mother to pass, It was just spontaneous, especially at the University of Pretoria you know it was, she knew that I was studying in preparing for a test and then after I spend like an hour before I write away from book I'd talk to her over the phone and she would tell me that I should write well and I should relax what what and then after when I felt

like it did not go well I call her again. And like; mum it was hard, am going to sleep and she'll be like "no baby, its fine and it's going to be okay" and I feel like although my parents don't know the pressure of academics it helped me because I never felt, I couldn't use the pressure from them as well as the academics combined' Lebogang.

5.3 Schooling

Schooling in South Africa is a racialized and gendered phenomenon as there are not a lot of black women continuing to do their postgraduate studies; hence this study is interested in the small elite group that has managed to do their postgraduate studies. Stories narrated by the women are filled with a lot of movement from either a public school to a private school or what is deemed a 'good public school due to a good reputation in academics, e.g.:

'It was a rural school so yah, public, very very rural, but yah I think it was one of those primary where people considered a good primary school especially in our area because I remember when people came from a different primary school in township, if you were doing grade 5 they would take you to grade 3' Jane.

'Yah it was a semi like private school meaning partially private and umm government sponsored as well so it wasn't as expensive as your other private schools, It was a good school, it was okay, not bad. Yah one of the good schools in the hood, and yah that's all I remember and I tried to make friends and stuff so that was yah' Paula.

These students have mainly attended relatively good schools, indicating that their families are probably part of the 'emerging black middle class' (Letseka et al, 2009), which disqualifies them from government financial aid. However, they clearly still struggle financially and families have often made enormous sacrifices to ensure their daughters' access to university. Letseka et al, (2009) writes about the emerging 'missing middle' cohort

of students who are denied funding because they are ‘too rich’ but still cannot afford University fees and struggle with associated costs of studying.

The stories of these women highlights absence of reading and engaging in academic activities that has perhaps have been found to enhance learning for children. Below the two subthemes are discussed: movement from public school to private schools and reading.

5.3.1 Movement from public school to private schools or ‘good public schools’

Post 1994, for families that could afford to move their children, there has been a shift first from township schools to former Model C schools in the suburbs, and then further, from public to private schools. Almost all the participants in this study had moved from public township schools to private schools or to the so called ‘good public schools’ at some point in their schooling. This may suggest that students who are getting access to universities (and particularly to postgraduate study) are from middle class backgrounds and attended good public schools or private schools. The education department says it has seen an increase in numbers of black students going to University and also going on to do their postgraduate studies (CHE, 2010). But the findings are presenting a new dynamic. The increase may be due to particular groups of parents taking their children to better schools but not due to a general improvement in schooling for all.

Maitebolo’s narrative reveals that black parents may now be in a financial state that allows them to choose the kind of schools they want to send their children to.

‘And why did your parents take you to that school?’ Interviewer.

‘Well we were already living in X, before my parents got divorced and we moved to Pretoria, we were already staying in this town X and in X that was the only private school, there were many other schools but it’s the best school and it’s a private school’ Maitebolo.

So the upward mobility of a small number of black people in South Africa discussed by Selod & Zenou, (2002) is evident in these women's narratives. Mamiki expresses cultural shock and the transition that transpired when she got transferred from a township school to a private school. It is evident that black public schools still develop little appropriate transferable cultural capital as they lack resources that are necessary for academic development.

'It's a different standard of teaching so you come from a township school where its barely any education going on in the first place and then you are moved at like a grade 11 to a certain.. to a school that is, quite ah, like emphasis is put on getting in a good high schools and learning yah. So it's quite hard because when I went to Y, I was still doing like 1+1 more like a very basic. Like yah, yah, I have to do like a very basic fundamental like yah (laughs) and then got to Y and there was like x's and y's that I've never seen so and then, it was quite a struggle, I barely made it out of that high school, Mamiki.

'So yah, and then my high school was, was Catholic, but it was, it was Catholic that was government-ishhh but it was also sort of a high reputation government school that was in the township: So we were almost Model c' Mamiki.

