

**Exploring the family as a socialising agent in  
intergenerational mobility in an emerging market**

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A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business  
Science, University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration.

7 November 2016

## **ABSTRACT**

The concept of intergenerational mobility refers to the social and economic movement between generations. Essentially it looks at the role of the family in determining the future of their offspring. There are external and internal factors that need to be taken into account when predicting mobility. The endogenous aspects refer to inherited and genetic factors, commonly referred to as nature. The exogenous factors are the environmental factors that are outside the ambit of your control. This is popularly called nurture. Examples of external factors are for instance the parents that you have been born to or your race. Unequal opportunities are responsible for low levels of mobility, particularly at the lower income levels.

This study aimed to explore the role of the nuclear and extended family in black South African communities, in enabling intergenerational mobility, in an emerging market context. The results show that the nuclear family has a critical role to play in assisting the offspring in becoming mobile. The extended family however is critical and has a key supporting role in the South African context.

## **KEYWORDS**

**FAMILY, INTERGENERATIONAL, MOBILITY, NUCLEAR AND EXTENDED**

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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**Roopa Singh**

7 November 2016

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## 1. Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH PROBLEM

**“It was not lack of ability that limited my people, but lack of opportunity.”**

– Nelson Mandela (Mandela, 2013, p. )

### 1.1 Description of the Problem and Background

The purpose of this study is to explore the roles of the nuclear and extended family, as socialising agents in enabling intergenerational mobility, in an emerging market context. This study seeks to delve into the lives of black South Africans and attempt to uncover the family related intricacies in the exogenous environment that have played a role in shaping their future.

Research on the social position of South Africa is important, as it is an emerging country characterised by high levels of income inequality. Research shows that heightened inequality leads to low levels of mobility in general (Corak, 2013). The Human Development Report (Programme, 2015) estimates the country's Gini coefficient at 60.5. The Gini coefficient is a measure of income inequality. This effectively earns South Africa the leading spot with the largest levels of income inequality globally.

It is estimated that 35% of the population live below the bread line (Chipp, Corder, & Kapelianis, 2012). In a study using three (3) decades of census data, it shows that education attainment continues to be racially distorted (Louw, Berg, & Yu, 2006), to the detriment of black Africans. The study shows that there has been little improvement in education levels of children with parents that had a given education level (Louw et al., 2006). However, ten (10) years later, this concerning trend persists. The 24 to 35 black African age group showed a two (2) per cent drop in education attainment over the past 20 years (Africa, 2016). The gravity of the situation was articulated by Statistician General, Pali Lehohla, “When parents are better equipped than their children, it's a sign of regression,” (Merten, n.d.).

Social mobility is occurring in South Africa but the Social Profile of Youth Report 2009-2014 (Africa, 2016), the National Income Dynamics Study (Woolard, Leibbrandt, & Daniels, 2014) and the Global Competitiveness Report 2015-16 (Schwab, Sala-i-Martin, & Brende, 2015) paints a bleak picture of challenges, hardship and disillusionment.

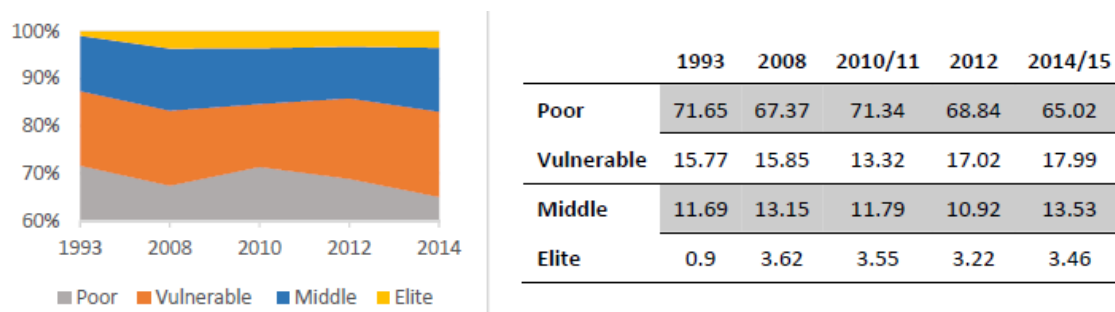


The introduction of democracy and the scrapping of the apartheid laws have seen South Africa’s middle class grow substantially. It was also quite predictable that the majority of the growth has taken place in the black race category, due to the “legislated” equal opportunity. At this point, it must be clarified that South African law defines Africans, Indians and Coloureds as Blacks (LRA, 1995).

The National Development Plan sets a bold target, “to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030,” (National Planning Commission, 2010). However economic growth has been slow in the economic downturn and President Jacob Zuma announced predictions that South Africa will experience less than one (1) per cent growth in 2016 (Zuma, 2016).

An assessment of the four waves of the South African National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) from the period 1993 to 2015 was conducted. It shows that the middle class has grown extremely slowly from 11.69 per cent of the population in 1993 to a shocking 13.5 per cent in 2008 (Zizzamia, Schotte, Leibbrandt, & Ranchhod, 2016). Since 2010, a marked increase in Africans entering the middle and elite class was experienced but the ratio of black to white remains hugely disproportionate.

**Figure 1 and Table 1: Growth in size of the middle class in South Africa, 1993 to 2014/15**



Source: (Zizzamia et al., 2016)

Research into the reasons for less than optimal intergenerational mobility in South Africa and globally point to inequality of opportunity. A major contributor to this is low income levels. Poor income earnings have the potential to create a spill over effect into other areas of life e.g. education (Roemer & Ünveren, 2016). Opportunity and income inequality function in a reciprocal manner.

South Africa is not unique in its experience of rapid middle class growth. There is a similar trend across developing countries, such as China and India. Emerging markets are said to contain the largest part of the world's population and its definition is also derived from its continued faster growth rate than the developed world, over the past two decades (Kearney, 2012). Significant research points to emerging markets as a critical component for global growth and revenue (Kravets & Sandikci, 2014). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2010) states that economic and political power has been gravitating towards emerging economies – a phenomenon they term as, “Shifting Wealth.” Albeit, in the latest OECD Economic Outlook Report (2016) indicates a slowdown in emerging market growth. South Africa's is particularly vulnerable due to its considerable current deficit, slower exports and dependence on commodities (OECD, 2016).

Intergenerational mobility has been widely studied by both economists and sociologists. A central focus has been based on income inequality. However research is increasingly demonstrating that the role of environmental factors in mobility has been grossly underestimated (Björklund & Jäntti, 2012; Bjorklund, Jantti, & Solon, 2005; Brunori, Ferreira, & Peragine, 2013; Buchmann & Hannum, 2001; Corak, 2013, 2016; Goldberger, 1989; Hampden-Thompson, 2013; Jaeger, 2012; Martin, 2012; Piraino, 2015; Sacerdote, 2010; Taubman, 1976; Torche, 2015).

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

This study aims to obtain a deeper understanding of the role of the nuclear and extended family. It will firstly establish the distinguishing features of the black family in South Africa. Thereafter it will focus on the role of the mother and father in assisting with intergenerational mobility. The extended family contribution to intergenerational mobility will also be investigated.

In South Africa, a history of racial oppression ended in 1990 and a democratic government was voted into power in 1994. In the past 23 years since freedom, the government has made several inroads in addressing inequality. The South Africa Survey 2016 report shows that living standards in South Africa have improved significantly over the past two (2) decades (South African Institute for Race Relations, 2016).

The Institute for Race Relations (2015) states that the current economic downturn could result in a slowdown in the pace of black middle class growth. The black middle class is described as small but is said to now be comparable in size to the white middle class (South African Institute for Race Relations, 2015). Two (2) out of every ten (10) South Africans believe they fall into the middle class category but the IRR believes that one (1) out of ten (10) South Africans is a more accurate reflection. The low number of middle class South Africans per ten people infers that intergenerational mobility is taking place at a far slower pace than anticipated, if the NDP poverty elimination target is to be achieved (National Planning Commission, 2010).

Piraino (2014) supports the assertion that intergenerational mobility in South Africa seems to be low due to the huge inequality that still exists. The reality is that the socio-economic status of parents often passes onto their children and it can be seen as a failure by society to level the playing fields (Roemer & Trannoy, 2015 – find reference).

It is clear that high levels of inequality have a dire impact on the social mobility of South Africans in post-democracy South Africa. The persistent inequality stems from a brutal history of racial segregation which saw the imposition of, inadequate resource allocation to non-whites and the provision of inferior education termed Bantu education by the apartheid government (Keswell, Girdwood, & Leibbrandt, 2013).

While entire groups of people may move or fail to move in class status, how this plays out at an individual level has gathered a great deal of attention. There has been attention on the family and education. The debate on individual mobility has oscillated between nature and nurture but the current study will only focus on the nurture aspects from a family perspective. It will specifically delve into the nuclear and extended family.

- Understand if the nuclear and extended family have equal or differing roles in assisting with intergenerational mobility
- Understand the role of the mother and father in relation to each other
- Understand how the extended family functions in an emerging market context

### 1.3 Research Aim

The purpose of this study is to explore the role of the nuclear and extended families in enabling intergenerational mobility. This study seeks to delve into the lives of South Africans and attempt to uncover and understand the deeper underlying intricacies in the external family environment that have shaped their future.

Researchers have grappled with determining the role of “nature or nurture” in influencing intergenerational mobility (Torche, 2015). Where nature refers to the endogenous factors, which are inherited or genetic and nurture essentially speaks to the exogenous factors which are outside the realm of our control (Black, Devereux, Lundborg, & Majlesi, 2015).

A need to understand the impact of environmental factors particularly that of family background in intergenerational mobility has been widely expressed (Björklund & Jäntti, 2012). While it has been acknowledged that environmental factors may have a significant role to play in understanding the challenges facing social mobility, more research is required (Björklund & Jäntti, 2012; Björklund et al., 2005; Brunori et al., 2013a; Buchmann & Hannum, 2001; Corak, 2013, 2016; Goldberger, 1989; Hampden-Thompson, 2013; Jaeger, 2012, 2012; Martin, 2012; Piraino, 2015; Sacerdote, 2010; Taubman, 1976; Torche, 2015)

A plethora of external factors have been identified that could have implications for social mobility. The major factors are family background, education, community, religion, work and peers.

Early childhood development is flagged as imperative for the long term success and productivity of children. The quality of the formative years of a child is a critical independent variable in determining success and productivity of a child (Knudsen, Heckman, Cameron, & Shonkoff, 2006). The research by Knudsen et al. (2006) goes on to state that the greatest influence for the disadvantaged child is investment in their early years. Interaction and experiences at a young age shape the emotional, cognitive and social abilities which are responsible for both school and later economic performance.

The main focus has been on the family Corak (2013) writes that there is growing evidence which is starting to suggest that the greater the income inequality is, the bigger the role of

the family background becomes in deciding the child's future as an adult. This is further qualified by stating that the hard work of the child has a weaker role here than that of the family.

The role of the family is obviously a salient one in shaping and moulding the young child for the future. The extant literature actually alludes to childhood development as a central intergenerational mobility determinant, as opposed to the peripheral role that it may be perceived to be by many.

Becker and Tomes (1979, p 1154) agreed that intergenerational mobility, "measures the effect of a family on the well-being of its children." (Tomes and Becker 1979) recognise that social interaction from an economic perspective does not occur with just the individual but it involves multiple generations of families. Parents pass on attributes and qualities to their children. These include, "a family's caste, religion, race "culture," genes and reputation for honesty and reliability. (Becker and Tomes, 1978, p 1155)"

This research intends to explore the nuclear and extended family as socialising agents that enable intergenerational mobility.

## 2. Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

**“Inequality lowers mobility because it shapes opportunity.”**

- (Corak, 2013, p. 98)

### 2.1. Introduction

The literature will provide an overview of intergenerational mobility with a focus on the family dimensions.

Poverty is viewed as one of the most serious challenges that plague the world today. The eradication of poverty is a global priority as articulated through the United Nation’s (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The level of concern and magnitude of the problem is clear from the 189 signatories that have committed to resolving the crippling problem of poverty.

The United Nations has cited considerable progress on the 2015 MDG targets. The contribution to helping level the playing fields is acknowledged but concerns have been raised about the UN changing targets and having questionable measurement mechanisms (Hickel, 2016).

The World Bank asserts that the poverty rates have shown a reduction in all regions of the world. However, the changes have not been evenly distributed (World Bank, 2016). This is confirmed in a paper on rich and middle income countries which shows that poverty reduction has been irregular and atypical in wealthy nations over the past two (2) to three (3) decades (Morelli, S., Smeeding, T. M., & Thompson, J. P, 2014). Ravallion (2013) observes that while the aggregated inequality results in developing countries have been steady since 1990’s, there has been a recent presage of increasing inequality.

In order to eradicate poverty, inequality needs to be tackled. Researchers have long been fascinated by the study of equality of opportunity. The family as a unit forms the foundation for such research. More specifically there has been serious emphasis on the father and son relationships from an income perspective.

This literature review examines the literature on intergenerational mobility, with a strong focus on the family and education dimensions.

## **2.2. Intergenerational mobility globally**

From all the advanced countries, the United States has the highest inequality and the lowest mobility rates (Torche, 2015). In his cross country study of intergenerational earning mobility, Solon (2002) found that the United States and United Kingdom fared poorer in mobility than Canada, Finland and Sweden. Naturally this revelation evoked questions on what the underlying reasons for this could be. Public policy was one aspect that was identified.

The World Bank international comparisons on inequality shows South Africa as an extremely unequal country (Brunori et al., 2013). On the African continent, the levels of inequality have decreased substantially in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Mali and Niger (Fosu, 2015). Yet inequality has shown a noticeable increase in Kenya, and Zambia. Countries like South Africa, Uganda, Mozambique and Ghana have had their economic growth slowdown. Lower income is seen as one of the problems but it also shows that intergenerational mobility is not only tied to domestic economics but also global. In addition, the need to understand the idiosyncrasies of the environments in each country will advance this research further.

In its most simplistic form, intergenerational mobility can be described as a measurement of the impact of the family on the future prosperity of its children (Becker & Tomes, 1979).

Intergenerational mobility is further explained as being, “concerned with the socio-economic status of parents and the socio-economic outcomes of their children as adults.”(Blanden, 2013, p.38). Blanden goes on to list the numerous ways in which intergenerational mobility can be measured as; family income, individual earnings, social class, occupational status or education.

The notion that children inherit certain characteristics from their parents led to the degree to which parents transferred economic status to their offspring being questioned (Zimmerman, 1992). Becker and Tomes (1979) argued that children's income is increased when their

parents provide more capital to them – both financially and otherwise. The success of children was found to be inextricably linked to the level of resources expended from parent to child. In the seminal work by Solon (1992) the researcher looks at the relationship between the incomes of parents and the mobility of their children. The United States is shown to be less mobile than was previously proven.

As early as 1989, Goldberger (1989) raised a concern that focusing purely on income distribution across generations could cause economists to give less emphasis to the critical aspect of family background and their contribution to intergenerational mobility.

### **2.3. How was intergenerational mobility measured?**

The study and particularly the measurement of intergenerational mobility is highly complex. The inherent complexities of this subject is evident by the profound enunciation by Harrington (1962) that the reason the poor are poor, is because they were born into the wrong race, had the wrong parents, were in the wrong sector or ethnic category.

This concept is described as the “birth lottery,” with an alarming finding that the gap between the income levels have become greater (Chetty, Hendren, Kline, Saez, & Turner, 2014). If equality and opportunity is based on luck and chance, the process of eliminating inequality and poverty will prove to be a near impossible one.

Many studies on intergenerational mobility concentrate on the relationship between a father and son’s earnings. The seminal work by Solon(1992) for instance uses data from the American Panel Study of Income Dynamics. The sample comprises exclusively of the earnings of fathers and sons. An attempt to investigate lifetime earning correlations in the United States by Zimmerman (1992) also consisted of a sample of fathers and sons only.

Researchers have tried to determine what leads to similarities or differences in earnings. Therefore extensive research has been conducted using sibling correlation. The concept of “nature or nurture,” is introduced and gave rise to a significant inclusion of focus on nurture as well.



For a very long time researchers studied intergenerational mobility through examining the genetic transmission of advantage. (Bjorklund, Jantti, & Solon, 2005) acknowledge that earnings inequality had been the primary focus of intergenerational mobility research. In the early 1970's British researchers attributed as much as 80 per cent of a child's intelligence to genetics (Goldberger, 1979). Subsequent interrogation of data led to researcher's discounting the high figure and quoting estimates of inherited intelligence as low as 45 per cent (Goldberger, 1979).

As far back as 1976, data was examined on twins in the United States, in an attempt to establish whether the genetics or environment were responsible for their specific income situation (Taubman, 1976). The results reinforced the belief that income of an offspring was largely due to genetics and being born to the right parents (Taubman, 1976).

Goldberger's (Goldberger, 1989) research into the economic family and various permutations on the family environment leads to caution on merely evaluating mobility from a financial perspective. "Then restricting attention to the monetary measures could lead an economist to understate the influence of family background on inequality.(Goldberger, 1989, p.531).

However a study conducted in Sweden on siblings explored both the nature and nurture dimensions (Bjorklund et al., 2005). The findings were startling and detracted from the genetic similarity. The difference in earnings could not be explained by similar genes or the common environment of the siblings (Bjorklund et al., 2005). The unique and specific aspects of individual siblings appeared to explain the earning differential (Bjorklund et al., 2005).

#### **2.4. Existing research challenges**

Piraino (2015) found that historical data in South Africa in some instances did not include non-whites. This results make use of the NIDS wave one (1), two (2) and three (3). Due to the lack of statistics and certain questions in NIDS, other statistics were used. The exact occupation of father's is not mentioned, nor is the place of residence of paternal fathers and the age of sons is young, amongst others (Piraino, 2015).