'And she, she was also not enjoying school because she was at a school that was disadvantaged, mine was okay I believe, hers was disadvantaged, they it's a very sad, very sad or depressing circumstances that she taught in or worked in. so those pressures she brought home and just us also and trying to juggle that so I found her un approachable' Lebogang.

'I was actually in boarding school from grade four, so it was primary school and high school, ummm my high school I went to a private school in a very small town which

was cool because I think it was a very, it is a very different experience from children in Joburg and big cities' Maitebolo.

'Okay I went to primary school in X school; it's an area in the East Rand, ummm I went to predominantly English school, so what they called a... model C schools, it was an English school. I went there, it was a public school. I went there for 7 years obviously from grade 1 to grade 7. Then in high school I went to a private school; St Catherine's, it's a private school. I went there for 2 years. And then in grade 10 I went to another public school. Ahhh model c school as well. So all my school, schooling has been in English' Bagorogile.

This may mean that even though there is an increase in the number of black students at Universities and doing post graduate studies, this may represent a relatively small elite rather than more thorough transformation and increasing equality of educational opportunities: Students from township schools may perhaps continue to fall through the cracks, either not gaining admission to University in the first place or dropping out because of either finances or inability to adjust. The participants in this study experienced this 'adjustment' far earlier in their schooling, preparing them for a smoother transition to University studies. A critical aspect of this process is the shift to the use of English as a medium of instruction and the primary means of communication at school.

'And the difference was that with this school all the learners, they were taught how to read and write in English from grade 1. You see, so they were way ahead of me and I was (0.2) way behind them (laughs) you know. So it was a drastic change for me, it was just nerve wrecking because I came from a school where I was a top achiever and now am here, am below everyone else' Barwadi.

Barwadi explains her transition from a public school to a private school. It is evident that English carries a lot of capital needed to successfully develop academically. So this came as a challenge for Barwadi because she was taught in her mother tongue but was later required to learn English at her new school.

'And yah, it was a small; it was a very small farm school, so there were like 5 people in the class. I think there was like three white people and 2 black people so yah I don't remember much but I was very comfortable, Yah It was a private school, Yah it was a new private school on the farm so yah' Mohumagadi.

Mohumagadi talks about schooling in a multi-racial school which shows that more and more black students are able to access historically white institutions. Her class was small which may have played a role in her academic development, allowing her to get the necessary attention from teachers in class. Students-teacher ratio has been found to be one of the predictors of pass rates in school. The smaller the class the higher the pass rate (Bhorat & Oosthuizen, 2009.) Mohumagadi is proof that the South Africa education system may be closing the racial gap allowing children of different races to get equal education through attending the same schools; however, she still represents a very small minority.

5.3.2 Reading

Five of the participants grew up in an active reading environment, where their parents made books available for them and promoted reading at home. Below are some of the quotes from participants when asked about reading.

'and having my mum engage me and ask me questions because my mum has always been one of those people, she always read to me and then she would encourage me to read back and stuff, so I also remember she signed me up for a debate team and I

remember I won, so yah, yah mostly, because like she would read to me, I had to read back, or like she would ask me questions so she always making sure that I am ,am at a level which I should be or that she thinks that I should be. umm she helped me with homework although she wasn't good at math's and other stuff but like I could always go and ask her if I couldn't, if she couldn't help me I'd ask friends who were good in a specific subject like for example am horrible with math's and then I would also go to extra lessons so I'd go for extra lessons for math's, am horrible I don't know how I made it through (laughs)' Bagorogile.

'We had encyclopaedias, ahhh what was this other book, I forgot what it's called Gosh, as you like this.... Something, something Mary gold. He liked a lot of Shakespeare but then he also at the same time he liked reading criminal law for some reason I don't know that is so weird in my mind. But I remember spending a lot of time on the encyclopaedias because it had a lot of cool pictures' Bajuta.

It is evident that these particular parents attended college or had some form of formal training which provided appropriate social capital in terms of engaging and exposing children to a reading environment. Sometimes this role was fulfilled by a member of the extended family. Mohumagadi describes how her uncle used to bring her book rejects from his workplace. It seems that even though her uncle did not directly teach her how to read, he was able to provide her access to reading material

'And he used to end up with lots of additional books or like rejects or something, they had mistakes or they couldn't actually go on, they couldn't distribute them anymore. I used to get a lot of those so I used to read those yah' Mohumagadi.

However, Mohumagadi also reports taking the initiative to read, responding to her uncle's encouragement, which goes back to internal locus of control reported earlier. Reading for

pleasure has been found to enhance comprehension and necessary skills for academic success (Greney & Hegarty, 1987; Faires, Nicols & Rickelman, 2000; Dick, 2001). Mamiki explains that she enjoyed reading and this may explain why she managed to succeed academically.

'So that (.)I started reading those when I was like 11, and then yah, that was like my daily entertainment and then from there I read everybody else' Mamiki.

Maitebolo reports both her mother and grandmother being actively involved in her reading. Both her parents read a lot which created a positive environment (Dick, 2001) for reading therefore enhancing her cultural literacy and academic development (Bray and Brandt, 2007)

'Yah I did have books, my dad reads a lot, my mum reads so I read as well as a child, you know like childhood books. I had a very, very, thick book with like all, okay not all but with most of the childhood tales and () and unfortunately my parents failed to read me a bedtime story every night but I still had it and I read it. Yah even my grandmother was actually like very involved now that I think about it. Just like in my upbringing as well I mean I used to read when I was there, when I visit so there was definitely like an encouragement. I don't necessarily remember a verbal and, and explicit encouragement to read and learn but there was always, I knew that; that's the focus, that education is important. It was never side-lined for something else'
Maitebolo.

Bajuta similarly explains that they had a study room and reading was a norm at her home, also she witnesses her father reading which created and reading environment at home and, according to Anderson, (2000), this provides a positive stimulus for children's reading.

'I think from young I've always had 20 books at a time. Whether they were for writing or reading in because some books you can write in, umm yah I always, always had like maybe 20 books at a time going forward and then like I said, there would be

encyclopaedias so and in primary school I'd always go to them to look for meanings of stuff or what stuff is so yah. Yah our study room had like a book shelf so that cabinet was always just busy and packed and there will always be newspapers on the side. Because my dad reads a lot of newspaper so sometimes you just look at the newspapers so there is a lot of reading going on at my house' Bajuta.

Even though reading is an essential tool for learning to take place, this study found that, in contrast to Maitebolo and Bajuta's experiences, most participants did not report a prominence of books and reading in their family homes, nor do they themselves engage in any reading for pleasure. This area needs more exploration to understand what other things may enhance learning. Some participants even said that they did not enjoy reading and only read when it related to their school work. Banda, (2003) found that literary practices are linked to demographic, geographical, linguistic, cultural and socio-economic factors. It is important to understand "the literacy practices that groups and communities engage in before introducing interventions" (Banda, 2003, p. 106) Participants mention other activities besides reading that may have played a role in their learning (particularly English language learning) such as watching television.

'Nah at that time, you know like, you know when you are in a public school at a location they don't even teach you how to read so. Yah and even when am watching TV neh am, we will be watching all these soapies. I'll be like okay "what does she mean when she says this?" because you know it was a school in a location' Barwadi.

'I can't read novels, I would read a novel and tomorrow I forgot what the novel was saying. Since then I stopped reading novels, now I don't read novels so I think my main source of education was from TV, I watch everything from TV, documentaries,

learning channels, soapies I think that's where I learnt to speak English from TV, I watched everything, I even knew the address by heart' Jane.

This may point out that there may be other media or 'texts' that enhance academic development especially in poor communities where buying books may be expensive. Television may work as a teaching tool if utilised correctly, helping children's English comprehension and to construct meanings (Gunter, 1997). This may be especially important for children who have English as their second language (Wright et al, 2001). These participants explain how reading was never part of their childhood activities.