Qualitative research will allow for easier access to interviewees but will yield new data on areas that require further examination.

## **2.5. Family**

Intergenerational research is largely aimed at understanding which internal and external factors and what role these factors played in assisting a person move or not move socially. The family has formed the basis of research in this area and education has been the other largely researched aspect of intergenerational mobility (Nolan, Esping-Andersen, & Whelan, 2010).

Nolan et al. (2010, p.6) lists many categories that intergenerational mobility may be studied under, “individual earnings, household income, poverty and disadvantage, wealth, social class, education, amongst others.

Research shows that the family plays a crucial role in determining the direction of a child's intergenerational mobility. There are two fundamental ways in which the family is responsible in impacting on the future of a child. The first is through genetic transmission, which is essentially termed, “nature.” The second is through exogenous means in terms of family background.

A human capital model examining intergenerational mobility assumes that children inherit all their parents genetic and cultural endowments (Becker & Tomes, 1986). The level of inheritability by parents of other endowments impact on the future earnings of the offspring.

## **2.6. Nature and nurture (effort and inherited circumstances)**

The role of family background on mobility has been largely neglected. However, there are proponents who have raised the question of the role of family background on mobility. Researchers have always questioned the inherent characteristics of equality. This has led to the classification of inequality into factors that are within the control of an individual and factors beyond their control. The terms “effort” and “circumstances” have been used to categorise the advantages (Brunori et al., 2013a). Factors beyond the control of a person

are viewed as unfair, while efforts, which are within the ambit of one's control are considered acceptable.

A study conducted with data on Swedish siblings reveals that family related aspects are the most significant for intergenerational mobility (Björklund & Jäntti, 2012). The researchers conclude that family related factors need to become a *cynosure*.

## **2.7. The extended family**

Research into more diverse family background matters is beginning to gain momentum. Extensive literature exists on the traditional family where the structure of the family is usually nuclear. The extended family appears to be generally disregarded.

Mare (2015) expostulated the omission of the extended family from research. The researcher contends that the extended family merits study and there is a dire need to ensure that the requisite intergenerational data is linked to national income and social databases. Mare (2015) argues that it is foolish to isolate studies to parent sibling relationships since it is plausible that relationships between grandparents, aunts, uncles and other more distant family members could influence the economic outcome of a child. Mare (2015) acknowledges that kin who do not reside with the individual may have less impact than one who is co-resident. The counter argument presented is that a father for instant may not be physically present but he could be investing financially into his offspring (Mare, 2015). Family structures are not homogenous and it is feasible that non-nuclear members could reside with individuals (Mare, 2015). In addition, family units are not static and could change over time (Mare, 2015). Chan and Boliver (2013) indicate that multigenerational co-residence is uncommon in Britain and the West. Based on anecdotal evidence, the situation in developing countries may not be the same.

Some scholars have argued that the grandparent has no effect once the parents have been taken into consideration (Chan & Boliver, 2013). A thought provoking finding on the effect of grandparents on grandchildren's social class in Britain was made in recent research. Where grandparents and parents belonged to different class stratum, the grandchild experienced a high rate of mobility (Chan & Boliver, 2013). This phenomenon is encapsulated by, "as

though grandparents' class background is correcting the "mobility mistake" made by parents,"(Chan & Boliver, 2013, p.671 ).

## **2.8. Extended Family and Education**

It is widely accepted that children inherit their educational success from their parents. Jaeger (2012) advocates that the parent-child relationship is too restrictive for the study of educational achievement and that the extended family needs to be taken into consideration.

Jaeger's (2012) study yields salient results confirming that the extended family can be a critical component in intergenerational mobility. The extended family was found to assist immediate family members during difficult times both economic and personal (Jaeger, 2012). This relationship was found to exist mainly in the low income family groups. Immediate family members were willing to utilise their resources to assist a family member. The support could be of a financial or emotional nature. This occurrence is termed the compensation mechanism and illustrates that the resources of the extended family has a role to play on the educational attainment of children in lower income families (Jaeger, 2012).The quality of relationships between family members has a role to play in determining whether resources will be provided or not. Support was also more likely to be made available to biological family members than more distant.

Three generations of Chinese formed the basis of a study aimed at exploring the role of grandparents on the grandchild's education. The results of show that grandparents have a positive contribution to make towards the educational success of the grandchild. However this is contingent on the co-residence of the grandparent as well as the level of education (Zeng & Xie, 2014). Grandparents not residing with the grandchild and those with low levels of education were found to contribute nothing to the grandchild's educational achievement. The extent of grandparent influence on a child is shown through the research demonstrating that the school dropout rate is reduced when a well-educated grandparent is a co-resident(Zeng & Xie, 2014).

## 2.9. Family structure

The pivotal role of the family on intergenerational mobility has already been stated. When the family is deconstructed, it becomes evident that the structure of the family is also salient in the social mobility discussion. Traditionally the nuclear family was considered as the family unit. The composition of the family was simple. It consisted of a mother, father and children – this was a lifelong unit. (Carlson & Meyer, 2014). This means that marriage is lifelong, that co-residence and marriage always go together, and that child bearing occurs only within the marriage. In contrast, complexity occurs when marriage and legal ties, living arrangements, fertility, and parenting are not coterminous, that is, when roles and relationships deviate from the simple nuclear family scheme (Carlson & Meyer, 2014)

The construction of families has seen distinct and significant changes over recent decades (Tach, 2015). While the nuclear family still exists, other forms of families have emerged. This includes unmarried parents, single parent families – mother or father, divorced parents, three generational families, step families, extended families, non-biological families and same sex parents.

The South African black family structure has been a complex one. Migrant labour, colonialism and the dismantling of the extended family during apartheid has had far reaching implications on the black family. (Hickel, 2016; Murray, 1980).

Considering the traditionally critical role played by both parents in the transmission of resources to their children, concern has been raised around the impact of complex family structures on the social mobility of children (Tach, 2015). Research shows that fathers who do not live with their children, do invest both financially and through interaction with their children. However, the level of time and resources diminish as the child grows older (Tach, 2015). Fathers that have children with multiple partners could be supporting many children. This implies a decreased share in parental resources for each child. It is not clear what the implications of this situation are on the future of the children.

Beller (2009) states if a family lives together, they will be exposed to analogous resources and concordant opportunities for the future. In the case of family members who are unemployed, their status is dependent on that of the primary income generator in the family.

Similarly, where both parents are employed, multiple class statuses do not exist. This essentially points to the class of a family being an aggregated one.

Although we are in the twenty-first century, the measurement of class from a family perspective took only the father into account. We have since seen numerous researchers beseech for the incorporation of the mother's economic status. (Beller, 2009). An omission of the mother's financial contribution to a family, could lead to a distortion in the family earnings and therefore class classification.

Yet the use of both parents in estimating class positions in society, results in another dilemma. Due to the complexity of family structures today, how, if at all should the social and economic status of non-traditional family members be dealt with e.g. step parents, grandparents, aunts, absent parents etc. (Tach, 2015)?

The argument is that a complex family configuration could have negative implications for the future of a child. The debate is centred around economic resources and what role the now decreased (shared) resources have on the child. The issue of family complexity is qualified by a bold statement with no supporting evidence "Indeed, there is little disagreement that complexity is more common among disadvantaged families, nor is there much controversy about asserting that relationship dissolution often leads to economic difficulties, or that economic difficulties often create additional difficulties for children's well-being." (Tach, 2015, p. 8).

Carlson and Meyer (2014) say that less than half the children spend their entire childhood in a nuclear two biological parent home. So the definition of a family is evolving and is not categorised exclusively by biology and shared residence.

The literature fails to account for father's that do not contribute financially or their time in their children's life. The description of a traditional family is purely from the western stance. It is not uncommon to find extended family structures in Asia and Africa. It is actually possible that some developing countries like South Africa may be moving towards a nuclear family structure as the rate of urbanisation increases.

## **2.10. Education**

In her recent review of intergenerational mobility Torche (2015) describes education as the predominant factor responsible for the social mobility of children. It is stated that the direct impact of parents' social class has a small effect on a child, once education has been obtained. Education plays a significant role in transmitting class between generations (Torche, 2015).

The attainment of a tertiary education is increasingly being viewed as a "gateway" to improved economic conditions (Corak, 2013). Economic circumstances are inextricably linked to the fulfilment of a tertiary education. Due to inequality, different social classes are able to invest towards their children's education differently.

Roemer is a strong advocate of differentiating between the factors that he feels relate to advantage i.e. efforts, which is innate ability are fair and external environmental circumstances he believes are unfair (Brunori et al., 2013a). A child cannot be held responsible for the lack of decent schooling and families that were not supportive as these were beyond the child's control (Roemer & Ünveren, 2016).

The distinction between fair and unfair in the nature and nurture discussion is logical and one would hope obvious. However despite the recognition of the cause of unequal opportunity, it does nothing to remedy the situation. It only serves to provide policy guidance, which becomes another complicated and contextual matter.

## **2.11. Parental level of education**

A parent with inadequate education often results in their offspring becoming poorly educated too. A parent's level of education accounts considerably in determining their child's educational outcome (Piopiunik, 2014). We are cautioned that the fact that there is correlation does not imply that one causes the other. In this instance changes to the education requirements and systems could dramatically alter the educational path of a child who previously had limited opportunities.

This could have particular reference for South Africa as significant educational reforms have been put in place since democracy. The government has been working to eradicate the effects of Bantu education. In South Africa, white mothers and fathers were generally better educated than African and Coloured parents (Keswell et al., 2013). The average years of schooling from parent to child has nearly doubled to 10.2 years, from 5.2 years (Keswell et al., 2013). The educational expectation of black children in South Africa was shown to be higher than that of whites and coloureds (Beutel & Anderson, 2008).

It will be of significant interest to understand if this is applicable in South Africa. This study will conduct interviews with people and their parents, to try to gauge if the educational levels remained the same or have improved.

The difference between the educational levels of mothers has been shown to have a bearing on the progress that a child will make. The children of more educated mothers with higher salaries result in greater physical interaction between father and child. While less educated mothers struggle to make significant progress and this results in them having less resources at their disposal (Corak, 2013).

Extensive research on low income top achieving students in the United States has revealed that most students do not apply to the most elite colleges. More than 50 per cent of these students apply to non-selective, low graduation rate institutions (Hoxby & Avery, 2012). This is despite generous financial aid packages at selective institutions for low income students. The low distribution of these students across a large number of schools was found to be the problem. The communication methods were able to reach schools which had a generally larger group of high achievers or lived near an elite tertiary institution (Hoxby & Avery, 2012).

Previous educational performance was found to be lower across family structures consisting of single fathers and step parents. There are however few studies which sought to establish whether there was a relationship between the socio-economic status of a parent and a child's educational attainment was different across family structures (Martin, 2012).

Coleman (1988) developed a theory to explicate the relationship between social capital and human capital in the family. Family structure formed a key part of this model; where Coleman (1988) divided family background into three (3) distinct categories. Financial capital was the



first component and referred to the wealth of a parent; followed by human capital which referred to parental education level and finally, social capital which was broadly defined as the relationship between parents and child. The climacteric impact of human capital on a child is acknowledged but the quality of the relationship between parent and child is highlighted as influential on educational outcomes as well (Coleman, 1988). Social capital harnesses the parent's human capital for transmission to the child. The physical presence of the parents is vital but not exclusive; the quality of relationships; such as the amount of attention paid to children and the quality of interaction are critical (Coleman, 1988)

On this premise, single family homes were described as structurally deficient but a nuclear family with poor quality relationships was also considered as deficient. The more siblings in a family, led to less attention being paid to children and Coleman (1988) asserts that it has been shown to lead to lower educational achievement. Coleman's (1988) study was conducted on high school students and it showed that social capital in the family and community was responsible for lowering school dropout rates.

The subsequent trend in single parent families and other complex, non-traditional family formations led to Coleman's theory being re-tested with current data but this time to ascertain whether social economic stats (SES) and educational attainment differed across family structure. The study shows that having both biological parent families who make a concerted effort to invest resources academically in their child leads to the creation of better educational advantage as opposed to single mothers. This includes single mothers in the high status bracket who are well established professionally. While the single mother has money and possibly effort, she is faced with time restrictions (Martin, 2012). The evidence goes on to show that middle and upper class children raised by a single mother are less likely to remain in this class when compared to their colleagues who had both biological parents involved in their lives.

## **2.12. Gender and mobility**

The salience of human capital is also demonstrated in a Chinese study that reinforced the notion that human capital is integral in the child-parent relationship to determine social mobility (Xuezheng Qin, WANG, & ZHUANG, 2016). China like many developing countries has a high inequality rate. This case study also revealed the vulnerability of the girl child.

Similarly in South Africa, it was (Keswell et al., 2013) found that the African girl child who receives an education level similar to her parents is 6 per cent more likely to be low in the occupation strata (Keswell et al., 2013).

The challenges in gender and schooling was also (Salehi-Isfahani, Hassine, & Assaad, 2014) illustrated in the Middle East and North Africa, where despite seeing an improvement in girls school attendance levels, oil rich countries were biased towards employing males (Salehi-Isfahani, Hassine, & Assaad, 2014). The likelihood of males receiving income from oil was also higher than for girls.

### **2.13. Public versus Private School**

South Africa is already experiencing an increase in the number of years of schooling. This is largely attributed to the new found democracy and improving opportunities. It is not uncommon for countries to initiate reforms to make schooling more accessible, invest more funds in public education and encourage the girl child to attend school (Salehi-Isfahani et al., 2014). Countries that have made a concerted effort to make schooling more accessible have seen a marked increase in years of schooling but the Middle East and North African countries are still seen as low opportunity countries. It has further emerged that the quality of public education is questionable and it has led to better resourced parents to send their children to private schools or private tuition (Salehi-Isfahani et al., 2014).

In an interesting educational policy paper Roemer & Ünveren (2016) propose the discontinuation of private schools and the adoption of a public schooling system inspired by the Nordic education system. Private school is viewed as a stumbling block in achieving educational equality across all income levels.

### **2.14. Siblings and the unshared environment**

The foundational work on “Nature and Nurture” using Swedish siblings showed that the largest part of income differentials between siblings resulted from the environmental factors that were not common to them (Bjorklund et al., 2005). The results showed that 64 per cent of differences in earnings were not accounted for by genetics or the environment common to both siblings (Bjorklund et al., 2005).

The tendency to focus on just intergenerational relationships was raised as a shortcoming. There has been insufficient focus on the wider set of factors that impact on siblings. The development of a child should be tracked from early childhood into adulthood (Bjorklund & Salvanes, 2010). An understanding of this would be beneficial in expanding the knowledge base in this area.

Qualitative research will allow for the opportunity to engage with individuals to discover the possible environmental factors and probe in understanding their possible role in social mobility.

### **2.15. Community**

Naturally the role of the community is an area worth delving into to establish what role the community has on mobility. A study into the years of schooling between siblings and neighbourhood children showed that the sibling correlations were higher than between neighbourhood children (Solon, Page, & Duncan, 2000). It was assumed that the family background was similar and neighbourhood effects were taken into effect (Solon et al., 2000), so it meant that the educational achievement was due to the shared family background between siblings

Nolan et al. (2010) cited many other studies which showed that the family background has a larger influence on the mobility of a child when compared to the community impact. However, one has to question whether this conclusion holds true across countries. Africa, Asia and South America and developing countries in general are known to be more communal and they are often described as collectivist in their cultural approach (Triandis & Suh, 2002).

Community networks have been shown to be extremely beneficial to members in terms of support (financial and non-financial), guidance and access to jobs. The benefits may not always be available to all community members and depends on the in and out group (Munshi, 2014). Munshi (2014) also learnt that community networks may frown upon members that want to obtain independence.

It will be noteworthy to try to establish through in-depth interviews what the role of the community has been in South Africa. Whether it has played an important role in upbringing, had a negative effect or a combination of both

## **2.16. Finances**

A child's higher education attainment will also depend on the family's resources both monetary and non-monetary (Corak, 2013). In a country like South Africa, policy reforms aimed to close the gap between educational qualities of opportunity. Solon (in Corak, 2013) asserts that investment in quality education at a primary and secondary school level will benefit the lower income groups. If the finances were used for tertiary education access, the rich would stand to benefit more, as access is limited.

Research shows that the low income community in South Africa experiences a problem with father's and the provision of maintenance support for their children. (Madhavan, Richter, Norris, & Hosegood, 2014). This in turn leads to the question as to what role does the father have in the offspring's life? It is hoped that this research will shed some light on this matter.

Low income levels curtail a child's educational access to school, extracurricular activities, books and other associated requirements. Furthermore, the single parent family structure could result in one income, a lower one, only. It is said that single mothers are often low income, so this will impact more on their children (Hampden-Thompson, 2013). The greater the number of children in a family, the less resources there will be to go around (Coleman, 1988).

In a fast developing South African context, where admirable efforts have been made to level the gender playing fields, more women are studying and in high positions. It would be important to establish how this new role would affect a child. However, the attitude of a poor parent in relation to tertiary education also needs to be ascertained.

The choice of studies is also linked to the income level of parents. It is believed that children of rich people will choose to study in more expensive fields and also possibly longer (Black & Devereux, 2010). While affordability, access to credit and bursaries dictate the type of studies and duration for the lower social economic class (Black & Devereux, 2010).

Once children of colour from under privileged backgrounds succeed in life, there is an unwritten obligation that they will assist the family and even extended family financially and otherwise (Seid, 2016). The unofficial term for this concept is “black tax.” In a recent survey, 38 per cent of people from a 14 000 strong sample cited black tax as a key factor preventing them from succeeding (Seid, 2016). The gravity of the situation is evident when unemployment and low education levels were cited by 45 per cent of the sample.

### **2.17. Risk**

Studies have been carried out to determine whether the risk attitudes of children are in anyway affected by their parent’s response to risk. In a study examining the level of risk offspring were willing to take in terms of occupation, compared to their parents, positive correlations were found. The literature shows that high risk children are more likely to have inherited this quality from their parents. However studies have also shown that intergenerational transmission is only able to explain a small portion of risk (Necker & Voskort, 2014).

### **2.18. Conclusion**

The importance and complexity of intergenerational mobility has been outlined above. Extensive literature exists on a multitude of aspects on intergenerational mobility. Several quantitative models have been devised and studies carried out to try to understand the factors that shape people’s social mobility trajectory.

The extant literature is clear that the thinking has moved from a pure genetic model of parent-child inheritance to one that also encompasses the environmental factors beyond the control of an individual. The need for more research into the nurture concept has been stated often.

This study will focus on the nuclear and extended family, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the specific roles they play on intergenerational mobility.

## **3. Chapter 3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

### **3.1. Purpose of the Research**

The extant literature has led to several questions arising. The most important being whether the family structure plays a role in enabling intergenerational mobility. The family structure in South Africa has been shown to be different and highly complex. The nuclear family and extended family compositions are both important in the country.

### **3.2. Research Questions**

#### **3.2.1. Research Question 1**

What is the role of the nuclear family in intergenerational mobility?

#### **3.2.2. Research Question 2**

What is the role of the extended family in intergenerational mobility?

## 4. Chapter 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

“The more important reason is that the research itself provides an important long-run perspective on the issues that we face on a day-to-day basis.”

***-Ben Bernanke, Former Chairman of the central bank of the United States and economist***

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology utilised in this study. The research gap identified through the literature review warrants an in depth understanding of the underlying reasons for intergenerational mobility in an emerging market. In order to achieve this outcome, an exploratory study was undertaken.

### 4.2. Research Method and Design

Exploratory research is aimed at uncovering information on an issue which is not clearly pellucid (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Bhattacharjee (2012) explains that exploratory research is used for enquiry into new themes, to amongst others establish the extent of a phenomenon and find new insights. The study is cross-sectional.

The literature review revealed large levels of quantitative methods, which were largely based on prediction (Arrondel, 2013; Augustine, 2014; Becker et al., 2015; Bjorklund et al., 2005; Brunori et al., 2013; Chetty et al., 2014; Nielsen & Roos, 2015; Piraino, 2015; Solon, 2002; Torche, 2015). Given (2008) pronounces that research conducted in a largely ex-ante manner on a dynamic topic will benefit from exploratory methods as the emphasis is on an ex-post approach.

The primary focus of intergenerational mobility research was on income and earnings, generally parent – child. Goldberger (1989) cautioned against the almost exclusive use of monetary data as a means of understanding the mechanics of mobility. Studies increasingly began to indicate that exogenous factors had a more important role than previously anticipated in the future of a child. The pioneering work into “nature and nurture,” accentuated the need for further research into the external environment (Bjorklund et al.,

2005). The need to delve further into environment and family factors was articulated as far back as 1976 by Taubman (1976). The literature review shows a slow uptake into examining the exogenous mobility factors. As the research began to gain momentum, it became clear that environmental factors were not sufficiently catered for (Björklund & Jäntti, 2012; Bjorklund et al., 2005; Brunori et al., 2013a; Buchmann & Hannum, 2001; Corak, 2013, 2016; Goldberger, 1989; Hampden-Thompson, 2013; Jaeger, 2012, 2012; Martin, 2012; Piraino, 2015; Sacerdote, 2010; Taubman, 1976; Torche, 2015). A review of the literature shows significant quantitative research on environmental factors.

A requirement for exploratory research was established. The literature has not interrogated the real life realities on intergenerational mobility sufficiently. The developing country is of particular interest to intergenerational researchers (Beutel & Anderon, 2008; Bossuroy & Cogneau, 2013; Buchmann & Hannum, 2001; Fosu, 2015; Keswell et al., 2013; Neidhöfer, 2016; Roser & Cuaresma, 2016; Salehi-Isfahani et al., 2014) and institutions such as the World Bank (Brunori et al., 2013a). Country level data was usually used and lacked engagement with developing world citizens.

Exploratory research allows for an open-ended wide focus at first which becomes more circumscribed as the study advances (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). This is a suitable approach for the research at hand, as the flexibility will allow for initial themes to be uncovered, which will provide direction for the study.

Exploratory research can take the form of either quantitative or qualitative designs but qualitative tends to dominate (Given, 2008). Qualitative research is popularly used in sociology research (Flick, 2009). The high rate of change and diversity in society requires an understanding of new concepts, contexts and outlooks. This in turn demands an inductive approach as the inferences from deductive research may not hold true. Qualitative research is fitting for the study conducted due to the need to understand the underlying, deeper factors responsible for mobility.

Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin (2013, p.132) postulate that the focus on qualitative research, “is on discovering true inner meanings and insights. “ Qualitative research was apt for this study as it allowed the researcher to interpret the data rigorously and not confine the study to numbers.



Qualitative research is commonly employed when; the research aim is to comprehend an occurrence more elaborately, to understand how a situation develops in its natural environment or when a new slant is required in examining a topic (Zikmund et al., 2013). Zikmund et al. (2013) goes as far as to profess that qualitative research tools are intended to detect cardinal themes stipulating human enthusiasm and inspiration.

Interviewing is a qualitative method that will result in data for exploratory research (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The outcome of in-depth qualitative interviews is rich, comprehensive information chronicling life experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This method does not confine the respondent to set answer choices but instead allows for elaboration, contestation and an overall flexible approach.

Qualitative research allowed the researcher to grasp the value attached to intergenerational mobility by individuals in South Africa. It also enabled the researcher to view the topic through various lenses, which would not have been possible if a quantitative method was adopted. This approach lent to an inductive technique which provided the researcher an opportunity to gain a glimpse into the life of the interviewee. The individual information provided by each participant, allowed for the specific details to be used to construct primary themes (Creswell, 2014). The use of this method allows, “a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation,” (Creswell, 2014).

### **4.3. Population/Universe**

The population or universe refers to the entire set of members that the study focuses on (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). In this instance there are two populations that are relevant.

- The first is all black South Africans (African, Indian and Coloured) above the age of twenty-five. A minimum age has been imposed to ensure that the participant has had time to complete higher education and pursue a career
- The second population is the parents of African, Indian and Coloured children over the age of twenty-five.

A decision was made not to include the white population in South Africa due to their historically advantaged position. The fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) wave of NIDS statistics also show that poverty and race are still tightly interlinked, with the white population still most unlikely to be afflicted by poverty (Zizzamia et al., 2016). From the four classes, the white population only comprises 0.82 per cent of the poor in South Africa, while the African population makes up 90.46 per cent of the poor category, with 57.39 per cent of the elite group belonging to the white race group and just 23.94 per cent from the African portion (Zizzamia et al., 2016). To read this in context, the 2015 mid-year population estimates indicated the national population at 54, 956 900, with the white population comprising 8.3 per cent and the African group at 80.5 per cent (Statistics SA, 2015). Due to the large racial disparity between the rich and poor, it is logical that the black population be studied, in order to provide insights into the reasons for this phenomenon.

#### **4.4. Unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis was the individual – whether a parent or child. Their life experiences were analysed in terms of intergenerational mobility. The extant literature on intergenerational mobility emphasises the parent-child relationship as the most important one for intergenerational mobility.

#### **4.5. Sample**

##### **4.5.1. Sampling method**

A sampling frame refers to every single element in a population (Zikmund et al., 2013). While a sampling frame does exist, it would be difficult to obtain all the contact details of the members. In addition it would be extremely expensive and time consuming to attempt to conduct the study with all members.

Since no sampling frame was available, non-probability sampling was used (Zikmund et al., 2013). Due to the personal nature of the interviews to be conducted, the researcher exercised discretion in choosing suitable candidates. First a quota sampling technique was applied, in order to ensure that each sub-group (African, Indian and Coloured) formed part of the sample. Next judgment sampling was used, the researcher took the age of

interviewees into account and focused where possible on participants where a close relationship existed. The reason for this was to leverage off existing networks and engage with participants that already trusted the researcher. Thereafter snowball sampling was utilised, where the initial participants recommended additional participants that they felt would be suitable for the study.

#### 4.5.2. Selection and Number of Interviewees

The sample size for qualitative will be small when compared to quantitative (Creswell, 2014). (Creswell, 2014) puts this down to the need to collect extensive data from a small number of respondents. McCracken (1988) posits that eight (8) respondents are adequate for qualitative interviews. The researcher needs to be mindful that the small sample is not intended to represent a large world but it is to allow for access into the complex life and culture of an individual. Saturation is another method that can be used to determine when to stop collecting data. Saturation is reached when no new data or codes are generated which means that all angles of the topic have been exhausted (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Due to the diverse nature of the sample, fifteen (15) interviews were conducted. There was an equal split of five (5) interviewees per race group. Four (4) of the interviewees were children and three (3) were parents, per race group.

**Table 3: List of interviewees**

No.	Race	Age	Gender	Income	Employment	Marital Status	No. of Children	Religion
P1	African	29	Male	R 500 000 – R 800 000	Middle Manager	Single	Zero (0)	Christian
P2	African	57	Female	R 200 000 – R 500 000	Professional Nurse	Married	One (1)	Christian
P3	African	26	Female	Zero (0)	Unemployed	Single	Zero (0)	Christian
P4	African	38	Female	R 800 000 +	Senior Manager	Single	One (1)	Christian

No.	Race	Age	Gender	Income	Employment	Marital Status	No. of Children	Religion
P5	African	33	Male	R 800 000 +	Senior Manager	Single	Zero (0)	Christian
P6	Coloured	32	Female	R 800 000 +	Senior Manager	Single	Zero (0)	None
P7a	Coloured	36	Male	Zero (0)	Unemployed	Married	Four (4)	Christian
P7b	Coloured	32	Female	Below R 200 000	Administrator	Married	Four (4)	Christian
P8	Indian	47	Male	R 200 000 – R 500 000	Middle Manager	Married	Two (2)	Hindu
P9	Indian	43	Male	R 800 000 +	Senior Manager	Married	Three (3)	Hindu
P10	Coloured	59	Female	R 200 000 – R 500 000	Administrator	Married	Two (2)	Christian
P11	Indian	47	Male	Zero (0)	Unemployed	Single	Zero (0)	Hindu
P12	Coloured	35	Male	R 800 000 +	Senior Manager	Married	Two (0)	Christian
P13	Indian	27	Female	R 800 000 +	Medical professional	Married	Zero (0)	Hindu
P14	Indian	55	Male	R 800 000 +	Senior Manager	Married	Three (3)	Hindu

**Table 4: Word count and duration of interviews**

No.	Designation	Province of Birth	Province of Residence	Duration of Interview	Word Count
P1	Child 1	Limpopo	Gauteng	01:14:42	11 214
P2	Mother 1	Gauteng	Gauteng	01:15:49	10 948
P3	Child 2	Gauteng	Gauteng	01:14:44	14 616
P4	Child 3	KwaZulu-Natal	Gauteng	01:39:01	15 984
P5	Child 4	Gauteng	Gauteng	01:35:33	14 261
P6	Child 5	Gauteng	Gauteng	01:19:20	10 240
P7a	Child 6	Gauteng	Gauteng	01:01:55	8876
P7b	Child 7	Gauteng	Gauteng	Joint interview	Joint interview
P 8	Child 8	Gauteng	Gauteng	00:56:19	9382
P9	Child 9	KwaZulu-Natal	Gauteng	01:26:28	10 983
P10	Mother 2	Gauteng	Gauteng	01:06:28	7259
P11	Child 10	Gauteng	Gauteng	01:15:34	10 448
P12	Child 11	KwaZulu-Natal	Gauteng	02:11:21	19 134
P13	Child 12	KwaZulu-Natal	KwaZulu-Natal	00:44:41	6417
P14	Father 1	KwaZulu-Natal	KwaZulu-Natal	00:45:26	5895
TOTALS				17:47:21	11 118
AVERAGE PER INTERVIEW				01:16:14	155 657

#### 4.6. Interview Process and Schedule

A questionnaire was devised for purposes of one-on-one interviews. The questionnaire consisted of both unstructured and semi structured questions. The questionnaire was broad and began with general questions on intergenerational mobility. Possible themes had been identified and these topics had follow up questions to further understand the matter. The interview was estimated to last between one (1) and one (1) and a half hours.

A pilot test is recommended in order to establish any challenges or shortcomings in administering the questionnaire (Bhattacharjee et al., 2012). Due to severe time constraints the researcher was only able to conduct one pre-interview. Constructive feedback was received from the pilot interviewee and possible confusion or misinterpretation of questions was identified. The researcher was mindful to elucidate adequately to interviewees and ensure that questions were posed at the correct level for respective respondents.

The researcher strove to conduct all interviews on a face-to-face basis. One-on-one face-to-face interviews were identified as the best approach for the study. Face to face interviews are suggested for amongst others sensitive topics, to unpack complex issues, it allows for interactive conversation and respondents are able to mull over responses (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003). Two (2) of the 15 interviews were conducted telephonically, due to the participants residing permanently in KwaZulu-Natal. Due to the time constraints, the researcher was not in a position to travel to KwaZulu-Natal for the purposes of an interview. Telephone and face to face interviewing have their merits and disadvantages. However, it was postulated that respondents have a propensity to provide short answers to some questions in comparison to face to face interviews (Groves, 2004). An assessment of the length of interviews confirm that the two (2) shortest interviews conducted, had taken place telephonically.

The researcher had established rapport with a significant portion of the sample due to existing relationships or interactions. Through the snowball sampling technique, initial participants identified other suitable candidates. The referring person vouched for the researcher as the first point to begin the trust building process (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In an attempt to build trust with the interviewees, the researcher contacted all possible respondents telephonically and provided background on the research project. Thereafter the

potential questions and consent form were e-mailed to each participant.

The interview location is mentioned briefly in literature but not explicitly emphasised as a salient matter in the interview process (Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti, & McKinney, 2012). The interview questions could prove to be emotional, confidential or sensitive to some interviewees as it requires a recount of their lives and reflection on the factors that contributed to their current success or lack of it. In such cases, it is recommended that the interviews take place in an undisturbed and private place, such as the respondent's home (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003). All participants were asked to choose the most convenient and comfortable place for them.

The researcher also ensured that there were no additional people present during the interview. The possibility of sensitive or confidential information being divulged did exist due to the nature of the topic. The presence of a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) party could restrain, falsify or misreport answers (Berent, 1966). The request was made by the couple as they wanted to speak about their offspring and the difficulty they were experiencing with him, together.

The questionnaire was drafted to begin with biological and general close ended questions such as age, gender, marital status, occupation and annual salary. The researcher was aware that some respondents were nervous. Therefore she was authentic, friendly and approachable in order to gain their trust and put them at ease (Leech, 2002).

Spradley (2003) recommends the use of grand tour questions to develop rapport. Grand tour questions allow the interviewees to gain focus and feel at liberty to speak (Leech, 2002). McCracken (1988) is also in agreement with the use of grand tour questions as he believes it subtly sets the conversation in motion. All interviewees were asked grand tour questions in order to create the environment for honest discussion and reflection on their life's narrative.

The opening grand question for children (now over 25) was:

- Can you tell me about yourself?

This allowed the participant to begin conversing on their terms. The interviewee would recollect and speak at length about their upbringing and childhood, often reminiscent of the

good, bad or both times. Once the respondent was comfortable speaking on the issues, planned prompts were used by the interviewer to elicit omitted details or understand an aspect that was vaguely presented by the respondent. The planned prompts proved effective to probe unobtrusively (Leech, 2002).

An example of a prompt to a child would be:

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ When describing your success, you mentioned your physical possessions. How important is wealth accumulation for your success?</li></ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ So, to what extent would you help a family member?</li></ul>  |

The opening grand question for parents was:

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What did you want for your child or children in life?</li></ul> |
|---|

Parents responded in a similar manner, recounting their children's upbringing and often becoming sentimental and showing pride or dismay as aspects of their life unfolded. The parents came across as frank and genuine in their responses. Planned prompts were also used to help gain further understanding and also expand on the discussion topics (McCracken, 1988).

An example of a prompt to a parent would be:

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ So, your child wanted to become a medical professional, can you explain what transpired to enable her to attain this career goal?</li></ul>           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ When you described the success of your child, you mentioned the assets and money. How important is money and wealth in determining success?</li></ul> |

Floating prompts were also used quite often by the researcher. The researcher is highly expressive and empathetic and her facial signs and hand gestures would acknowledge a comment, encourage further comments or even lead to elaboration on issues, when the researcher looked puzzled (Vidich, 1955).



#### **4.7. Data Collection and Analysis**

Interviews were established as the best instrument to conduct this study, in view of its exploratory and qualitative nature, which is which well aligned with gaining insights into real life research (Creswell, 2014a). In the data collection process, a diverse range of black South Africans were interviewed using the in-depth interview format. The researcher went through the notes as each interview was completed and began to create a list of emergent themes (Bhattacharjee et al., 2012) and identified commonalities.

#### **4.8. Data Analysis**

The researcher used a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Solution (CAQDAS). The specific software chosen was Atlas ti as it would assist with storing the voluminous data, enable easy search abilities and allow for the linking of data (Flick, 2009).

In the analysis stage, the transcribed data was broken down into smaller chunks, to allow for more convenient analysis. (Creswell, 2014a) qualitative data analysis approach was used. The model has a bottom up approach which was appropriate for the exploratory research. The phases are:

- Organise and prepare the data for analysis (raw data)
- Read or look at all the data (organising and preparing the data for analysis)
- Start coding all of the data (manually or automatically)
- Use the coding process to generate descriptions, themes or categories
- Advance how the themes will be represented
- Interpret the qualitative data findings or results

(Creswell, 2014a)

#### **4.9. Transcript Preparations**

All the interviews were transcribed. As part of the confidentiality agreement, the names of interviewees are not included.