'There is no, it's not normal in that house to have books that are used so I think it's just a believe that any any any any situation I find myself in, you just have to meet what is expected of you so if I, if I was, if I was, if being a psychologist meant I don't know talking a lot than reading or something, some sort, I'd do it. My parents I mean, even when I talk about theories now, they switch off, they are like yah, don't start, sometimes they even plead with me. They are like don't start, don't start not now yah (laughs) and then you are like Freud and they are like not now, not now Lebo please lets watch TV' Lebogang.

'No (laughs) no I didn't read them but what I used to do any way, they used to teach me stuff, yah they teach me stuff like for example teach me time' Paula.

5.4 Finances

All the young women indicated financial struggle as one of their biggest challenges at University. The financial struggles were not only limited to tuition fees but also the everyday living expenses. According to several researchers (e.g. Lournes, 2013; Senneth, Finchilescu, Gibson & Strauss, 2003), one of the main factors that interrupts students' access to University

is finances. Lebogang explains some of the pressures she faced relating to lack of funds. It seems even though she relies on her parents to pay her fees, there is still some discomfort that arises when she has to ask for other things that require money.

'Finance is the struggle, umm...Finance is a struggle because in as much as you may appear well groomed and clean everyday err you don't know what's happening. You don't know if someone has enough to eat and enough for this and that and like I said my family has all been supportive and you know my parents find themselves in situations in which they need to compromise. So they had to pay for my accommodation as well since sometimes you don't have certain things. This guilt, you like, aii am not going ask from my parents, but you know they are going to give you but you know that the struggle that they have to go through... And then you just die in silence and you like you know what as long as I appear at school in the condition that am expected to which is being clean, being neat ummm being approachable, well-groomed and obviously given the profession you have to be well groomed, you can't be coming here and showing that you struggling a bit with this and that. Branded clothes and stuff like that and the pressures of a student who is not comfortable from a background which can offer that easily kick in if they are not resilient where you find yourself' Lebogang.

It is evident that most of these women struggle on a daily basis because of lack of financial capital. This makes it harder for these women as they do not possess the necessary capital to sustain their stay in University. Apart from not carrying the necessary embodied capital, the lack of finances limits and makes it harder to play the game. Even in families such as Maitebolo, whose parents possess cultural capital as they attended University and acquired degrees, these financial burdens are significant. Maitebolo's mother had to pay her

fees utilising a loan. So the parents find themselves in “generational debt” (Moore, 2011) where parents carry their own household debts as well as their children’s school fees.

‘So this entire time she has been fully supporting me and I might add that she is wanted to do that. Ummm every time I say maybe I should get funding and things like that she will be like no no no and I think it’s because she had a bad experience where in her master’s degree’ year she couldn’t... Her parents couldn’t afford to pay for her and so she had to take a student loan and for a very long time even well into her forties, she was still paying for this student loan so I think she was really trying to avoid that kind of pressure for me and she was always like no don’t worry about it, I’ll make a plan umm just study make sure that you get your degree’ Maitebolo.

This also speaks to the problem of the ‘missing middle’ at South African universities (How & Butler, 2016). The missing middle is students who are considered not poor enough to qualify for government funding but also not wealthy enough to pay their own fees (Letseka, Brier & Visser, 2009).

‘Well it’s ridiculously expensive but there is nothing else I don’t like’ Bajuta.

Despite the participants all attending relatively good schools, indicating that their families are probably part of the ‘emerging black middle class’ (Erbert, 2013), which disqualifies them from government financial aid, they clearly still struggle financially and have often made enormous sacrifices to gain access for their daughters in good schools and then later to University

‘Expenses too expensive I mean you can buy a car which I don’t have right now with the fees and all that. I still use a taxi... so I think master’s degree’ umm because, to heighten my chances in for academic no mx career access and, and I did not, there were no factors that could stop me. Umm and I feel like ummm, or you know, ah education is... am not a person who would say education is everything but you have

to learn that the system is designed in a way in which you have to study further if you can, you know a degree is no longer a thing, I mean you talk about a degree as good as ah a matric for other people And then you get into honours, you like yeah okay, cool, nice' Lebogang.