The transcripts represented the primary analysis documents and they were loaded onto a new atlas ti hermeneutic unit. The primary documents were coded on a line-by-line basis,

from the first to the last page. The codes were developed in accordance to the main themes that had emerged from the interviews. It was interesting to note how loaded some statements were and this resulted in one (1) passage containing multiple codes (Kuckartz, 2014).

The transcripts were filled with deep, detailed information from the interviews. The highly descriptive essence of the content had the potential to impede the coding process. In order to prevent the creation of voluminous codes, careful consideration was given to the conceptual and not descriptive aspect of the data (Friese, 2014).

The initial coding process led to the creation of 155 super codes (Appendix C). Thereafter the coding was reassessed according to the dominant themes which would ultimately link to the nuclear and extended family. Themes were merged into families (Friese, 2014). The emergent themes were intricately linked with intergenerational mobility. Due to the broad nature of the interview questions, an interesting variety of themes surfaced. A total of 12 families were generated (Appendix D).

#### **4.10. Validity and Reliability**

The researcher took numerous steps to ensure validity.

Self-reflexivity refers to the researcher's values, bias, past, world view and the effect that this has on the research engagement and interpretation (Tracy, 2013). Creswell (Creswell, 2014) describes reflexivity as a key component of the qualitative research process. It is important to acknowledge these biases as it allows the readers to understand the researcher's perspectives, recognise such and disregard them if required (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The researcher will therefore disclose any bias that could exist due to their specific background. The demographic details of the researcher are cited as an important point to begin (Creswell, 2014; Tracy, 2013; Yin, 2011).

The researcher is a, black South African female of Indian descent. The researcher has spent more than fifteen (15) years as a government official who has been exposed to poverty eradication work and general upliftment initiatives. In addition, the researcher is a strong advocate of access to quality education for South Africans. Race is cited extensively as a

demographic that needs to be accounted for (Tracy, 2013; Yin, 2011). The researcher understands that race is inextricably linked to the concept of context, given South Africa's history of racial segregation and fledgling democracy. The researcher has worked extensively with all South African race groups, which have been racially representative, due to government's adherence to employment equity policies. The researcher is well integrated into South Africa society.

The use of thick, rich description in portraying the content derived from the research process is listed as a means of testing validity (Creswell, 2014a). The use of thick and rich descriptions aims to transport the reader to the actual interview in order to get a more authentic account of the process. The vivid and honest descriptions allow the reader to view the interview through a more relevant lens and thus develops credibility (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The researcher has used descriptive text in presenting the results in chapter 5. It is envisaged that this will heighten the reader's ability to visualise the scenes and add to the validity of the study.

Triangulation is strongly recommended as a method of validation (Bhattacharjee et al., 2012; Creswell, 2014a; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Willis, 2007; Yin, 2011). Triangulation is a process where the researcher consults several sources of information to establish common themes (Creswell, 2014a; Creswell & Miller, 2000). Bhattacharjee et al. (2012) caution that non-triangulation runs the risk of introducing interpretation bias. The researcher has engaged with multiple documents as evidenced in the literature review and also examined the interview scripts in order to derive coherent themes. (Creswell, 2014a; Willis, 2007) confirm that utilising triangulation can avouch for credibility in qualitative studies.

Yin, (2011) does however state that the process of triangulation is less important to confirm validity where the interviews have been properly captured and recorded. The researcher would like to reiterate that all interviews were voice recorded and thereafter transcribed professionally. In light of Yin's (2014) statements, the accurate documentation of the interviews can be considered as a method of reinforcing credibility as it presents an accurate account of the interview.

Due to the richness, intensity and complexity of the resulting data, the researcher employed

the peer debriefing mechanism. The data emanating from the research was presented and discussed with five (5) individuals, separately. A wide representation of individuals were chosen viz. current MBA colleagues, government officials and colleagues in the corporate sector. The peers concurred with a lot of the themes and also provided constructive criticism and insight on the themes. The validity is enhanced as external interpretation has been sought and it is not the exclusive exegesis of the researcher (Creswell, 2014a; Yin, 2011).

The final validation technique used was member checks. Member checks is a process where, interview transcripts and emerging themes are sent to some participants to indicate if there is consensus (Flick, 2009; Willis, 2007). The transcripts were sent to seven (7) interviewees. All seven (7) interviewees confirmed the content of the transcripts. The emergent themes were discussed with them and the participants were generally in agreement with the broad themes. Any additional comments and input were looked into by the researcher. Creswell & Miller( 2000) explain that by changing the focus of the lens from the researcher to the interviewee, the data is verified as a true account of the interview and credibility is thus increased.

#### **4.11. Research Limitations**

The small sample size of fifteen (15) rendered thick, rich data but the size also poses a limitation. Purposive sampling in the form of non-probability techniques were used, which allowed the researcher to exercise personal judgement against a set of criteria in determining members of the sample (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Therefore everyone in the universe did not have an equal chance of being selected. Random sampling error cannot be measured for non-probability methods (Zikmund et al., 2013).Therefore the data cannot be extrapolated outside of the existing sample, since it is not generalisable (Bhattacharjee et al., 2012; Flick, 2009; Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Zikmund et al., 2013).

The researcher undertook a cross-sectional study which represents a point in time (Creswell, 2014a). Intergenerational studies usually require data collection from a large cohort of siblings, children, and parents, grandparents, in order to track trends, patterns and calculate correlations. Longitudinal studies will benefit this space significantly particularly to enhance multigenerational studies. This poses real challenges for data collection for quantitative research designs as long term data is not collected uniformly or even at all. The

extent of this problem was highlighted by a cross country analysis of intergenerational mobility (Blanden, 2013). However in view of the time, a cross-sectional study was the only option available to the researcher.

Respondent bias is a concern; particularly from the low income interviewees. There was a sense of response burden from one (1) interviewee. This could be attributed to the emotionally sensitive nature of some questions (Lavrakas, 2008). The interviewer did everything in their power to gain rapport and put the interviewee at ease. It appeared as though there was a case of social desirability bias with a different low income interviewee. Certain responses were not consistent with others and in the researcher's assessment it could be due to the respondent attempting to create a favourable image of themselves (Bhattacharjee et al., 2012). The researcher cross examined the respondent tactfully and was able to obtain more accurate information. However the extent of untrue responses is difficult to gauge.

## 5. CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH RESULT

**“Supposing is good, but finding out is better.”**

- Mark Twain,

### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter will present the results from the interviews that were conducted. The purpose of this study was to explore nuclear and extended families. The in-depth interviews with a diverse group of the black population in South Africa has revealed some good insights into intergenerational mobility in South Africa.

### 5.2. Description of interview process and respondents

A total of fifteen (15) interviews were conducted in line with the minimum prescription of eight (8) from (McCracken, 1988) and Saunders & Lewis (2012). Due to the diverse sample that was chosen, a decision was taken to conduct 15 interviews.

It must be noted that the sample had a total of eight (8) males and seven (7) females. Therefore there was a slight over representation of males in the overall sample. However on deconstructing the gender for each race group, there were two (2) males and three (3) females in the African category; three (3) females and two (2) males in the Coloured grouping and four (4) males and one (1) female in the Indian portion of the sample.

The education levels of the sample varied; ten (10) of the 12 children interviewed had a formal education in the form of a degree, one (1) had a certificate level qualification and one (1) did not complete matric. From the parents; one (1) parent had a standard (6) qualification, one (1) had a university degree and one (1) had a formal qualification.

The geographic distribution of the sample is not nationally representative. The participants were either born or currently reside in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo. In addition, only two (2) respondents grew up in a rural setting. That is equal comprises 13 per cent of the sample. The rural dynamic is important to the social mobility of South Africa as there is a migration of labour from the rural provinces to the more densely populated provinces.

Due to the broad nature of the questionnaire and extremely diverse contexts of the sample, saturation was not reached in all areas but by the ninth (9) interview, saturation was reached on certain questions and topics.

The sample contained groups of five (5) participants from the African, Indian and Coloured population. In each group of five (5), one (1) parent and child pair was interviewed. It must be noted that a married couple requested to be interviewed jointly. This is not adequate, due to the possibility of distortion or fear to comment on certain issues (Berent, 1966). The couple cited that the joint interview was their preference. The researcher respected this and the request was accommodated. Table 3 provides biological and other general information on each interviewee.

The interviews took place over a three (3) week duration. The majority of the interviewees chose to be interviewed at home or in a boardroom. Two (2) were interviewed in their offices at work, while one (1) requested to meet in a restaurant and the remaining two (2) were interviewed via telephone (Holstein & Gubrium, 2003). The interviewer used a combination of interviewing styles. McCracken's (1988) long interview format was predominantly used. As a trained journalist, the researcher was able to engage empathetically with participant and also probe in an unobtrusive manner (Leech, 2002).

Each respondent was informed about the confidentiality aspect prior to making a decision to participate or not. At the outset, the consent form was explained to each interviewee and they were requested to sign them prior to commencing with the interview. The participants were explicitly informed that the information will be used in a dissertation which could be made public. However, their names would not be recorded in any part of the document or supporting data. All interviewees chose to participate voluntarily and were comfortable with the provision of confidentiality (Yin, 2011).

All interviews were voice recorded using a cell phone. Permission was obtained from each interviewee to record the interview (Wahyuni, 2012). The interviewer took notes on key points during the interview. Questions that arose as the interview progressed were also noted and asked at a later relevant point. All interviews were transcribed, for the purpose of analysis by professional transcribers. The researcher checked the scripts and ensured that

the content was reflective of the interviews. Where parts of the conversation were inaudible the researcher was able to fill in the missing information wherever possible.

A pilot test of the interview was conducted on a person known to the researcher (Olsen, 2012). This was to allow the researcher to practice the flow of the questions and also adjust anything that required attention. Notes were taken during the interview but it does not form part of this study. The interviews began with non-threatening closed questions such as age and was followed a descending chronological order (Bhattacharjee et al., 2012). Once the first interview took place, the researcher was able to reflect more fittingly on the process. An issue that was observed during the inaugural interview was the slight discomfort around speaking about childhood poverty and family background. The researcher realised the sensitivity of the matter, particularly where the childhood may have been less than desirable. Ten (10) of the interviewees were known to the interviewer. The researcher is aware that there is a perception by some researchers that interviews should not be conducted with people known to the interviewer. Due to the delicate nature of the topic, the researcher realised that it would be beneficial to speak to people that she already had a relationship with. The researcher's peers were willing to assist and understood their role in contributing to an understudied area of intergenerational mobility. However, it is for this reason that the exact occupation of interviewees were not disclosed but only provided in broad categories.

### 5.3. Legend for the interviewees

C = Child

M = Male

A = African

C = Coloured

I = Indian

P = Parent

F = Female

E.g. C1\_M\_A = Child 1, Male, African and P1\_C\_F = Parent 1, Coloured, Female

\* Note that the first C represents the child and the second C describes the Coloured race group.



#### 5.4. Word Cruncher

A list of all the words from the interview transcripts was derived using the Word Cruncher analysis tool in Atlas ti. The overall number of words used was 72 018. Irrelevant words composed of three (3) letters and less, such as articles, propositions and conjunction were eliminated. A total of 5427 unique words were identified. The complete list was moved to an excel spreadsheet. The researcher was able to quantify the most recurrent words and the category it belonged to.

The top 20 most commonly used words appear in the table below. These words provided a superficial look at the

Table 5 Top 20 Word count

No.	Word	Length	Frequency
1.	school	13	952
2.	children	25	684
3.	working	14	567
4.	mum	9	420
5.	life	4	392
6.	people	6	358
7.	education	9	327
8.	money	5	315
9.	class	5	306
10.	home	4	271
11.	family	6	268
12.	parents	7	246
13.	house	5	218
14.	father	6	210
15.	child	5	160
16.	better	6	159
17.	community	9	158
18.	feel	4	158
19.	help	4	157

20.	mean	4	157
-----	------	---	-----

The researcher then grouped similar words that emerged in important thematic areas, to provide an overview of the frequency of mentions. In the instance of nuclear family, father, mother, brother and sister and all their synonyms were clustered, to provide an aggregated word count. This thematic consolidation indicated the predominant themes that were emerging. From this process, it became evident that education was still the most recurrent theme, with 1397 reproductions. The nuclear family was the second most repeated topic with 897 mentions, followed by community with 612 repeats and this was followed by the extended family, at 271.

It is worth mentioning that the consolidation of community related words was not as straight forward as with the other themes. This was due to the numerous elements of community. The researcher exercised discretion in determining the qualifying words.

No.	Word	Length	Frequency
Education			
1.	School	13	952
2.	Education	9	327
3.	University	10	97
4.	College	7	21
TOTAL			1397

Nuclear Family			
1.	father	6	210
2.	mother	6	204
3.	brother	7	141
4.	dad	3	99
5.	sister	6	97
6.	sisters	7	43
7.	brothers	8	35
8.	brother'	8	12
9.	sibling	7	11
10	parents'''	8	10
11	mothers	7	8
12	mummy	5	4
13	daddy	5	2
14	fathers	7	2
15	mums	4	2
16	dads	4	1
17	daddy''	6	1
18	daddies	7	1
19	siblings'	9	1
20	siblings'	9	1
21	Brother...	8	1
22	parents''''	8	1
TOTAL			887

Extended Family			
1.	grandparents	12	100
2.	aunt	4	49
3.	uncle	5	59
4.	nieces	6	3
5.	nephews	7	3
6.	relatives	9	6
7.	cousins	7	51
TOTAL			271
Community			
1.	community	9	164
2.	church	6	79
3.	township	8	73
4.	religion	8	70
5.	god	3	58
6.	area	4	43
7.	Christian	9	26
8.	suburbs	7	25
9.	neighbourhood	13	19
10.	village	7	10
11.	Hindu	5	9
12.	residence	9	9
13.	catholic	8	7
14.	Christianity	12	6
15.	pastor	6	3
16.	sangoma	7	3
17.	Anglican	8	2
18.	Hinduism	8	2
19.	Location	8	2
20.	Almighty	8	1
21.	Temple	6	1
TOTAL			612

## 5.5. Data

The data that was yielded from the interview process proved to be rich, vibrant and had the ability to transport the interviewer to the reality of the interviewee's narratives. In addition, due to the in-depth interview nature of the qualitative design, the data collected was extremely comprehensive and dense. The resultant thick, rich, descriptions are commensurate with the validity mechanisms for qualitative research (Creswell, 2014b; Creswell & Miller, 2000).

## 5.6. Inductive

The exploratory nature of the study is typical of a qualitative design. The purpose of this research is to try to better understand the challenge of intergenerational mobility in the emerging market, from a family perspective. It falls in the domain of the real world and is in line with the inductive process. The interviewer started a process of interviews which also allowed for observations and a feel for the sample population. As each interview progressed, the details of the interviews began to contribute to predominant themes (Gray, 2013). The bottom up approach was utilised as the various narratives, incidents, experiences helped the researcher visualise the mobility trajectory (Yin, 2011).

## 5.7. Themes

The purpose of this study is to establish the role of the nuclear and extended family in the intergenerational mobility of black South Africans. The context of this research is set against a backdrop of dramatically changing family environment's and structures, globally and locally.

Intergenerational mobility has garnered major interest from researchers. Research in this area is framed in terms of the Nature and Nurture concept. The researcher's explicit focus is on nurture; from a family background perspective. Researchers have indicated that the family background as an exogenous factor is important and that the level of knowledge on the impact is not adequately known.

Figure 2: Visual representation of emergent themes

Figure 2: Visual Representation of Themes



Source: Researcher's Own Compilation

### Research Question 1:

What is the role of the nuclear family in enabling intergenerational mobility?

#### 5.7.1. Characteristics of family structure and contexts in black communities

The first theme to emerge from the coding process was on the family structure and context of black families. This is a complicated issue but it is compulsory to understand this as it begins to build a picture on the surroundings, complexities and features of the black family in South Africa. This theme formed the first step in the bottom up inductive research process aimed at understanding the underlying family contributions to intergenerational mobility.

An interesting array of super codes comprised this theme. There were 17 codes in total that that were identified as relating to family structure and context. The family's financial standing

in terms of poverty emerged as the most critical characteristic, with 29 mentions. Interviewees commented about the difficult economic conditions under which they were brought up. The circumstances were harsh and money was scarce. This is evidenced by the quotes below:

*"In my family I'm told we were one of the poorest in the community. I'm told we used to sleep with no food."*

**(C1\_A\_M, 504:611)**

*"No I don't think she could really afford it (sending me to study), we just made ends meet, so we ate two minute noodles most of the evenings and eggs and viennas, I never ate lunch so for me to go study we sacrificed eating, going out, I didn't have clothes I wore the same jeans every day for a whole year and then I would go and buy myself a new jeans next year. So I don't think she really could afford it but I think she just sacrificed to make it work."*

**(C5\_C\_F, 1918:2360)**

*"In the beginning, we never had a home, so we stayed around with other family.... Ok at first, we stayed at various family members, you know, we moved, moved, moved and this was also between place x and place y, and we lived in a caravan for about 4 years –that was my mum, myself and my brother and then we moved to this house."*

**(C11\_I\_M, 825:1230)**

(Some information has been changed to protect the identity of the respondent)

*"I can say I could do it, but it was difficult, and I was doing it alone, and my parents had never been to University (bursary recipient); they had no idea of the challenges; the home that we lived in, we didn't have a desk, I used to work on the floor, so, I mean, there were other things besides having ability and wanting to be ... follow a certain career path."*

**(C8\_C\_M, 238:812)**

*"This is not a topic that we ever discuss at home. I don't think there were savings; no. I remember when things went wrong, there was no buffer; we were in it. My father used to sell from our peach tree in our yard, for R2 a peach outside xx Company because there was no money."*

**(C8\_C\_M, 100:469)**

(Some information has been changed to protect the identity of the respondent)

*"That was wow, so let me tell you about this experience. Remember I said to you I had been exposed to a running tap or when I visit my mom, so now I come and I have my own bed and this, okay so I should've told you, so at*

*home I had been only sleeping with my grand mom in her bed and it wasn't even a fantasy to fantasize about my own bed."*

(C3\_A\_F – 2080:2423)

#### **5.7.1.1. Early Childhood Responsibilities**

Early childhood responsibilities featured highly on the list of family characteristics, at 25. There was general mention about household chores, largely due to working parents. Some of the children were also expected to contribute financially to the household while they were still attending school.