In these narratives we see evidence that struggles faced by black women revolve around lack of finances. It seems apart from furthering studies to get better paying jobs; the women believe that they have to work harder in order to succeed in life. Mohumagadi's father stopped supporting her financially because she chose a different field than what he wanted.

'Ummm interesting story because my father is in like the health sciences, he was not happy with me not wanting to pursue the sciences, I wanted to pursue the humanities so he thought of...At some point he stopped supporting me financially and all of that because of that reason' Mohumagadi.

Her father is not only absent emotionally but financially as well. This links to the absence of fathers that have emerged throughout these women's life. The consequences of this remain with the mother who is left to support her alone making it harder to escape poverty. Various studies have confirmed that children from families with a higher socio-economic status tend to attain academic skills more easily than their counterparts (Mokrova, O'Brien, Calkins, Leerkes & Markovitch, 2012; Aikens & Barbrin, 2008). There have been other studies in South Africa which made the same assertions (Werner, 2001; Mc Adoo, 2002; Dans- Brailsford, 2004 & Logan, 2004). However this study found that despite the financial difficulties presented for these women, they still managed to succeed academically. The unusual occurrence about the socio-economic inequalities of South Africa in this moment in history is the possibility for lower class to go for University. While this was

impossible during the apartheid era, black children can now access University but another hindrance is ‘unaffordable fees’ which may work to impede access for students from lower socio-economic status. This reveals that race and socioeconomic status gaps in children's academic achievement remain a concerning social justice issue as asserted by Fram, Miller-Cribbs & Horn (2007).

This chapter revealed four main themes and subthemes that were discovered across the participants’ narratives. The four main themes are internal locus of control, families, schooling and finances. In exploring the themes of “internal locus of control”, the sub-themes are as follows; intrinsic intellectual ability, challenges and good girl discourse through which participants understood themselves as “in control of their own learning and responsible for their own academic success”. The family theme had sub themes as follows: multigenerational families, relationship with parents; emotional and social capital that demonstrate both the particular structure of families (as described in detail in Chapter 4) and the important social support that participants derive from their families. It is very clear that the primary source of emotional and social support comes from mothers rather than fathers. The focus on schooling theme revealed that all participants had moved from public to private or from township to “model C” schools in their childhoods. There was also an exploration of reading practices both in family homes and as adult students; counter the literature, these successful students did not point to the importance of reading in their development. Finance remain a huge challenge for all these women throughout their narratives.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The odds of doing postgraduate studies as a black female in South Africa remain unlikely due to familial poverty, financial burdens as well as a background of poor racialized schooling and unequal opportunities for the female gender. However, this study is evidence of possibilities for success despite these intersectional predictors of failure. The study offers some answers as to how and why this may be possible in response to the primary and secondary research questions that guided the research (see p. 35). The analysis of the family dynamics in these women's lives reveals that while their nuclear families are relatively small, all live in extended family networks with particularly grandmothers playing a central supportive role in their childhoods. In regards to gender dynamics present in the family, most of the families were single parent home headed by mothers. Even in cases where fathers were present, the women still gravitated towards their mothers rather than their fathers for emotional and social support. Despite the importance of family support, this was not enacted through assistance with homework as children and, in many cases, women reported a reluctance from family members to support extended study at the postgraduate level. The women report that they were responsible for their own learning as children, citing that, in the main, their parents did not have the required cultural capital to help with their academic development and it is clear that practices such as reading for pleasure that are conventionally understood as supportive of academic development were generally absent in these families. In terms of school experiences that emerged as important, the women all described a movement from public (township) schools as children to private or high-performing suburban public schools. This study has explored how these women were able to negotiate their way to higher education despite the double challenges of being black and being woman. Two levels of analysis were utilised to analyse and make meaning of the participants' narratives. The first layer of analysis used visual techniques to provide a structural analysis of the women's