*"...my father went through a like, he was laid off, so me and my brothers worked for a bakery and the money we earned my mum was really, really able to spread it so she knew how to cook food that would last."*

(C9\_I\_M, 19:571)

Twenty-five (25) comments were made on the family unity and nurturing aspect. The sense of caring, Ubuntu and happiness resonate through this sub-theme. The large black families are mentioned as well as the discipline instilled in children, being respectful and what can be interpreted as a sense of belonging.

#### **5.7.1.2. Bridging the Parent Guide**

An inkling of parents that were not fully present at all times becomes visible. The presence of role models such as teachers, older siblings and uncles are highlighted. Fond memories of grandparents are mentioned. This is an attempt to fill the evident parenting gaps that exist.

Emotional scars from past incidents appears quite prominently with 19 quotations. An assessment of the quotations provides domestic violence, alcoholism, polygamy, absent fathers, early parental death, early spousal death, early death of sibling and the loss of parents.



Importance of shared family values towards education and self-development had a moderate number of quotations recorded on shared educational values. Twelve (12) quotes to be precise.

Table 6: Characteristics of family structures & contexts in black communities SA

Characteristics of family structures & contexts in black communities SA	Children	Parent	Totals:
Indications of family financial standing: Poverty	29	0	29
Family unity and nurturing interaction	20	5	25
Substitute parent figures who bridged the gap of daily parental support	19	4	23
Importance of shared family values towards education and self-development	7	5	12
Strained family relations stemming from childhood disappointments	7	1	8
Spouse educational & professional background	4	8	12
Own perceptions of upbringing	4	0	4
Unconventional family home set up: Polygamous	4	0	4
Unconventional family background: Alcoholic parent	3	0	3
Unsupportive spouse	3	0	3
Unconventional family background: Raised by Aunt with cousins	2	0	2
Unconventional family home setting: Raised by grandmother & cousins	1	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>126</b>

### 5.7.1.3. The role of fathers on intergenerational mobility

The role of the father in determining a child's intergenerational mobility arises as a theme. However in contrast to the family structure, which resulted in 179 quotes, only 44 quotes were obtained in the category of father. Eight (8) codes were merged to obtain the overarching topic of fathers and the socio-economic impact they have or do not have on their offspring.

The eight aspects on father's show that six (6) are tending to negative aspects and only two (2) are neutral to positive. The table below shows the break down per category. The linkages between the family structure starts to unfold, as the inductive research continues to move from the bottom to the top.

Table 7: The role of fathers on intergenerational mobility

The role of fathers on intergenerational mobility	Children	Parent	TOTALS:
Experience of father figure Absent and irrelevant	11	3	14
Influence of father on life values	7	3	10
Experience of father figure_ Abusive	5	1	6
Experience of father figure Lack of support for education	4	0	4
Impact of absent fathers on child development	3	2	5
Experience of father figure Present and accessible	3	1	4
Experience of father figure_ Gangster	1	0	1
Experience of father figure Inconsistent financial support	1	0	1
TOTALS:	35	10	45

#### 5.7.1.4. Experience of father figure – Absent and irrelevant

*“My son’s father – we didn’t get married. I raised him as a single mother, as a single parent. We split when he was still a baby and we had married traditionally, so I literally raised him alone.”*

**(P1\_A\_F,1483:1681)**

*“... One time he would say “You know, sometimes I faked my father, and then I said, ‘My father this, this, this, this’” Even though we were split, but he gave a report in class as though we were together, everything, you know?”*

**(P1\_A\_F,1338:1918)**

*“My memory of him was he is very much a charismatic man, he is quite gregarious ... I think he’s very self-absorbed and I even remember that as a child, and I think he’s very selfish as well and I think he’s not a nice man. I know this from a child because I would see him with other women when my mother was at work, you know; it being flirtatious or whatever, and I also know this from my mother, growing up, that, I know we were kicked out. ”*

**(C4\_A\_M – 732:1684)**

*“But, I think the painful memory was when he drove past us in the rain with his other kid – he’d impregnated someone in the same street as us – so, my memory of him is very gregarious, very charming, but very self-centred and it’s all about him. I lived with him for a year, and my mother and I moved out.”*

**(C4\_A\_M – 1687:2186)**

*“My father – when I grew up I never really knew I had a father. It wasn’t so much of a big deal because he was never a part of my life. I met him when my mum died, so he was this complete stranger and I never really knew him – even after my mum died – he would come, but I understand that he had a relationship with my siblings; I don’t know what happened with me, um, they somehow cliqued with him and they also had a relationship with his part of the family, but we never connected. ”*

**(C2\_A\_F. 23:2:650.)**

*“My father – when I grew up I never really knew I had a father. It wasn’t so much of a big deal because he was never a part of my life. I met him when my mum died, so he was this complete stranger and I never really knew him – even after my mum died – he would come, but I understand that he had a relationship with my siblings; I don’t know what happened with me, um, they somehow cliqued with him and they also had a relationship with his part of the family, but we never connected. ”*

**(C2\_A\_F. 23:2:650.)**

“...like I said the fact that he wasn’t there, it pushed me to make something better of myself because it angered me that you can have a child and just desert the child. It didn’t make sense to me. So, but in terms of support because I didn’t know him, there was nothing from him or of him he couldn’t, he, I would even lie at some point at varsity when people ask about your father it’s just tiring because you explain that you don’t know your father. I just say no he died.”

C3\_A\_F (17:848)

“So my father was, I hated him. I absolutely despised him... For the entire 17 years of my life they (parents) fought. He hit her all the time. So my sorry excuse for not getting an exemption in matric is that they were beating each other up every night. ..I don’t have anything good to say about him. He was not a role model, he was not an upright citizen, he was pretentious, he lied to the rest of the world, he hit me twice... ya and we have no relationship now. I don’t know anything about him.

(C5\_C\_F,1314-:2090)

*“I’d seen (only ever) him (my father) three times.”*

**(C11\_I\_M, 1399:1423)**

#### **5.7.1.5. Influence of father on life values**

The impact of the father on family values surfaced as the second issued linked to absent fathers. On inspection, all the quotes pertained to the father and education or values. The African female parent spoke fondly of her parents – a father who was a driver and a housewife mother. The emphasis on education on the life of this parent was sown through her parents.

*“My mother has always been unemployed, my father was working at Company X– he was a driver there. But they loved education – they wanted us to go to school.”*

**(P1\_A\_F,2780 :2976)**

#### **5.7.1.6. Emphasis of education at a young age**

An Indian male child in the sample described himself as risk averse. This was attributed to his upbringing and directly to his father who had held down employment for close to four (4) decade’s. His risk profile was also qualified by his responsibilities towards his children in terms of ensuring the provision of basic needs and education.

*"I suppose one of the reasons could be the paternal influence of my father having worked for one company for nearly four (4) decades, I think the other one the other reason is having kids that I need to and am accountable for as far as education is concerned and making sure that they are clothed and fed, that also makes me approach risk very cautiously."*

**(C1-I\_M, 17:361)**

The espousing of good values such as generosity, kindness and appreciation is echoed by the Indian father (P3\_I\_M) that was interviewed. The importance of attaining an education was accentuated, to the extent that the parent described education as a weapon. This parent's stance on education was more specific, in that the requirement for his children was stated as a graduate degree.

An Indian male child (C9\_I\_M) indicated that it was not within the realm of his parent's worldview to prioritise higher education for their offspring. However, he encountered overwhelming support and encouragement for education from his father-in-law. This experience has contributed to the respondent's value system and is now an essential conviction that he drives as a father. This has also become a parenting value, where he is cognisant of his accountability towards ensuring that he is able to support his children's educational development and goals.

*"...my wife's stepfather... (a retired surgeon). ...the one thing she acknowledged is he always encouraged them to study. He didn't force them. So she studied and he was always there to bring the material part. So he would pay, he wanted them just to study and he would selflessly pay for anything they wanted to study. So he encourages education without imposing what it is they (should study)."*

**(C9\_I\_M, 2231:2771)**

In contrast the African female child who had been abandoned by her father, had a desire to be successful but it was borne from her dislike towards her father. The abandonment impacted on her and this was linked to the building block of the emotional scars, described as a black family context. Her father's decision not to be involved in her life served to bolster her tenacity to achieve.

*"I now started having some feelings towards my father like ill feelings I guess. I wanted to do well because he abandoned me so I want to show him that I actually don't need him, I could just be as fine without him."*

**(C3\_A\_F, 765:982)**

In terms of values, a disparate issue was unearthed from the interview with a Coloured child (C8\_C\_M). The matter related to race and the emphasis placed on the fair skinned versus the dark skinned coloured person. The father of the coloured child, sensitised his sons to the race and complexion dynamic at a young age. The father opined that his fair skinned son would have more opportunities and exposure, while his darker skinned child ran the risk of being denied opportunities and having to work harder to achieve in life.

*“My father sat my brother and I down – 5 years apart – my father’s dark-skinned, my mother’s lighter than me – my father explained that I’m fairer and I’m going to have more opportunities in my life, and he’s darker and he’s going to have less opportunities, and he’s going to have to work harder to have the same success that I will have to – that I will be exposed to.”*

**(C8\_C\_M, 2587:2967)**

#### **5.7.1.7. Experience of father figure – Abusive**

Abusive father figure relationships are cited six (6) times. The abuse relates to alcoholism, violence against the mother and child, as well as authoritarianism. Five (5) of the instances were mentioned by children and one (1) was by a parent. The abuse was described in detail in some instances and it ranged in severity from moderate to extremely harsh.

The Coloured female parent P2\_C\_F explains continued violence perpetrated against her mother by her father. One incident left the respondents mother with a broken jaw and this led to a separation between the parents. The Coloured female parent is the sister of father of the coloured female child (C5\_C\_F) in this sample. It is noteworthy to highlight that domestic violence was also prevalent in this family. That is the father and son were both violent husbands.

*“He was very abusive actually sometimes, although he was a very good man, when he didn’t drink. He was extremely good and he and I, I kind of forgave him for a lot of stuff before he died and I had no issues with him but I think my brothers and stuff still hold on. They seemed to have held on to a lots of things.”*

**(C9\_I\_M, 19:336)**

*“He used to hit my mother a lot, he used to abuse my mother and the last time when he did that when he broke her jaws and since, I think they weren’t divorced they were like separated for years...”*

**(P2\_C\_F, 1201:1804)**

### **5.7.2. Role of Mothers in Intergenerational Mobility**

The role of mothers in intergenerational mobility resulted in a total of 108 quotations, under 6 super codes.

Table 8: Role of Mothers in Intergenerational mobility

Role of Mothers in Intergenerational mobility	Children	Parent	Total
Influence of mother on life values	24	3	27
Early exposure to hard working women sacrificing to support the family	23	1	24
Maternal influence in formative years	18	6	24
Experience of mother figure financial responsibility for the family	11	0	11
Single parent household: Mother alone	7	6	13
Continued maternal nurturing in adult years	6	5	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>110</b>

#### **5.7.2.1. Influence of mothers on life values**

The inculcation of a savings culture being instilled from parent to child is a dominant life value that is clear from the data. Under this super code all the lessons in savings were transferred from the mother to the child. Another important observation is that the salience of saving is occurring under the backdrop of tough economic conditions and in a climate of limited resources available for saving.

Saving and the associated variations around saving appears 198 times in the Atlas transcripts. The stokvel, 32 day notice account and saving in the form of cash at home are some of the primary sources of saving that is mentioned.

On interrogation of the quotations under the value sub-heading, the theme of aspiration began to become apparent. The mothers in question had plans for their children, despite their current socio-economic conditions. This in turn has been transmitted to the children and it is evident throughout the interviews, when their determination, grit and their unwavering resolve to improve their life circumstances.

*“What happened though was in my mind I knew that the school must have been expensive and the trouble that my mom had gone into, into getting me into the school, so I wanted to do well like I, I just wanted to do well for her.”*

**(C3\_A\_F, 2484:2710)**

*“Because she knew that (investing in better education despite a low salary) was the difference between me being a Cashier and living in the suburbs and she knew that there was a difference between me going to hospital in a public hospital, probably having a lot of kids, probably being ... catching TB ... the township ills ...?”*

**(C4\_A\_M, 3041:3321)**

#### **5.7.2.2. Early exposure to hard working women sacrificing to support the family**

The inductive approach of research continues to reveal elements that fit together to provide a holistic view of intergenerational mobility and the role of family. The first theme indicated that unconventional family structures were habitual in the black family sample utilised for the study. The next theme built on the complex family structures and depicted the role of fathers in the lives of our interviewees. Absent, irrelevant, abusive or unsupportive fathers were signalled as a central theme.

Due to the often non-existent or inadequate contribution from the father, the mother is now shown to have filled and compensated for the deficient father. The magnitude of this role is illustrated by the 24 quotations that were recorded during the interviews. However, on scrutinising the comments, the emotion, recognition and gratitude expressed begins to help the researcher fathom the extent of the sacrifices made by the mother.

Many of the interviewees provided genuine accounts of the great lengths to which their mothers went to, to ensure survival of her offspring. The narratives are raw and authentic depictions which appealed to the interviewers emotions. The life chronicles of the



respondents, particularly on the role of their mothers, helped immerse the researcher in the respondent's reality. This is a continued confirmation of the validity of the data collected.

*"The plantation was about 15 k's away from our house. It was in a, I think it's in a tribal land, it still exists even now. A lot of women in particular from around there, the four villages around there worked there. It's not an executive job that they were doing. They were doing very hard labour with very less pay. I remember my mom would leave home at about 5 o'clock in the morning and come at 5 in the evening. So she'll be out of the house for about 12 hours given the distance to walk and we're told she had to, she had a weight that she needed to achieve with the crop that you harvested. If she registered say 50kg, then her job for the day is done."*

*"I must say not even a single day did I owe a school fees. On the first day that the school reopens I would have my R6.00 to pay school fees, that's what impressed me about my mother even this day."* **(C1\_A\_M, 1107:1776)**

*Yes everyone, everyone, okay so for instance like I said she was the only person in my household that was a breadwinner. My uncle's kids she made sure they get to varsity. She's the one who helped them apply. She, everyone surrounding in her area of influence, she influenced them to get a better life in terms of schooling. She would apply for people to be nurses. She would take them to, she would drive with them, she, not drive we didn't have a car but she would get in, go with them like to help them"*

**(C3\_A\_F, 453:967)**

*"...it was a two people home and the truth of the matter is probably 50% of the time, or more, more – my mother was not there. So 60% of the time she was working double shifts and throughout, until I finished varsity, for her, to be able to afford my school fees and for us to have that middle-class lifestyle - in township standards - that we had."*

**(C4\_A\_M, 289:734)**

*"She couldn't afford to save money because she just took all the money out of the bond to pay for my tertiary."*

**(C5\_C\_F, 1251:1361)**

*"Ja, I think she would have wanted us to succeed and do better than she has. I mean, Place X is, like a rural village; it's very underdeveloped but – she tried her best. She built a 4 room house for us and there was water and sanitation. She tried, built it, just from working as a domestic worker and a receptionist – working 2 jobs. I think she gave her best just to provide – give us that sense of comfort."*

**(C2\_A\_F, 3303:3808)**

### 5.7.2.3. Single Parent Household – Mother Alone

The role of the single mother rearing her children is reinforced under this sub-theme. The sacrifices made by mothers for their children is highlighted. Education and the single mother becomes visible. Two (2) of the mothers prioritised education through ‘actively seeking’ out better schools for their offspring. Significant sacrifices were made to ensure that the children were able to attend the semi-private or former model C type schools.

An evaluation of non-tertiary education schooling reveals an interesting pattern of preference for ‘better’ perceived schools, which were often former model C schools, or what was sometimes described to as, “white schools.” Fifty per cent of the sample of children interviewed had attended private, former model C or schools outside of the government prescribed public school.”

The general view was that the parents envisaged their children would attain a better quality of education at the non-public schools.

The word count shows that private appears 76 times in the analysis transcripts and public appears 75 times.

*“...after teaching him for six months, [s]he didn’t know that the child was left-handed and then I started getting involved and then a month later, he said, “It shows that your mother is involved.” He was doing well in class, and then I realised the danger of the poor education that I was going to expose my son to. So that’s when I took a decision to take him out”*

**(P1\_A\_F)**

*“...in standard four and standard five, there after I went to xx High School, which was a model C school so this switch from a government public school to a private school. .. I think she wanted me to go to university and I think she knew that if I continued to stay in the township school I might become a victim of teenage pregnancy, drugs, alcohol abuse the norm so.”*

**Child 5 (C5\_C\_F)**

*“...the eldest of my children was the first child, Indian child, to get placed at XXX Primary School in Durban. It was cheap then, we could afford it then and you know, the only reason we actually put the child there, because it was affordable to us.”*

**Parent 3 (P3\_I\_M)**

*“I already knew which high school I was going to go to. It had broken windows it just, it was yeah. Even the primary school was better than the high school you know... I think the high school thing bothered my mom...”*

*she got a school, the boarding school that was then when my life changed completely. You going to go for registration, they've accepted you with your results."*

**Child 3 (C3\_A\_F)**

#### **5.7.2.4. Experience Mother Figure – Financial**

The role of the single mother as a breadwinner is further highlighted. The levels of hardship and sacrifice continue to be exposed. The financial responsibility of the single mother towards her children continues to build towards broader themes in an inductive manner.

#### **5.7.3. Research Question 2:**

#### **What role does the extended family play in enabling intergenerational mobility?**

The importance of the extended family is stipulated. However it appears that the mother and father are the most important role players in the child's life. This is evidenced by the sacrifices and prioritisation of the child's wellbeing and education.

The extended cropped up sporadically during interviews for a multitude of reasons. Five (5) super codes were created and then merged into a family, titled extended family. The primary areas of that the extended family arises in are related to providing support in the absence of parents, nurturing children, acting as role models and childhood interactions with the extended family.

The table below provides a break down on the extended family topics, together with the volume of quotes attributed to the category.

Table 9: Extended Family and Intergenerational Mobility

Extended Family and Intergenerational Mobility	Children	Parent	Totals
Extended family interactions in childhood	32	0	32
Influence of other role models: Extended family members	12	1	13
Reflections on social status: Extended family	13	0	13
Role of extended family in nurturing	0	1	1
Substitute parent figures who bridged the gap of daily parental support	19	4	23
<b>Totals</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>82</b>

### **5.7.3.1. Extended family interactions in childhood**

A diverse range of interactions, relationships and support structures are discernible from the interview transcripts. The discourse points to a very inclusive family structure in the black community in general. Even when families mentioned were nuclear, the extended family structure was generally alive and thrived. Some of the interviewees grew up in extended family structures, sometimes this would be a grandparent or there could be aunts, even cousins. Close bonds are apparent, to the extent that siblings in some extended families considered themselves to be brother and sister. Deep family connections are present between some of the nuclear and extended family structures. This is corroborated by the living arrangements of extended family members with the nuclear family of some of the interviewees. These living arrangements were beyond the grandparents but also included the brothers of the mother, or the sibling of a brother or sister. One interviewee explained that there was a family member, whom he always knew was a blood relation that lived with their polygamous family. Only recently did the interviewee learn that this relation actually bore a different surname.

The variations of extended family words, such as grandmother, aunt etc. were combined to provide a composite figure of 271.

### **5.7.3.2. Substitute parent figures who bridged the gap of daily parental support / Idiosyncratic**

During the interviews, the interviewer noted a pattern, where 75 per cent of children (interviewees) had lived with members of their extended families at some point during their childhood. The primary reason for the removal of the children out of their nuclear home environment was due to serious, dangerous or unexpected incident. The various cases are explained below.

Table 10: Substitute parent figures who bridged the gap of daily parental support / Idiosyncratic

Child	Reason
Child one (African, male)	Not applicable
Child two (African, female)	Following the death of her mother, she was separated from her three (3) older siblings and sent to stay with her mother's sister
Child three (African, female)	The first 12 years of her life were spent living with her maternal grandmother in rural KwaZulu-Natal. In addition, her mother's brother's family with children resided with the grandmother in an extended family arrangement
Child four (African, male)	The first two (2) to three (3) years of his life was spent with his maternal grandmother.
Child five (Coloured, female)	The first few years were spent living with her maternal grandmother
Child Six (Coloured, male)	His secondary school years were spent living with his mother's brother
Child seven (Coloured, female)	Not applicable
Child 8 (Coloured male)	Spent parts of tertiary years with his maternal grandmother
Child 9 (Indian, male)	Spent part of secondary years with mother's sister
Child 10 (Indian, male)	Spent part of secondary school and tertiary with family
Child 11 (Indian, male)	Lived with family in KwaZulu-Natal for part of schooling years
Child 12 (Indian, female)	Not applicable

### 5.7.3.3. Influence of other role models: Extended family members

The extended family data yielded considerable quotations on role models. Many interviewees listed uncles and cousins as role models. They cited them as role models and were particularly inspired by the physical wealth.

## 5.8. Conclusion

The development of the family structure and context code is significant, as it shows that the unique characteristics embodied by black South African family's needs to be understood first. There is a broad mix of attributes that are accorded to the family sample. However, the economic situation and experiences of poverty are at the forefront of defining the community. A challenge with absent, abusive and alcoholic fathers becomes evident. When interpreting the data for the codes on substitute parents, if one scratches below the surface, some substitution situations are the result of parents having to work and therefore time with the parents may be limited. The first signs of unconventional family structures within the sample are noted by a polygamous relationship, alcoholic parent and an aunt- child orphan arrangement. Despite some of the challenges that are identified through the quotations, the nurturing and unity qualities are important and points to warmth, caring and brotherhood.

The source of inspiration and transfer of values is evident from parent to child but also from the parents of other children to an individual. In contradiction, the absence of a father inadvertently develops the value of perseverance and determination to succeed, as opposed to becoming an obstacle in the educational and personal development of a child. Context is always critical and this is shown through the conversation between father and sons about race, fairness and the implications for progress.

## **6. Chapter 6 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

### **6.1. Introduction**

The focus of chapter six (6) will be on discussing the results of chapter five (5) in relation to the literature that was presented in chapter two (2). In this chapter, the analysis and insights obtained from the 15 in-depth interviews conducted with black South African children and parents, will be compared and connected to the literature on intergenerational mobility at a nuclear and extended family level. The interviewing, coding and analysis process has allowed the researcher to scrutinise the content of the transcripts and therefore provide evidence to defend or confirm the research questions put forward in chapter three (3).

### **6.2. Characteristics of family structures and contexts in black communities**

As argued in the literature review, the family as a unit is traditionally perceived in the nuclear sense. However the black family in South Africa as a developing country has undergone immense transformation from tribalisation to colonialism to apartheid and now democracy (Aliber, 2003; Hickel, 2016). The traditional black family was large and essentially worked on the extended family principal. Hickel (2016) describes the systematic breakdown of the traditional African household from a large, extended family to smaller nuclear structures, under colonial rule.

The outcomes of the research provide evidence that the family structures in South Africa are not homogenous but complex heterogeneous structures. In order to understand the implications of the nuclear family on social mobility, the unique characteristics need to be contextualised.

Firstly the inequality of opportunity facing the black community historically and post-democracy is clearly visible as a defining feature from the research. This is evidenced by the poor financial standing arising as the most dominant feature of black families. This finding is congruent with the economic conditions in the country, where the majority of the disadvantaged population remain in the non-white category. It is noteworthy to mention that it is only the children that were interviewed that ascribed poverty (financial standing) as a pertinent factor that defines the family in black communities.

The concept of Ubuntu and care were found to be defining indicators of black families. Reliance on the extended family for assistance in providing parental guidance and support where parents were not able to fulfil the responsibilities was identified by the interviewees.

The unconventional family background is also an important element of the black family. The theme arises as a dominant one, with the upbringing of a child by someone other than the parent leading to the

### **6.3. Research Question 1**

#### **How important is the nuclear family in enabling intergenerational mobility?**

The role of the mother and father in transferring socio-economic advantage to children has been extensively researched (Arrondel, 2013; Torche, 2015). However, a significant portion of this research is focused on the inheritance factor, so therefore it looks at the genetic transmission of benefits, from parent to child. The study of nature and intergenerational mobility relates to the endogenous environment and therefore (Brunori, Ferreira, & Peragine, 2013b).

Studies show that inequality of opportunity is one of the key constraints facing low income groups from attaining social mobility and ultimately improving their life conditions (Corak, 2013). The emerging and developing countries are often referred to as highly unequal and South Africa has been found to be one of the most unequal countries in the world.

The focus of this study was to explore beyond the nature dimension of intergenerational mobility and begin to understand the role of the nuclear and extended family in facilitating social mobility. The researcher approached the matter from a nurture perspective. Nurture refers to the exogenous factors, that are responsible for impacting on the attainment of a better life (Bjorklund et al., 2005).

Inequality has been identified as the major contributor to poverty and low levels of mobility (Corak, 2016). Family background has been identified as a critical determinant of mobility. The need to further study the non-inherited family factors has been raised. The family structure and complexity in developing countries formed the basis of this study. The



proposition on the nuclear family will be discussed according to the key themes that emerged during the analysis process.

### **6.3.1. The role of the father in intergenerational mobility**

In order to establish the role of the nuclear family in the enablement of mobility, the role of the father needs to be decomposed and discussed. The results of the interviews are consistent with the assertion, that less than half of the children spend their whole childhood in a nuclear home, with both their biological parents (Carlson & Meyer, 2014b). The researcher is mindful that this statistic is applicable in the United States context. It is difficult to gauge the exact figures around the number of children that spent their time with both biological parents and those that did not. Firstly nine (9) of the interviewees were shown to have resided at a place other than their parental home at some point in the duration of their childhood.

In addition, only five (5) of the respondents resided in two parent, nuclear homes. The figure of five (5) can also be further unpacked into a “normal” or “functional” home and only two of the interviewees will meet the criteria.

From the extant literature it was predicted that the traditional role of the father as the head of the household and provider had been altered over time. The findings are quite startling in that the role of the father in intergenerational mobility, was found to be greatly reduced.

In general, the father was found to have been absent, irrelevant, abusive or unsupportive. A large portion of the observations stemmed from homes where the parents were not married and the unions had dissolved. Financial support from all the absent fathers appeared to be non-existent. In some instances, fathers were not contributing to the upkeep and maintenance of their offspring when they were still married. Child one explained that despite having a father, his father who was a migrant labourer, did not provide regularly for any of his 13 children from his three (3) wives. This interviewee was one (1) of two (2) rural respondents in the sample. This family situation conformed largely to the textbook notions of migrant labourers working away and the polygamous wife gaining more autonomy and had to become active in sustaining the family, in the absence of the father figure (Murray, 1980). While the rural wife is said to be responsible for most of the domestic management,

her access to the resources is a problem (Murray, 1980). This is illustrated in the research, which sees two (2) of the three wives in the polygamous marriage seek menial jobs in a nearby village, to provide for their children.

The absence of the biological father was mentioned and explained by the interviewees. However reflecting back on the extreme paternal non-involvement that was found to be prevalent, it raises a question as to why the lack of financial and other support from the fathers was not lamented about more during the interviews. One reason for this could be the resignation that the parent had to deal with raising a child as a single mother and that she needed to proceed with that job. It is also possible that there was a level of normality or desensitisation around absent fathers. The underlying reasons for the lack of financial support by fathers were difficult to establish despite attempts to probe the interviewees.

It is easy to reach a misinformed and unsubstantiated opinion on this issue. However insufficient evidence was obtained to establish where the problem lay. In the review of the literature, the American reality was one of non-resident fathers providing financially for their children. Here the concern was more around division of resources between multiple siblings with different mothers as opposed to whether the father would contribute financially to his child.

Having only received one version of the situation, it was difficult to gauge why fathers had abandoned their children. Literature in low income South Africa shows that some of the reasons for the lack of financial support by fathers is due to unemployment, maternal access to the children being strictly managed and the end of a relationship with the child's mother, which was linked to support being provided only when the father was still residing with mother and child (Madhavan et al., 2014).

The impact of the father on a child's life values show some positive interactions but this is largely from children who came from intact nuclear families. The fathers of two (2) Indian children shaped their perceptions around the importance of education. The two (2) interviewees ascribe their positive view of tertiary education largely to their fathers. Their father's encouragement around education motivated the respondents to attain higher education.

An unexpected pattern was noticed in the children of absent or abusive fathers. The lack of or negative involvement of the fathers on their children's lives appears to have had the reverse effect than that which was predicted. Instead of being demotivated, this served to further fuel their desire to succeed. This brings a very interesting dynamic into play, as the father's non-involvement is a nurture matter but the outcome impacts on nature, in the form of innate qualities of the child to achieve in life. So the father impacted on their child's desire to succeed whether he was present in their lives or not.

### **6.3.2. The role of the mother in intergenerational mobility**

Traditionally the role of the mother was not explicitly used to determine genetic inheritance or class standing (Beller, 2009). It was argued by the researcher that the role of the mother in the face of increasingly complex family structures would become more important. Single parent homes were becoming increasingly common around the world and South Africa was no exception. The family structures of the interviewees show that six (6) of the interviewees, which equates to fifty per cent were raised by single mothers or had fathers that were not interested in the socio-economic wellbeing of their children.

Tach (2015) found that low income families were more likely to be plagued by family structure complexity and that it would result in economic complexities for children. The interviews show that the single parents were generally in the low to working class income bracket. The result of the single mother family, was underscored by economic hardship and was even evidenced to impact on the children's general wellbeing, where they felt abandoned or inadequate due to the absence of their fathers.

Martin (2012) showed that single mothers in the high income bracket would not be in a position to create educational advantage to the extent that two (2) biological parents could. This was based on the notion that the single mother would not be in a position to provide as much time to her child when compared to two (2) biological parents. The single mother interviewees were not in the high income stratum. This raised concern that if a single mother that was more economically stable would experience challenges in providing for her children's education, what did this mean for the low income single mother?

The data gathered provides key insights into the role of the single mother and her impact on the educational attainment of her children. All the single mothers valued education greatly and were of the view that education was essential for the future success of their children. Education is considered the great leveller in terms of being a mechanism through which to improve their mobility (Torche, 2015).

The odds were stacked heavily against single mothers and their ability to provide education. Firstly from a nature dimension, the research shows that the parent's combined financial and other investment into their children determined their children's educational outcome (Solon, 2015).

All the mothers, including single parents understood the value of education. Some mothers placed more value on education than others. The levels of education of the mothers varied greatly, Four (4) of the mothers had achieved tertiary level qualifications; three (3) had a secondary school level of education but did not complete matric, five (5) had a primary school education.

Here the intersection between nature and nurture shows a very interesting relationship. The environmental factors which were beyond the control of the mother were generally harsh, particularly socio-economically. Yet, it became clear that the mother's possessed the inner drive and tenacity which saw them going through great lengths in general to improve their children's lives. Three (3) of the six (6) sub-themes under the mother and intergenerational mobility aspect relates directly to the mother and her commitment to providing a better life for her children.

It is difficult to pin point the reasons behind the single mother's persistence to provide education for her children. What is certain though from the sample is that the shifting family structure has given rise to more single mother families. The findings go against the grain of the extant literature on single mothers, particularly in the low income category. The general consensus is that these mothers will fail dismally in their attempts to help catapult their children out of the lower and working class rungs. Yet this is not the reality that was found during the in-depth interviews with a diverse sample of the black South African population. One can question whether this is an anomaly in light of the non-probability sampling technique and small size of the sample. However, four (4) out of the five (5) single mothers

exhibit mothers who have successfully improved their children's life status and class. In addition the four (4) offspring have achieved excellently from an educational perspective and this has followed them into their careers.

Some of the reasons have been highlighted as to what led to the prioritisation of education and the immense sacrifices endured selflessly by the parents. The research has not been able to unearth such a depth of understanding on the underlying reasons and thought processes.

Love, nurturing and accountability towards their children is documented in the analysis. However if one carefully looks at the nature of some of the sacrifices made by the mothers, it is difficult to take it merely on face value. In addition, the mothers also made sacrifices for the extended family and the offspring of other family members. This research failed to show on any significant level why mothers value education so greatly and why they push their children towards it.

Financial management, particularly savings, appeared as a value that children have learnt from their mothers. Despite many of the mothers having low levels of income, saving took place wherever possible and the children have observed and emulated this culture.

The value of education was transmitted from mother to child. In addition, values such as generosity, appreciation and humility were taught to some of the children. While gender does emerge marginally, it is largely related to the experiences of the children's parents. The gender barrier to mobility has largely been broken by the child interviewees' mother.

Siblings.

In the case of 10 out of 12 children interviewed, one (1) or more siblings were part of the family. Just two (2) were only children. The success of siblings has been documented and it shows that the non-shared environment is largely responsible for differences in earnings between brothers and sisters (Bjorklund et al., 2005).

The interviews yielded data on siblings and the findings show key issues relating to siblings and intergenerational mobility. Perhaps the most salient finding under siblings has been the confirmation that despite being exposed to similar environmental circumstances, there is no guarantee that siblings will become equally mobile. Naturally this is an area requiring more in depth research into.

The success rates on siblings is a crucible of varying outcomes. Some families have children where all have achieved well. Other families have children where all have not achieved significantly or improved their socio-economic position in life. The area of interest for this study is the vast disparity in achievement amongst siblings from the same family and of the same bloodline. The imbalance between the levels of achievement range from a middle manager who has a sister that is a street vendor and a highly qualified professional who has a brother that could not obtain a tertiary qualification and is struggling to make ends meet. Another middle manager has siblings that have did not study further and face the reality of unemployment.

Both siblings were exposed to the same shared environment but little is known about the unshared environment. However, the innate qualities of the siblings are worth investigating. The sibling findings support the case that it is not merely a division of nature and nurture aspects to explain mobility. The complexity may be as extensive as looking into the gender, country of birth and other variables which may have different implications in different settings (Torche, 2015).

### **6.3.3. Public versus private education**

The findings of the study corroborate the statement that education is the most important platform for economic growth (Torche, 2015). Tertiary education was viewed as essential to most interviewees as well as parents who formed part of the study (Corak, 2013). Ten (10) out of 12 of the interviewees had obtained tertiary qualifications. Of the ten (10), nine (9) have successful careers. One (1) of the respondents that did not complete his tertiary studies is currently unemployed. The other respondent who did not complete high school, was in an administration position. In general, the common factor is a further qualification.

On analysing the data in relation to primary and high school, a compelling pattern was identified. It was found that 50 per cent of the respondents made a conscious decision to change their children's school from a government public school to some form of either private, former model-C or a school perceived as better quality. Of greater interest is the reality that 83 per cent of the children that were sent to "better quality," schools were working class.