families to determine the structure, pattern, size and emotional relationships. The second level of analysis is thematic analysis which aimed at analysing the data thematically to draw attention to specific content within the narratives given by participants (Riessman, 2008). Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to carefully identify, analyse and report patterns across data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The first layer of analysis revealed the small family size, the smallest family having one child and the largest family consisting of four children which may have also played a role in their success because studies found that when the family is small then the children are most likely to succeed academically (Cancian & Reed, 2008). Besides the size of the family, the women's family diagrams were made up of grandparents, aunts and uncles from the extended family refuting the nuclear assumption of family (Burman, 2008; Hanson et al, 2005). The emotional relationships between the participants and their family members showed the absence of fathers in these women's life, both emotionally and physically which is similar to the findings made by Nduna & Sikweyiya, (2013) and Padi et al (2014). The diagrams also revealed the friendship relationship that exists between mothers and daughters which according to Burn, (2006) and Gavinet et al (1996) is a pattern found in mother-daughter relationships.

The second layer of analysis, (thematic analysis) found that most participants continue to face challenges including lack of financial support despite their schooling histories in Model C schools which suggests that their parents had at least some limited upward mobility. This confirms the current discourse of the 'missing middle' where there are students who are deemed too rich to qualify for government support, but are too poor to afford tuition fees.

Agency, self-efficacy and independence were found to play a great part in these women's academic development. This is contrary to much of the literature (Comer, 1988; Flaxman & Inger, 1991; Debord, Griffin & Clark, 1977; Hout & Morgan, 1975 & Picou, 1973) which suggests that in order for children to succeed in their academics, parents must be highly involved in their academics. A key finding from this study is how aspects of social capital and internal locus of control as well as the women's independence intersect and work together in the academic development of these women. It is also important to note that as these women become 'independent', they remain closely connected to and emotionally reliant upon support from family, particularly from their mothers. It may therefore be important to enhance family and community strengths alongside educational interventions.

Participants reported that their parents and family members were not highly involved in their studies. Rather, there is a discourse around internal motivation and internal locus of control. This may suggest exploring interventions that look at factors that contribute to and enhance internal locus of control. However, this may simply reflect the classic 'attribution error' (Miller and Ross, 1975) in which high achievers, whose efforts are rewarded with success, tend to create individual, internal rather than social, external explanations. This affirms social psychology assertions that when people fail they tend to blame external factors. The concept is called self-serving bias which asserts that people attribute positive outcomes to internal causes while negative outcomes are attributed to external causes (Miller and Ross, 1975; Brown and Rogers, 1991). Regardless of the explanation, these young women are evidence of generational shifts and the possibilities for individual children to move beyond the worlds of their parents. Most women revealed that they grew up in a different environment where they were expected to succeed but there was no involvement of parents in their school work. They reported that their parents barely attended parent-teacher meetings and there was no particular effort put into involving them in intellectual matters. This may

mean that parents support and value academic success but they may not possess appropriate cultural capital, knowledge or tools that can enhance their children's academic success.

Despite this emphasis on individual ability and hard work, and the absence of conventional educational support in the home, the women reported that family plays an important role in their academic development; the main support systems include emotional support as well and financial support. This means that even though families may not have the expected patterns of educational support at home, they provide other forms of social capital, particularly, emotional and financial support that is necessary for these women to succeed. Being a black postgraduate female student for these women presented with issues of disadvantaged schooling due to socio-economic inequalities. Issues of bullying remain a big problem and according to Tyler (2011), bullying behaviour is linked with racialisation as the children are naturalised into harsh environment. Despite this, the women reveal an internal locus of control which enabled them to persevere even with the external challenges presented.

The women assert their success to their friendliness and being obedient to their parents. This good behaviour may indeed have worked for them in terms of the relationship they also had with their teachers. The study found that being liked by teachers carried capital necessary for this women's academic success. This good girl discourse portrayed by these women contradicts feminist arguments that this 'good girl behaviour' may work to oppress, restrict and prevents girls from success (Baker, 2010). The findings reveal the balance and negotiation that has to take place between asserting themselves, following the rules and going against the rules. The women report being obedient at school which enabled them to succeed but also rebelling against their parents when they had to choose their field of study and continue to do their studies. This shows a balance between knowing when to go against the

rules and when to obey the rules showing a great deal of self-regulation. This reveals the women's knowledge of the rules needed to play the game in order to succeed.

The extended family unit has been able to withstand the destructive effects of apartheid and, throughout the narratives of these young women, relatives from the extended family emerged as important in their life stories. Dans- Brailsford (2004, p. 586) who identified familial poverty as a high predictor of school failure in children, made a similar finding; "kinship bonds that knotted communities appeared to have survived the assault of apartheid". However, a distinctive feature of these women's families was the relatively small nuclear family size, which may mean that parents were better able to afford both emotional and financial support that was needed to succeed. The women's' family size was small ranging from 2 family members (single mother and the participant) to six (2 parents and 4 children). Most of the participants relied on kinship relationships for emotional support and financial support. This confirms Bourdieu's (1986) assertion that individuals rely on social networks and kinship relationships to access resources needed to succeed, also (Coleman 1988) assertion that it creates a platform for children to increase their chances of being successful.

Mothers continue to emerge as the most influential caretakers. All participants reported close emotional bonds with their mothers even echoing Burn's (2006) depiction of the mother- daughter relationship as 'friendship'. This means that even though these women may have internal locus of control, the mother plays a significant role in their development as support system. However, the study made a similar finding to Morrell (2006) of the absence and dysfunctional relationships with fathers in black families. Seven of the participants had father – daughter relationships that range from non-existent to distant or casual. Only one participant out of nine reported a good and close relationship with her father. Reasons for this

absence of fathers ranged from either working grave yard hours, conflict between father and daughter due to strictness, misunderstandings, drunkenness, abuse and divorce.

Even though parents may struggle with offering necessary cultural capital needed for children to succeed at school in the form of more readily recognised direct academic support, the study found that families offer other forms of support that are equally important, including emotional and financial support, critical forms of ‘social capital’.

Movement from public to private schools or ‘high performing public schools’ was evident in all the women’s narratives of childhood, indicating that they come from black families with a measure of socioeconomic mobility, even though they later struggle with University fees. These students form part of the so-called ‘missing middle’ and struggle with getting aid from government, because they are not too rich nor too poor but they cannot afford University fees. Financial struggle was clearly the biggest challenge for the women as payment of fees is necessary for completion and continuation of their studies.

This study found that, contrary to studies and a common assumption that reading plays a critical role on academic development, four of the women grew up in a non-reading environment. This may perhaps be for the reason that parents were not academically inclined or due to a lack of money to purchase books for their children. There is a possibility that parents may not even know the benefits of a reading environment. However, television is reported to have played a role in language acquisition skills. This is an important finding as it points to a knowledge gap on resources that enhance learning for black South African families, suggesting multiple media and forms of textuality. Future studies should focus on specific resources possessed by these families that work to promote academic development. There is a literature gap on other forms of support that can help children from poor backgrounds to succeed academically. It is clear that the women possess some form of capital

and strategies that enabled their success. More needs to be done to explore existing resources that can enhance learning in low socio-economic communities.

Against the odds, these women have not only been able to complete their undergraduate studies but they have continued to do their honours and master's degree. This makes this particular cohort of women a very unusual group. The role of family depicted by these women's narratives contradicts the common assumption that in order for children to succeed academically, family has to be academically inclined, possess resources and appropriate cultural capital needed for success. While this may be true, this study reveals that while family was important for these women's' academic success, affording them emotional support needed for them to focus in their studies. There is a sense of asserting themselves as destined for academic success from a young age.