The general explanation by most parents was that public schools at the time (pre- and early post-apartheid) provided an inferior standard of education was provided. However, when the respondents (children) were asked what their preference would be for their children, public or private school, the majority chose private school, using the same explanation.

This is indeed an interesting finding as it shows that despite education becoming more accessible to South Africans and the years of schooling increasing, confidence levels in government schools may not be high. This is similar to the scenario in the Middle East and North Africa where the number of years of schooling has increased but in general the quality is a concern (Salehi-Isfahani et al., 2014).

#### **6.4. Research Question 2**

How important is the extended family in enabling intergenerational mobility?

The role of the extended family in developing countries was highlighted in chapter two (2). The researcher proposes that the extended family as a structure is more prominent in South Africa, Asia and South America, as opposed to the western world. The history of South Africa and its highly evolved and complex family structure was discussed.

The researcher asserted that the extended family had a crucial role to play in intergenerational mobility. This was formed on the basis of the role of the extended family, particularly the grandparents at the formative stage of the child's life. It is also not uncommon in South Africa to find cousins included as a part of the extended family structure. On the basis of the collectivist and communal nature of South Africans, it was argued that the extended family would be greatly involved in the development of a child. The black family cultures also accommodate aging grandparents, so they are found in the extended family and the parents are looking after them financially.

While the extended family appeared consistently in the transcripts that were being analysed, the degree of repetition was not as high as the researcher had envisaged. However the findings do show close knit families beyond the nuclear space and a general willingness to assist members of the extended family, even as far as housing them and helping them financially in achieving educational success.

The research does show a critical role filled by the extended family is that of assisting to bridge the gap where parents are not able to. This finding is in keeping with the researcher's argument that the extended family would oblige in assisting where possible to assist in parental deficiency cases.

The research showed that the extended family had a role to play in educational attainment but it was a combination of the nuclear and extended family effects that was important and neither family structure was exclusively responsible (Jaeger, 2012).

A pattern that was detected by the researcher was that firstly that a reciprocal relationship existed between the interviewee's nuclear and extended families. In general the sense conveyed to the researcher was that a generally mutually beneficial relationship was in place between the families. It did not appear to be a one sided and exploitative arrangement.

The evidence for this is the confirmation that seventy-five per cent of the children interviewed had lived outside of their family home and with members of the extended family. The reasons for the temporary movement of children was due to; father losing employment, grandparent support structure required by working parents for young child, emotional difficulty, death of a parent, parent child tension and the prospects of a better future. The reasons provided are reflective of the research into the role of the extended family and educational achievement. It was found that the family network could be relied on in times of difficulty to provide assistance in the form of resources, to ensure that the child was not negatively impacted on due to insufficient resources (Jaeger, 2012). According to Jaeger (2012) likelihood of an extended family member assisting was dependent on the quality of relationships that existed between the two (2) families.

Bjorklund et al. (2005) found that the external environment was critical in understanding intergenerational mobility. However it was the unshared environment that was left largely unexplained, yet it was found to have a large impact on the earning potential of siblings.

This research was able to confirm that idiosyncratic differences existed between the interviewed child and other siblings. The time spent with the extended families was a traceable unshared environment experience. A further examination was conducted to understand the affluence of the host extended family in comparison to the original environment of the respondent. In three (3) of the instances it was found that the children



had moved from a less affluent to a more affluent living environment. The material wealth was a distinct difference from their normal environment. This exposed the interviewees to different possibilities. Two (2) of the three interviewees have progressed to lead comfortable middle class lives, while one (1) is unemployed and falls into the low class grouping.

Two (2) of the interviewees has spent parts of their formative years with their maternal grandparents. The interviewees described this as a sublime time in their lives. Both respondents are now in the middle class and highly successful. While the research in China on the role of grandparents on a child's educational success states that it is dependent on the education level of the grandparent (Zeng & Xie, 2014), this does not apply to these cases. Both grandparents were said to have low levels of education, if any education at all. However it would be worth investigating the nurturing impact of the grandparents on the social outcome of a child.

The impact of the extended family as role models on children featured quite prominently in the interviews. On close inspection the majority of the role model influences were positive, with one negative (1) instance, where the interviewee wanted to follow in the footsteps of his uncle who was a gangster. The other extended family role model narratives were linked closely to the accumulation of wealth. The positive influence is noted as the interviewees became aware of the possibilities that were open to people, as well as the type of education or perseverance and sacrifices that were required.

### **6.5. The impact of nurture on intergenerational mobility**

This study set out to focus explicitly on the nurturing effects of the nuclear and extended family for the social mobility of an individual. Many pertinent themes were formed on an inductive basis and they began to fit into each other, and eventually allow for generalisations on the topic.

However, the researcher must clarify that despite attempting to explore the family dimension, the role of nature in intergenerational mobility was found to be intricately entangled in the data. The researcher attempted to separate the nature and nurture aspects and has presented the findings and subsequent discussion in this chapter.

The findings under the nature category are slanted towards the positive aspects of motivation, drive and performance. Some of the sub-themes alternate between nature and nurture, which is further evidence that the issues are inextricably linked. A large part of the narrative focused on the internal drive to achieve and improve their socio-economic position. There were external environmental conditions that worked for and against the respondents. The role of family in assisting the individuals in attaining their goals was explained in detail above. However the nature findings show that despite being born into a life of adversity, most of the children displayed phenomenal levels of motivation and what many of them termed as a “burning desire,” to survive and excel.

This finding bears testimony to the argument that has been advanced in recent years on mobility across generations, that it is both the internal and external environment that impacts on a person’s ability to become mobile.

## **6.6. Conclusion**

The importance of the extended family in the facilitation of intergenerational mobility amongst children is evident. However, in comparison to the impact of the nuclear family on the success of a child, the extended family appears at a glance to be less instrumental. Grandparents feature more than most other extended family members in the narratives. The supplementary role of the extended family in the instance of single mothers and times of need has been shown to be a strong one. As some of the first people that children interact with outside of their nuclear family, the extended family does have an important responsibility.

## 7. Chapter 7 CONCLUSION

### 7.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the findings from chapter five (5) and the analysis in the subsequent chapter are developed into a framework that provides a summary of the research outcomes. The implications for social mobility will be explained and areas for future research will be identified.

### 7.2. Principle Findings

The primary objective of this research was to explore the roles of the nuclear and extended family in enabling intergenerational mobility in an emerging market context. Intergenerational mobility is a widely studied subject, with constant emphasis on the high levels of inequality in developing countries, like South Africa (Brunori et al., 2013b).

The study found that the family structure and context of black South African communities were not homogenous but highly diverse and did not conform to many Western characteristics attributed to the family. Poverty was a defining feature of many black families. Family unity and nurturing was also found to be the cornerstone of families. Despite poor financial backgrounds, the family shared common values in regard to education and self-development. It was not uncommon for children in black communities to have early responsibilities towards their family. Complex family structures were also prevalent such as single parent and extended family homes.

The role of the nuclear family was found to be crucial in enabling the intergenerational mobility of a child. In this study, the father's capacity to contribute towards intergenerational mobility was raised as a concern. The research yielded largely negative associations when the father was considered. Absent or abusive fathers were a major theme, followed by the lack of financial and educational support. Some fathers in the study, the minority were found to be present and accessible. However they represented a fraction of the sample. The father was found to have an influence on prioritising education and risk aversion. Once again this was the anomaly and not the norm.

This study showed that the mother had the most significant role to play on a family level in the social mobility of the child. This critical role was marked by tremendous sacrifices to support the child and in most instances the mother was a single parent. Children were shown to adopt certain values from their mother. The most noticeable being the prioritisation of a savings culture. The mother's financial responsibility was central to role in improving the circumstances of her children.

The role of the sibling in intergenerational mobility was difficult to gauge from the in-depth interviews. No specific patterns were detected in terms of siblings and their success. It was found that in some families, all siblings were successful, with similar or varying degrees of education. In some families, none of the siblings were successful and in other families, there was a combination of successful and unsuccessful brothers and sisters. It was difficult to make any inferences as to what led to these occurrences based on the data collected.

The role of the extended family in the facilitation of intergenerational mobility showed close knit family structures. One of the major findings was that the extended family was found to play a crucial role in helping bridge the gap in terms of daily parental support. The findings showed that the extended family was willing to provide assistance and resources in terms of crises, to ensure that children were not deprived of resources. Assistance was also made available by accommodating children during difficult or unexpected times in the nuclear home. A steady supply of role models was found within the ambit of the extended family. Some degree of aspiration was derived from the encounters with the role models. The reasons for choosing a role model was centred around perceived success and wealth accumulation.

This study focused exclusively on the external nuclear and extended family factors that impacted on intergenerational mobility. Despite this research's explicit focus, a large amount of data relating to the endogenous factors responsible for mobility surfaced. The innate abilities of individuals were intricately linked to the exogenous factors. This is a clear indication that neither nurture nor nature is fully responsible for mobility. It is clearly a more complex composition of the two variables.

### 7.3. Implications for Management

This research confirms that the developing country family context has characteristics that are heterogeneous. The first implication at a country and global level is to take cognisance of the unique defining features in the developing world. Poverty reduction programmes, ultimately aimed at bridging the gap between the rich and poor must incorporate this information.

Chronic poverty persists in South Africa, 22 years after the fall of apartheid. The government has devised policies and implemented numerous impactful programmes to equalise opportunities. The success of many programmes are evident e.g. greater access to free education, free houses and improved infrastructure for communities.

The results of this study indicate clear areas of challenge in the improvement of socio-economic conditions of black South Africans. Violence, abuse, alcoholism, unemployment, poor public schools, lack of funds for tertiary studies and dangerous communities are some of the real impediments facing citizens. These challenges can be further decomposed into those affecting rural and urban areas. This study had a minimal number of respondents from the far flung rural areas of South Africa. However, the interactions with these interviewees paint a bleak picture about the pace of change in some rural areas. Of particular concern is the quality of public schools and teachers.

The answers to many of these problems are relatively simple, like improving the quality of teachers and schools. This should be a priority as the effects of the horrific Bantu education system are still felt. Unsafe community areas that are gang and drug ridden need intensive policing and commitment from the government, law enforcement authorities and residents to root out these problems. Some of these problems have been in existence prior to the dismantling of apartheid and no end appears to be in sight, for a solution. The researcher was able to grasp the severity of the situation when she was shown the harsh reality of gangsterism and drug abuse in a former Coloured community in Gauteng. Making it out of the community was a mammoth task. The situation is so dire, that the child of an interviewee was addicted to drugs at age 13.

The intergenerational mobility model that emerged from this study shows that the mother and father are the most important role players in enabling intergenerational mobility for their children, on an external level. Despite being faced with challenging circumstances, the motivation and tenacity to succeed was shown through the stories of many of the interviewees.

Clear, concerted political and administrative will is required to address these problems.

#### **7.4. Limitations of the Research**

The small sample size of fifteen (15) rendered thick, rich data but the size also poses a limitation. Purposive sampling in the form of non-probability techniques were used, which allowed the researcher to exercise personal judgement against a set of criteria in determining members of the sample (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Therefore everyone in the universe did not have an equal chance of being selected. Random sampling error cannot be measured for non-probability methods (Zikmund et al., 2013). Therefore the data cannot be extrapolated outside of the existing sample, since it is not generalisable (Bhattacharjee et al., 2012; Flick, 2009; Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Zikmund et al., 2013).

The researcher undertook a cross-sectional study which represents a point in time (Creswell, 2014a). Intergenerational studies usually require data collection from a large cohort of siblings, children, and parents, grandparents, in order to track trends, patterns and calculate correlations. Longitudinal studies will benefit this space significantly particularly to enhance multigenerational studies. This poses real challenges for data collection for quantitative research designs as long term data is not collected uniformly or even at all. The extent of this problem was highlighted by a cross country analysis of intergenerational mobility (Blanden, 2013). However in view of the time, a cross-sectional study was the only option available to the researcher.

Self-reflexivity refers to the researcher's values, bias, past, world view and the effect that this has on the research engagement and interpretation (Tracy, 2013). Creswell (Creswell, 2014a) describes reflexivity as a key component of the qualitative research process. It is important to acknowledge these biases as it allows the readers to understand the researcher's perspectives, recognise such and disregard them if required (Creswell & Miller,

2000). The researcher will therefore disclose any bias that could exist due to their specific background. The demographic details of the researcher are cited as an important point to begin (Creswell, 2014a; Tracy, 2013; Yin, 2011).

The researcher is a, black South African female of Indian descent. The researcher has spent more than fifteen (15) years as a government official who has been exposed to poverty eradication work and general upliftment initiatives. In addition, the researcher is a strong advocate of access to quality education for South Africans. Race is cited extensively as a demographic that needs to be accounted for (Tracy, 2013; Yin, 2011). The researcher understands that race is inextricably linked to the concept of context, given South Africa's history of racial segregation and fledgling democracy. The researcher has worked extensively with all South African race groups, which have been racially representative, due to government's adherence to employment equity policies. The researcher is well integrated into South Africa society.

Respondent bias is a concern; particularly from the low income interviewees. There was a sense of response burden from one (1) interviewee. This could be attributed to the emotionally sensitive nature of some questions (Lavrakas, 2008). The interviewer did everything in their power to gain rapport and put the interviewee at ease. It appeared as though there was a case of social desirability bias with a different low income interviewee. Certain responses were not consistent with others and in the researcher's assessment it could be due to the respondent attempting to create a favourable image of themselves (Bhattacharjee et al., 2012). The researcher cross examined the respondent tactfully and was able to obtain more accurate information. However the extent of untrue responses is difficult to gauge.

### **7.5. Recommendations for Future Research**

This study was exploratory in nature and as much as it has provided insight into the family and intergenerational mobility, it has also raised a lot of questions. Possible future research areas are listed below:

- Different siblings from the same nuclear household were shown to have varying levels of social mobility. All the siblings were brought up in similar circumstances but

some have managed to break through the barriers to poverty. A study into the reasons for such disparities in achievement will be beneficial

- Grandparents, particularly the maternal grandmother were shown to play an important role in the formative years of the child. In most instances, the grandmothers had little or no education but they have been cited as positive impacts on the child. Does the uneducated grandparent, have a positive contribution to make to the future success of child?
- Parents in the black community place immense emphasis on education, higher education in particular. The prioritisation of education by lower income single mothers in the study was interesting. Where does this push for education come from? Why do parents go to great lengths to ensure their children get to study? Why do people at the bottom of the income spectrum value education to the extent that they do?

## **7.6. Conclusion**

Inequality of opportunity threatens millions of South Africans on a daily basis. The problems facing our country are exacerbated by our complex past as a people. Since the democratic dispensation, massive strides have been made in reducing poverty levels. The black middle class has grown substantially. Yet, this growth is shown to be occurring at an inadequate pace if we are to meet our poverty eradication targets as set out in the National Development Plan. The family is critical in the inequality battle. The nuclear and extended family if harnessed, can prove to be a powerful mechanism for change.



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## 9. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: Ethical Clearance

Dear Ms Roopa Singh

Protocol Number: **Temp2016-02187**

Title: **MBA Thesis - Exploring the socialising agents that enable intergenerational mobility in an emerging market**

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been APPROVED.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

Kind Regards,

Adele Bekker

## APPENDIX B: Research Questions

### Questionnaire for a Qualitative Research Project Consent Form:

I am conducting research as part of my Masters in Business Administration (MBA) degree at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS).

My research seeks to explore intergenerational mobility in an emerging country context. The black middle class in South Africa has experienced rapid growth, since democracy. However research shows that the pace of social mobility, into middle class is slower than anticipated, if the National Development Plan poverty elimination targets are to be met.

This study aims to understand the role of socialising agents (family, education, work and community) that enable intergenerational mobility in an emerging market. The interview will take between one and one and a half hours.

Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. All data will be kept confidential. If you have any queries, please contact my supervisor or me.

**Student:** Roopa Singh

**Research Supervisor:** Kerry Chipp

**Email:** [roopasingh78@gmail.com](mailto:roopasingh78@gmail.com)

**Email:** [chippk@gibs.co.za](mailto:chippk@gibs.co.za)

**Phone:** [REDACTED]

**Phone:** [REDACTED]

I agree to participate in the above mentioned interview.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Place:** \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTIONNAIRE – ADULT**

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### 1. Respondent's Personal Information

CATEGORY	RESPONSE
Name	
Age	
Sex	
Race	
Ethnic Group	
Occupation	
Marital Status	
Religion	
Number of children	
Level of income	

## **QUESTIONS FOR ADULT**

### **Family and Upbringing**

1. Tell me about yourself? PROBE: What sort of household were you brought up in? Many people? Many children.
2. Tell me about your parents? What level of education did they have? What type/s of employment did they hold? PROBE: What did your parents want for you in life? Reward structures; involvement in schooling. Are your parents successful?
3. Tell me about how your siblings have done, your cousins? Your childhood friends? Tell me about them
4. Did you know what you wanted to do with your life when you were growing up? PROBE. What informed this choice?
5. Who were your role models growing up? Why?

### **Education, religion and community**

6. Tell me about your attitude towards school?
7. Tell me about your teachers and the role they played in your educational motivation?
8. What attitude did you have about tertiary / further education? Tell me about it

9. How important is religion in your family? What role did it have play in your upbringing?

**Success**

10. What do you regard as success? Do you think that you are successful? Why?

11. Was there a specific incident or opportunity that you had, which contributed to your success or gave you that big break?

12. What do you attribute your success to?

13. What social class would you say you are in and why? Probe: has it changed across time? What made you aspire to improve your social status / life conditions?

14. Would you help a family member? To what extent would you help them? Is it important to help the community

**Other**

15. Do you have any additional comments that you would like to make?

Thank you for your participation and cooperation

## QUESTIONNAIRE – PARENT/S

CATEGORY	RESPONSE
Name	
Age	
Sex	
Race	
Ethnic Group	
Occupation	
Marital Status	
Religion	
Number of children	
Level of income	

## QUESTIONS FOR PARENT/S

### Family and Upbringing

1. What did you want for your child / children in life? PROBE. Your occupation and what occupation you wanted for your child?
2. When your child talked about what they wanted to do when they grew up, what advice did you give them?
3. What did you think it was important for your child to have?
4. Do you think that your child/children is/are successful or has achieved? Why? What do you think the reason for their success is? PROBE on materialism, assets, black tax etc.
5. What do you think were the obstacles that your child faced in becoming successful?
6. How have your other children fared in life? Why do you think that is the case?
7. How have the children of other family members and your children's childhood friends fared? Why is that? What did their parents do?

### **Education, religion and community**

8. Did you play an active role in your child's schooling?
9. What attitude did you have about tertiary / further education?
10. How important is religion in your family? Tell me about it and its role in your family?

### **Success**

11. What do you regard as success? Do you think that your child is successful? Why?



12. What do you attribute the success of your child to?

13. What social class would you say you are in and why? Probe: has it changed across time? What made you aspire to improve your social status / life conditions?

14. Does your child take care of you or anyone in the community

**Other**

15. Do you have any additional comments that you would like to make?

Thank you for your participation and cooperation

## APPENDIX C: Coding in Atlas.ti

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1. Absence of parental support in career developC11\_I\_Ment
2. Active parental oversight of developC11\_I\_Ment in formative years
3. Adult life circumstances: Battling with access to resources
4. Advantaged schooling conditions
5. Burden of cost of getting educated
6. Burden of uplifting living standards for prior generations
7. Challenges in establishing a savings culture for self
8. Challenges in guiding children to progress
9. Challenges in guiding self to progress
10. Challenges in transitioning from township to urban contexts
11. Communities and cultural nuances: Confined & limiting
12. Conscious selection of community associations & influences
13. Contexts of a rural upbringing
14. Continued maternal nurturing in adult years
15. Continuing responsibilities to support family & community
16. Defining and evaluating personal success
17. Defining and evaluating success of siblings
18. Defining and evaluating the success of offspring
19. Defining and evaluating the success of parents
20. Difficulties of raising kids in disadvantaged communities
21. Difficulties with performance at school
22. Disadvantages of lack of education
23. Disadvantages of limited external exposure
24. Disappointment with own social status
25. Disparate educational levels amongst siblings
26. Early establishment of an independent spirit
27. Early establishment of personal developC11\_I\_Ment aspirations & goals
28. Early exposure to hard working women sacrificing to support the family
29. Early lessons in self-reliance in dealing with life challenges
30. Early loss of parents
31. Early responsibilities towards the family
32. Early sources of influence from the outside world
33. Educational backgrounds of siblings: Successful
34. Educational backgrounds of siblings: Unsuccessful

35. Effects of financial constraints on life choices
36. Emotional scars of the past
37. Establishing a tangible perception of the link between education and improved quality of life
38. Establishing a link between setting personal goals and attaining success
39. Evidence of inferior treatment of the girl child
40. Evidence of limited daily contact with parental figures
41. Evidence of strong academic performance relative to peers
42. Evidence of the importance of role models & role modelling
43. Examples of individuals whose social status has not changed
44. Examples of social mobility consciousness
45. Experience of father figure: Abusive
46. Experience of father figure: Gangster
47. Experience of father figure: Absent and irrelevant
48. Experience of father figure: Lack of support for education
49. Experience of father figure: Present and accessible
50. Experience of father figure: Inconsistent financial support
51. Experience of mother figure: financial responsibility for the family
52. Extended family interactions in childhood
53. Family background: Tensions & violence
54. Family background: Large family
55. Family unity and nurturing interaction
56. Government intervention to bridge social inequalities
57. Highlighting a hierarchy in the vehicles of progression for sustainability
58. Highlighting social mobility stagnation as a communal challenge
59. Impact of absent fathers on child develoC11\_I\_Ment
60. Impact of disadvantaged schooling conditions
61. Impact of disadvantaged upbringing
62. Impact of national independence on family fortunes: positive
63. Impact of limited external exposure
64. Impact of loss of parental guidance and influence on develoC11\_I\_Ment
65. Impact of mistakes and misguided choices
66. Impact of social status on access to education
67. Importance of shared family values towards education and self develoC11\_I\_Ment
68. Indications of family financial standing: Poverty
69. Indications of separation of own path from childhood context
70. Influence of father on life values

71. Influence of formative lessons on life values
72. Influence of mother on life values
73. Influence of other role models: Childhood peers
74. Influence of other role models: Childhood peers: negative
75. Influence of other role models: Community members
76. Influence of other role models: Extended family members
77. Influence of other role models: Teachers
78. Influence of parents on life values
79. Influence of siblings in building a vision for the future
80. Influence of strong parental convictions about importance of education
81. Influence of weak parental convictions about importance of education
82. Limited parental capacity to actively support educational advancement
83. Maternal influence in formative years
84. Motivating influence of recognition
85. Multi-racial schooling exposure
86. Negative impact of national independence struggles
87. Other sources of education funding: Corporate bursary programs
88. Own perceptions of upbringing
89. Parental influence on career choices
90. Parental self-sacrifice to invest in development of offspring
91. Parents' educational and occupational background
92. Parents backgrounds
93. Phase of youthful rebellion and difficult behaviour
94. Post-independence schooling experiences
95. Racial profile
96. Recognising social mobility disparities with childhood peers & community
97. Recognising the role of inner resilience and determination for success
98. Recognition of social progression by others
99. Reflections on own social status
100. Reflections on own social status: Current status
101. Reflections on own social status: Past
102. Reflections on own social status: School friends
103. Reflections on social status: Extended family
104. Resigned to failed circumstances
105. Resilience to pursue self-development despite hardships
106. Respondent's adult life values: Burning desire to succeed for self
107. Respondent's adult life values: Community conscious

108. Respondent's adult life values: Continuous self-improvement
109. Respondent's adult life values: Deliberate in making life choices
110. Respondent's adult life values: Hard working & goal driven
111. Respondent's adult life values: Prudence with financial resources
112. Respondent's adult life values: Religion
113. Respondent's adult life values: Seeking fulfilment
114. Respondent's adult life values: Seeking quality of life & security
115. Respondent's adult life values: Taking responsibility for self and others
116. Respondent educational background
117. Respondent professional profiles
118. Respondent profiles
119. Role of extended family in nurturing
120. Role of formative work experiences
121. Role of formative work experiences in evolving life standards
122. Role of practical support structures in ensuring access to progress
123. Role of religion
124. Role of social status in informing a world view & creating societal silos
125. Single parent household: Mother alone
126. Social mobility aspirations for own children
127. Spouse educational & professional background
128. Strained family relations stemming from childhood disappointments
129. Substitute parent figures who bridged the gap of daily parental support
130. Supportive relationships & community structures
131. Symbols of social status
132. Contexts of township upbringing
133. Unconventional family background: Alcoholic parent
134. Unconventional family background: Raised by Aunt with cousins
135. Unconventional family home set up: Polygamous
136. Unconventional family home setting: Raised by grandmother & cousins
137. Unsupportive spouse
138. Vehicles of social mobility: networking
139. Vehicles of social status mobility
140. Vehicles of social status mobility: Advantaged Education
141. Vehicles of social status mobility: Education
142. Vehicles of social status mobility: Family conversations on progression
143. Vehicles of social status mobility: Family support
144. Vehicles of social status mobility: Gainfully employment

145. Vehicles of social status mobility: Intergenerational financial stability
146. Vehicles of social status mobility: Investments & Savings
147. Vehicles of social status mobility: Marriage
148. Vehicles of social status mobility: Moving to the leading city
149. Vehicles of social status mobility: Moving to urban area
150. Vehicles of social status mobility: Owning a car
151. Vehicles of social status mobility: Owning property
152. Vehicles of social status mobility: Role modelling
153. Vehicles of social status mobility: Wealth accumulation
154. Views on convergence of nurturing and nature in successful individual progression
155. Violent experiences during upbringing

## APPENDIX D: Code Families

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HU: Roopa Singh

File: [C:\Users\user\Documents\Scientific Software\ATLAS\TextBank\Roopa Singh\Roopa Singh.hpr7]

Edited by: Super

Date/Time: 2016-11-04 09:21:05

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Code Family: Black African social contexts

Created: 2016-11-04 09:05:31 (Super)

Codes (17): [Contexts of a rural upbringing] [Contexts of township upbringing] [Difficulties of raising kids in disadvantaged communities] [Disadvantages of lack of education] [Disadvantages of limited external exposure] [Effects of financial constraints on life choices] [Evidence of inferior treatment of the girl child] [Highlighting social mobility stagnation as a communal challenge] [Impact of social status on access to education] [Influence of formative lessons on life values] [Multi-racial schooling exposure] [Post independence schooling experiences] [Racial profile] [Recognition of social progression by others] [Reflections on own social status: School friends] [Role of religion] [Role of social status in informing a world view & creating societal silos]

Quotation(s): 215

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Code Family: Characteristics of family structures & contexts in black communities SA

Created: 2016-11-04 08:56:39 (Super)

Codes (17): [Disparate educational levels amongst siblings] [Early responsibilities towards the family] [Emotional scars of the past] [Family background\_ Tensions & violence] [Family background Large family] [Family unity and nurturing interaction] [Importance of shared family values towards education and self-development] [Indications of family financial standing: Poverty] [Own perceptions of upbringing] [Spouse educational & professional background] [Strained family relations stemming from childhood disappointments] [Substitute parent figures who bridged the gap of daily parental support] [Unconventional family background: Alcoholic parent] [Unconventional family background: Raised by Aunt with cousins] [Unconventional family home set up: Polygamous] [Unconventional family home setting: Raised by

grandmother & cousins] [Unsupportive spouse]

Quotation(s): 179

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Code Family: Evidence of IGM in Adult life circumstances

Created: 2016-11-04 08:59:26 (Super)

Codes (12): [Adult life circumstances: Battling with access to resources] [Recognising social mobility disparities with childhood peers & community] [Respondent's adult life values: Burning desire to succeed for self-] [Respondent's adult life values: Community conscious] [Respondent's adult life values: Continuous self-improvement] [Respondent's adult life values: Deliberate in making life choices] [Respondent's adult life values: Hard working & goal driven] [Respondent's adult life values: Prudence with financial resources] [Respondent's adult life values: Religion] [Respondent's adult life values: Seeking fulfilment] [Respondent's adult life values: Seeking quality of life & security] [Respondent's adult life values: Taking responsibility for self and others]

Quotation(s): 199

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Code Family: Prevalence of community conscious as a theme in IGM

Created: 2016-11-04 09:07:59 (Super)

Codes (10): [Communities and cultural nuances: Confined & limiting] [Conscious selection of community associations & influences] [Continuing responsibilities to support family & community] [Influence of other role models: Childhood peers] [Influence of other role models: Childhood peers negative] [Influence of other role models: Community members] [Recognition of social progression by others] [Role of religion] [Substitute parent figures who bridged the gap of daily parental support] [Supportive relationships & community structures]

Quotation(s): 176

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Code Family: Role of extended family in IGM

Created: 2016-11-04 08:55:46 (Super)

Codes (5): [Extended family interactions in childhood] [Influence of other role models: Extended family members] [Reflections on social status: Extended family] [Role of extended family in nurturing] [Substitute parent figures who bridged the gap of daily parental support]

Quotation(s): 79



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Code Family: Role of fathers in IGM

Created: 2016-11-04 08:55:04 (Super)

Codes (8): [Experience of father figure\_ Abusive] [Experience of father figure\_ Gangster] [Experience of father figure absent and irrelevant] [Experience of father figure Inconsistent financial support] [Experience of father figure Lack of support for education] [Experience of father figure Present and accessible] [Impact of absent fathers on child development] [Influence of father on life values]

Quotation(s): 44

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Code Family: Role of individual values & traits in IGM in black SA

Created: 2016-11-04 08:57:35 (Super)

Codes (23): [Challenges in guiding self to progress] [Continuing responsibilities to support family & community] [Defining and evaluating personal success] [Difficulties with performance at school] [Disappointment with own social status] [Early establishment of an independent spirit] [Early establishment of personal development aspirations & goals] [Early lessons in self-reliance in dealing with life challenges] [Evidence of strong academic performance relative to peers] [Examples of individuals whose social status has not changed] [Examples of social mobility consciousness] [Impact of mistakes and misguided choices] [Indications of separation of own path from childhood context] [Influence of other role models: Childhood peers] [Influence of other role models: Childhood peers negative] [Phase of youthful rebellion and difficult behaviour] [Recognising the role of inner resilience and determination for success] [Reflections on own social status] [Reflections on own social status: Current status] [Reflections on own social status: Past] [Resigned to failed circumstances] [Resilience to pursue self-development despite hardships] [Social mobility aspirations for own children]

Quotation(s): 411

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Code Family: Role of mothers in IGM

Created: 2016-11-04 08:55:14 (Super)

Codes (6): [Continued maternal nurturing in adult years] [Early exposure to hard working women sacrificing to support the family] [Experience of mother figure financial responsibility for the family] [Influence of mother on life values] [Maternal influence in formative years] [Single parent household: Mother alone]

Quotation(s): 108

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Code Family: Role of parental relations in IGM

Created: 2016-11-04 08:58:19 (Super)

Codes (15): [Absence of parental support in career development] [Active parental oversight of development in formative years] [Defining and evaluating the success of parents] [Early loss of parents] [Evidence of limited daily contact with parental figures] [Impact of loss of parental guidance and influence on development] [Influence of parents on life values] [Influence of strong parental convictions about importance of education] [Influence of weak parental convictions about importance of education] [Limited parental capacity to actively support educational advancement] [Parental influence on career choices] [Parental self-sacrifice to invest in development of offspring] [Parents' educational and occupational background] [Parents backgrounds] [Role of religion]

Quotation(s): 275

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Code Family: Role of siblings in IGM

Created: 2016-11-04 08:55:29 (Super)

Codes (4): [Defining and evaluating success of siblings] [Educational backgrounds of siblings: Successful] [Educational backgrounds of siblings: Unsuccessful] [Influence of siblings in building a vision for the future]

Quotation(s): 50

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Code Family: Views on barriers to IGM

Created: 2016-11-04 09:04:05 (Super)

Codes (11): [Burden of cost of getting educated] [Burden of uplifting living standards for prior generations] [Challenges in establishing a savings culture for self-] [Challenges in guiding children to progress] [Challenges in guiding self to progress] [Challenges in transitioning from township to urban contexts] [Communities and cultural nuances: Confined & limiting] [Impact of disadvantaged schooling conditions] [Impact of disadvantaged upbringing] [Impact of limited external exposure] [Impact of mistakes and misguided choices]

Quotation(s): 129

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Code Family: Views on enablers and drivers of IGM

Created: 2016-11-04 08:59:56 (Super)

Codes (32): [Advantaged schooling conditions] [Conscious selection of community associations & influences] [Early sources of influence from the outside world] [Establishing a tangible perception of the link between education and improved quality of life] [Establishing a link between setting personal goals and attaining success] [Evidence of the importance of role models & role modelling] [Government intervention to bridge social inequalities] [Highlighting a hierarchy in the vehicles of progression for sustainability] [Impact of national independence on family fortunes positive] [Influence of other role models: Teachers] [Motivating influence of recognition] [Other sources of education funding: Corporate bursary programs] [Role of formative work experiences] [Role of formative work experiences in evolving life standards] [Role of practical support structures in ensuring access to progress] [Symbols of social status] [Vehicles of social mobility: networking] [Vehicles of social status mobility] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Advantaged Education] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Education] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Family conversations on progression] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Family support] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Gainfully employment] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Intergenerational financial stability] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Investments & Savings] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Marriage] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Moving to the leading city] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Moving to urban area] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Owning a car] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Owning property] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Role modelling] [Vehicles of social status mobility: Wealth accumulation] Quotation(s): 366

## APPENDIX E:

This is appendix, heading as below.

Role of individual values & traits in IGM in black SA

	Children	Total
Role of individual values & traits in IGM in black SA	361	361
Defining and evaluating personal success	40	40
Early lessons in self-reliance in dealing with life challenges	40	40
Recognising the role of inner resilience and determination for success	35	35
Reflections on own social status: Past	33	33
Resilience to pursue self-development despite hardships	28	28
Social mobility aspirations for own children	28	28
Continuing responsibilities to support family & community	25	25
Reflections on own social status: Current status	25	25
Indications of separation of own path from childhood context	23	23
Phase of youthful rebellion and difficult behaviour	23	23
Early establishment of personal development aspirations & goals	21	21
Evidence of strong academic performance relative to peers	16	16
Early establishment of an independent spirit	9	9
Difficulties with performance at school	8	8
Examples of individuals whose social status has not changed	7	7
Reflections on own social status	5	5
Examples of social mobility consciousness	4	4
Influence of other role models: Childhood peers	4	4
Influence of other role models: Childhood peers negative	4	4
Reflections on own social status: School friends	4	4
Challenges in guiding self to progress	2	2
Impact of mistakes and misguided choices	2	2
Disappointment with own social status	1	1
Resigned to failed circumstances	1	1
Total	749	749

Table: Community Also appendix



Community	Children	Parent	Total
Role of religion	34	9	43
Communities and cultural nuances: Confined & limiting	27	4	31
Conscious selection of community associations & influences	26	8	34
Continuing responsibilities to support family & community	25	6	31
Substitute parent figures who bridged the gap of daily parental support	19	4	23
Influence of other role models: Childhood peers negative	4	2	6
Influence of other role models: Childhood peers	4	0	4
Influence of other role models: Community members	2	0	2
Recognition of social progression by others	1	2	3
Supportive relationships & community structures	0	3	3
Total	142	38	180