This study was an exploratory study and the focus was on emerging themes across the participants' narratives which limited the study in terms of exposing all narratives that perhaps could not fit into a theme. However, visual analysis was a useful supplement to thematic analysis in revealing the structure of the individual families.

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Appendix A

Interview Schedule

Demographic Information

- Age of participant
- Degree of study
- Gender of participant
- How many siblings do you have?
- What is your sibling position?
- What level of education does your parents or primary caregivers have?
- How many siblings have gone to University before you

Interview Questions

- ✚ Tell me a story about your first school.
- ✚ Tell me about your family's involvement in your education at school and now?
- ✚ Tell me how you came to study at Wits?
- ✚ Can you tell me a story about your experiences as a black woman student on campus (a positive and negative one?)

Follow up probing questions

1. Who helped you with your homework?
2. Who would you say academically supported you a lot in your family?
3. Any academic support from outside the family?
4. What kind of high school did you attend?

5. How much time would you say each of your parents spent with you on school work?
6. How often did your parents/ caregiver(s) meet with teachers and visit school?
7. Did your parents/ caregivers or anyone in the family engage in activities which are educational outside home?
8. Can you tell me a little about how you managed to do your postgraduate studies?
9. Tell me about your current family relationships.
10. What do you think is responsible for your academic success?
11. How has family influenced and played a role in your current academic field?
12. If you were a parent or as a parent, what (do)/would you do with your children to promote their academic development?

Appendix B



Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa. Telephone: +27 11-717-4500/2/3/4. Fax: +27-11-717-4559

Information sheet

29 March 2015

Good day,

My name is Agisanyang Otukile and I am doing master's degree' in Psychology by coursework and research report at The University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for a master's degree, I am conducting research on schooling and families in the lives of black female postgraduate students. This involves carrying out interviews with each of the participants. The interviews will be held in a private room on campus at a time convenient for you. Each participant will be interviewed once and interview will take approximately 1 hour long to ensure that every topic and question of concern is dealt with effectively. With your permission the interview will be recorded using an audio- recorder and later transcribed. The information shared will be seen by the supervisor and may later be published or may even be presented at workshops.

This will ensure that you are well aware and make an informed decision before agreeing to partake. You have a right to decline participation in the study and withdraw at any time of the interview. The researcher will use pseudonyms to protect your identity and data will be

stored safe in a password protected computer. The interview will require personal experiences from participants and if they experience emotional or psychological distress they will be referred to a mental health professional and the counselling and careers development unit on Wits campus.

Your contribution to this study is invaluable to the process of enquiry therefore I would like you to participate in my study and play a role in understanding or filling the gaps in South African literature. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are under no obligation to give answers to questions which you feel uncomfortable responding to and you may withdraw from the interview at any point.

Thank you.

Agisanyang Otukile (agisanyang11@gmail.com or 0849136727)

Supervisor's contact details: Prof Jill Bradbury, PB Wits 2050, 0117174515

Appendix C

Participant Consent Form

I hereby confirm that I have been briefed on the research that Ms Agisanyang Otukile is conducting. ☐

- I fully understand what participation in this research means and what it entails ☐
- I understand that my participation is voluntary
- I understand that I may choose not to answer any question that I do not feel comfortable with
- I understand that I have the right to withdraw my participation in the research at any time I choose to do so ☐
- I understand that my identity will be kept confidential. ☐

Signed on _____ at _____

Participant's signature: _____

Appendix D

Participant's Consent Form for Audio-recording

I _____ have been given the participant information sheet for the study being conducted by Agisanyang Otukile. I have read, understood and signed this information sheet. I understand that the interview will be audio taped. I understand that pseudonyms will be used during the interview to protect my identity and that the interviewer is the only person who is going to access the tapes and the conversation will be stored in a password protected computer.

Participant's signature:

Date: