

**‘FOR BETTER OR WORSE’: DUAL PERCEPTIONS OF INDIAN
COUPLES TOWARDS WIVES’ CAREER ADVANCEMENT**

by

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, many married women have not only entered the working world, but are also rapidly climbing the career ladder. This has given rise to an increasing number of dual-career couples who have to constantly navigate between work and family life. Being in this position, coupled with Indians – generally regarded as one of the more traditional cultural groups in South Africa, with an emphasis on male dominance – provides a unique and interesting context for the study. In this study, the perceptions of Indian dual-career couples towards the wives' career advancement are explored. The study places a specific focus on the role of the husband in the dual-career arrangement by determining the impact that the spouse has on the balancing of work and family life and, ultimately, the impact he has on the wife's career progression.

I embarked on this study from an interpretivist stance in terms of which a qualitative research strategy, using in-depth, semi-structured life-story interviews, was employed in order to gain a greater understanding of the various factors that mould the perceptions that couples currently hold with regard to the career advancement of women. Purposive as well as snowball sampling strategies were used to identify nine dual-career Indian couples, who constituted the sample for this study. A comprehensive analysis was conducted that involved thematic analysis. This process was aided by using the qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti.

The results of this study reveal that, although there is a shift towards greater acceptance of career women, the spouses have not reached a level of parity as Indian women are not completely emancipated from their duties in the home domain. In addition, masculinity and the male ego were running threads throughout this study, tying in with various aspects of the study. My thesis contributes to the growing research on dual-career couples by focusing on an under-researched, but crucial aspect of the dual-career arrangement, and therefore opens avenues for further research.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

“If you think you have found the perfect woman, you have to test her before you can be one hundred percent sure. Ask her to play Monopoly. If she chooses the iron, you know she is the one.”

- Unknown

The turn of the 21st century has sparked the radical transformation of the roles of women. One of the most noteworthy demographic changes taking place in workplaces globally is the augmented number of women, including mothers, across the various spectrum of professions in the labour force (Buddhapriya, 2009; Wax, 2004). Feminisation of global workplaces is occurring at an alarming rate, with approximately 200 million more women entering the workforce than in the previous decade (Zhong, 2006). A similar picture is painted in South Africa, as 45% of the 51% of women in the population are part of the workforce (Businesswomen’s Association, 2010). However, a paradoxical situation has emerged as women contribute extensively to social and economic outcomes at national and global levels, but still remain at the bottom of the workplace hierarchy in terms of power and rewards (Singh & Hoge, 2010).

This lack of women in executive or top managerial positions appears to be a global issue (Carrim, 2012; Rowe & Crafford, 2003; Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003), and South Africa is no exception, as women constitute only 4.5% of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and 6% of chairpersons in the country (Businesswomen’s Association, 2010). Mathur-Helm (2005, p. 57) highlights the disconcerting reality of the country’s situation by stating that “...women are still under-utilized in the South African employment market and are a wasted resource”. A similar, but bleaker, scenario is depicted amongst Indian females who constitute 1.1% of the economically active population of South Africa

(Department of Labour, 2010). These women form part of the transformation from the traditional roles of being baby caretakers to baby boomers, from bread-makers to becoming breadwinners, from sweeping floors to shattering glass-ceilings, and from running a home to managing large organisations. However, even with the transition of female roles, the number of Indian women in senior (2.5%) and top managerial (1.3 %) positions is very low (Department of Labour, 2010).

The introduction of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) has had a remarkable impact on the promotion of women in organisations, as African women constitute 46.9% of women directors in the country, followed by white women at 37.3% and coloured women at 9.2%. However, even with the implementation of this policy, Indian women are still the least represented, at 6.3%, compared to women directors from other racial groups (Businesswomen's Association, 2010). Therefore, it is critical to understand the underlying reasons why Indian women are under-represented in management cadres. Furthermore, these shocking statistics beg the question: Is the thwarting of Indian women to senior and top management positions a result of organisational or individual barriers?

Research on organisational barriers to women's career advancement abounds, both globally and in South Africa (Bilimoria, Joy, & Liang, 2008; Burke & Mattis, 2005; Rowe & Crafford, 2003; Tlaiss & Kauser, 2010). While most of the research focuses on organisational barriers to women's upward mobility within organisations (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008), researchers also allude to women's individual barriers, such as culture, extended family and spouses, being obstacles to their career advancement (Carrim, 2012; Rastogi & Bansal, 2012; Välimäki, Lämsä, & Hiillos, 2009; Wafula, 2010). As a result, researchers have indicated the vital role that husbands play in the career advancement of their wives (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2005; Noor, 2002; Xu & Burleson, 2001). However, limited studies could be found that focus specifically on spousal support in dual-career marriages (examples include: Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999; Schwarzer & Gutierrez-Dona, 2005; Välimäki et al., 2009). Also, as far as could be determined, a study that focuses specifically on husbands and the impact they have on the career advancement of their wives has not been undertaken before among Indians in the South

African context. This has given impetus to the present study, which in a figurative sense ultimately will determine whether the weight of the wedding ring drowns Indian women or keeps them afloat while riding the wave of career success.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Research strongly advocates the need for organisations to identify, understand, and support women's career and relationship concerns so that talented female professionals can be retained (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005). The experiences of working women has thus been a topic with unparalleled significance in the field of organisational psychology (Firth-Cozens & West, 1991). In the past, the study of work-family conflict was not a crucial issue, as organisations developed career paths with the expectation that positions would be occupied by a family man who gave his undivided attention to the job, as he had a wife who was responsible for taking care of all tasks in the domestic domain (Nieva, 1985). In addition, traditional studies were underpinned by the belief identified as the "myth of separate worlds" (Kanter, 1977, p. 8), which viewed work and family as two isolated domains. However, there has been a significant increase in the number of dual-profession couples wherein both spouses are involved in careers, as opposed to simply holding jobs (Elloy & Mackie, 2002). As a result, recent studies have recognised the crucial interdependent, reciprocal, and dynamic relationship between work and family domains and have stated explicitly that a woman's professional life cannot be studied in isolation to her non-work life (Mujumdar, 2008; Powell & Mainiero, 1992; Theunissen, Van Vuuren, & Visser, 2003). Thus, in current times, with the escalating number of wives as well as mothers entering the workforce and advancing in their careers, the dynamics surrounding women's endeavours to balance their work and family life is a crucial area of examination, as it appears to be a worldwide phenomenon.

Consequently, organisations are demonstrating a developing concern for issues relating to work and family life, which need to be addressed in order to mitigate their adverse effects in both the work and family spheres (Person, 2003; Theunissen et al., 2003). The majority of research conducted has focused on organisational barriers that inhibit the career progression of women (Bilimoria et al., 2008; Burke & Vinnicombe, 2005; Burke & Mattis, 2005; Rowe & Crafford, 2003; Tharenou, 2005; Tlaiss & Kauser, 2010;

Van Zyl & Roodt, 2003). However, valuable information for the development of aggressive human resource management policies can be obtained from knowledge about factors external to the workplace that have an impact on pertinent job attitudes and behaviours (Shaik, 2003). As a result, studies were conducted to identify personal factors that may have an impact on women's career advancement. The main areas investigated in these studies include:

- ❖ issues surrounding dual-career couples, consisting of gender-role beliefs, societal expectations, as well as the influence of culture and religion (Abele & Volmer, 2011; Aleem & Danish, 2008; Rusconi & Solga, 2008);
- ❖ individual factors regarding attitudes towards women career advancement (Al-Lamky, 2007; Burke, Burgess, & Fallon, 2006; Fullagar, Sumer, Sverke, & Slick, 2003); and
- ❖ interface of work and family domains (Apospori, Nikandrou, & Panayotopoulou, 2006; Gregory & Milner, 2009; Kargwell, 2008).

However, there still seems to be a lack of research done on the factors outside the work environment that sustain or obstruct women's career advancement, particularly the social support offered by husbands (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008). Moreover, such research is lacking in relation to minority women, such as Indian women in the African continent. It must also be highlighted that the barriers impacting on women's career advancement cannot simply be categorised as being organisational or personal, but "equally important are social barriers in the form of broader cultural expectations in terms of the sex role stereotypes, political, traditional, and historical influences" (Moorosi, 2007, p. 518). Various researchers have stated the crucial need for such research to include the women's larger life context, as there are other explanations for women not advancing at a satisfactory rate that may hold true (Aryee, Srinivas, & Tan, 2005; Martins, Eddleston, & Veiga, 2002; Rao, Apte, & Subbakrishna, 2003). Thus, it can be seen that taking a static approach will not suffice in understanding Indian women and the challenges faced by them. It is for this reason that I have adopted a broader umbrella approach in the investigation of the career advancement of Indian women by also examining the cultural, religious, historical, and societal contexts in which they function.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As a result of the changing roles of women over the past two decades, couples have had to redefine their marital norms with respect to their work and family lives (Stolz-Loike, 1992). Thus, research has shown that a woman's marital status appears to be a significant factor impacting on her career advancement (Mavin, 2000). However, researchers contend that it is not simply the presence of a partner that has an impact on the career satisfaction and advancement of women, but rather the type of marital relationship that exists, the amount of assistance received with domestic work, and/or the socio-emotional support offered by the husbands (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999; Kim & Ling, 2001; Martins et al., 2002; Namayandeh, Yaacob & Juhari, 2010; Tengimfene, 2009).

Investigating the impact of family dynamics on women's careers is a key avenue to explore, since women have increasingly moved into the work arena while still maintaining primary responsibility for the home, which in effect tends to complicate the once clear distinction between their personal and professional lives (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005). Thus, women are often required to make the choice between their career advancement, the stability of their families, or even raising a family at all (Mavin, 2000). In addition, the increase in dual-career couples has led to changes in family dynamics. One of the distinct changes occurring is the emergence of nuclear families replacing joint or extended families (Noor, 2002; Rastogi & Bansal, 2012). The transformation from the dissolving of extended families to the formation of nuclear families has resulted in the reduction of support networks and placed greater emphasis on support from the husband (Bharat, 1991; Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005). Thus, exploring the levels, types, and impact of support or non-support received from husbands in relation to the experience of work-family conflict of female professionals is warranted.

In addition, previous studies have highlighted that job-spouse conflict often serves as a barrier to the progression of women in the workplace (Ballout, 2008; Namayandeh et al., 2010; Wei, Ying, & Liangliang, 2009). The need for research that places a specific focus on the husband in a dual-career arrangement is heightened in the Indian context, as Indian women face distinctive barriers in their climb up the corporate ladder (Carrim,

2012). It is also crucial to note that the number of Indian women employed who eventually advance to top-level positions remains minute, even though the percentage of Indian women in administrative and managerial professions has increased over the years (Businesswomen's Association, 2010; Carrim, 2012). A possible reason for this is indicated by Sujatha (2008), who notes that the majority of Indian women are still traditionally bound and therefore are in a disadvantaged position compared to other women. Similarly, other researchers have advocated that unique challenges are faced by Indian women in South Africa, as they still struggle to reconcile traditional roles with those of modern working women (Carrim, 2012; Shaik, 2003).

Specifically, the issue of work-family conflict and family responsibility can be seen as a major, if not the greatest, obstacle to the career advancement of Indian women, as Indian women are required to place the needs of their families before their own (Salway, Jesmin, & Rahman, 2005). Furthermore, traditional Indian culture requires women to be submissive and devoted to their husbands (Rastogi & Bansal, 2012). Research has also shown that professional women and men from collectivist cultures, such as the Indian culture, are attempting to adjust to modern gender-role norms while simultaneously preserving their traditional values of familialism and collectivism (Aycan & Eskin, 2005). Thus, job-spouse conflict is likely to occur, as Indian women are faced with the perplexing decision of whether to advance in their careers or accept the traditional roles of being passive and subservient to their husbands. It is therefore necessary to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of Indian husbands towards their wives' career advancement, and the impact thereof, as many Indian women who receive a promotion are congratulated with the question: How does your husband feel about this?

Furthermore, the preponderance of work-family research done in the South African context has been dependent on studies and career theories emanating from the Western context (Tengimfene, 2009; Wafula, 2010). A limitation of these studies is they lack the culture dynamic that is crucial in work-family research, as issues that relate to work and family are entangled in cultural values, beliefs, and customs, particularly regarding gender roles in the Indian society (Aycan & Eskin, 2005). Thus, the outcomes of such studies are not completely interpretable in countries such as South Africa because of the diversity of cultural practices and beliefs of the population, as well as the

lack of examination of the appropriateness of these theories in the South African context (Grzywacz et al., 2007; Tengimfene, 2009; Wafula, 2010). Consequently, race, ethnicity, social class, and culture are core dimensions to explore when attempting to understand the lives of South African women, particularly when conducting work-family research, as these dimensions influence the unique circumstances that women have to navigate through in the various aspects of their life (Higginbotham, 1997). Similarly, Beoku-Betts (2005) notes that these diverse cultural constructs of gender, patriarchy, family, and work, as well as the disparate position of African societies in terms of worldwide socio-political and economic affairs, results in distinctive realities and career options for women in Africa. Thus, it is crucial that these variables be taken into consideration as they are likely to have a considerable impact on the experiences of South African Indian female managers.

1.4 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The main purpose of this study is to explore the dual attitudes and perceptions of Indian couples towards women's career advancement in South Africa. An ancillary aim of the study is to determine whether these perceptions hinder or encourage the career mobility of Indian women.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aimed to address the following specific research questions:

- ❖ **Research Question 1:** What are Indian couples' cultural, religious, and family values in relation to women's career advancement?
- ❖ **Research Question 2:** How do Indian husbands react to their wives' career advancement?
- ❖ **Research Question 3:** What are the wives' conceptions of how husbands perceive their career advancement?
- ❖ **Research Question 4:** Do Indian males of different age groups have varying perceptions regarding the career advancement of their wives?
- ❖ **Research Question 5:** What is the impact of husbands' support or non-support on wives' career advancement?

1.6 ACADEMIC VALUE AND INTENDED CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

Since 1994, when democracy dawned in South Africa, South Africans have been referred to as the 'rainbow nation'. The demise of apartheid, the creation of a new political dispensation, together with globalisation, have all contributed to the diversity in South African workplaces (Grant, 2007). As a result, 'diversity management' has become the buzz phrase in organisations globally, as well as in South Africa. A crucial argument is put forward by Valerio (2006, p. 6), who states that "if organizations are to survive in the wake of the upcoming generational shift, they must ensure that they have an adequate pipeline of leaders, and that will happen only if women and other underutilized sources of leadership are recruited, retained, and developed". Thus, if diversity is utilised as a source of competitive advantage, heterogeneous organisations can be transformed into high-performance organisations (Mostert, 2009). However, diversity management in the South African context is complex, as leaders are responsible for crafting organisational cultures that embrace the mix of varying individuals' needs in order to attain a competitive advantage (Povah & Thorton III, 2011).

The South African government has made attempts to aid women and previously disadvantaged groups with the aim of placing them on an equal footing with men in all spheres of work through initiatives that include, but are not limited to: affirmative action, the Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995), the Employment Equity Act (Act 75 of 1997), the Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998), as well as the National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality. However, in order for the successful attraction and retention of such talent, it is crucial that organisations understand the societal challenges facing these women (Hewlett & Rashid, 2010). This study therefore will provide valuable insight and understanding to the government, as well as managers within organisations, with regard to the opportunities and challenges presented to Indian women, as well as the impact of Indian husbands' perceptions on their wives' career progression. This understanding will provide corporate leaders, human resource managers, and management consultants with insight to aid in the management of diversity, which is regarded as one of the most crucial global challenges (Mor Barak, 2005). As a result, this study will assist in sensitising these supervisors and/or managers

to the challenges faced by married Indian women in their personal lives while advancing in organisations. This will assist managers in developing aggressive policies to advance, accommodate, and ultimately retain Indian women in order to capitalise on the valuable contribution that this ethnic minority group has to offer.

In addition, the findings of this study will provide Indian couples with awareness of the perceptions that both men and women hold with regard to the career progression of Indian women. With this knowledge, couples will not only become aware of their own perceptions and the impact thereof, but a platform will be provided for couples to compare their perceptions with those of other individuals in dual-career marriages. Thus, both spouses will be able to make informed decisions on the rationality of their viewpoints relative to other couples in the Indian community of South Africa. The findings of this study will create awareness among aspirant female Indian managers, and those currently in lower-level managerial positions who intend on entering into dual-career relationships, of the dynamics, situations, and challenges that they may encounter, as well as the coping strategies adopted by Indian women. They will be able to sort the myths from the facts, as the study provides a realistic picture of the dynamics surrounding the subject matter. Moreover, this study will shed some light for men who aim to enter into dual-career relationships in the future to become aware of the challenges faced by Indian women, and by creating awareness, minimise the adverse impact of these challenges while capitalising on the vital support they can offer.

From a theoretical perspective, a study of this nature has not been done before among Indians in the South African context. In South Africa, studies have been conducted with the aim of identifying the barriers that have an impact on women's career advancement (Hajee-Osman, 2010; Lewis-Enright, Crafford, & Crous, 2009; Rowe & Crafford, 2003; Sephoti, 2009). Studies have also been conducted that focus specifically on the challenges encountered by professional women as a result of the interface between work and family domains in the South African context (Sedumedi, 2009; Tengimfene, 2009; Wallis & Price, 2003). However, limitations of studies have been identified as they focus predominantly on the experiences of white and black female managers in reaching top managerial positions, while Indian women are examined as a sub-category of black women, and not studied exclusively (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Carrim, 2012;

Mathur-Helm, 2005). Studies have also been conducted in India that focus specifically on work-life conflict as a barrier to the upward mobility of women (Baral & Bhargava, 2011; Buddhapriya, 2009; Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005; Rastogi & Bansal, 2012), but such research is lacking regarding Indian women living outside the Indian subcontinent.

It is crucial for organisations to understand work-family conflict in particular cultural contexts in order to implement interventions that are pertinent to that specific culture (Wafula, 2010). Furthermore, it is important to pay particular attention to women from minority groups, as they have different expectations, backgrounds, and experiences, as they do not hold equal power and privileges to their colleagues, and therefore are likely to have distinct work experiences, identities, and development paths (Davidson & Burke, 2004). In the South African context, only two studies could be found that focus specifically on the experiences of Indian female professionals in South Africa. The study conducted by Shaik (2003) was aimed at determining whether career salience and work salience moderate the relationships between inter-role conflict–life satisfaction and inter-role conflict–job satisfaction for Indian working mothers. A shortcoming of this study is that it was conducted quantitatively, thus lacking the rich, in-depth information required for this under-studied minority group. Research conducted by Carrim (2012) focused on the life and career journeys as well as the identity of Indian women in management in South Africa. However, her study focused on managers between the ages of 33 and 53 years old and did not consider the generational differences (younger cohorts) in terms of their experiences. Furthermore, both studies adopted a one-sided approach as they only considered women’s perceptions, and the husbands or male partners were not given a voice. Thus, the results of this qualitative study will provide valuable insight and add to the limited research done exclusively on Indian female professionals in the South African context.

Spousal support has been studied mainly as a subset of work-family studies, but research focusing specifically on the support offered by husbands to their employed wives is limited (examples include: Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999; Schwarzer & Gutierrez-Dona, 2005; Välimäki et al., 2009). Drawbacks of these studies have been identified. Firstly, because most of them were done quantitatively, hence, more qualitative studies are needed to put “flesh on the

bones of generic constructs and their relationships, [seeking] generic processes” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 27). As a result, research from a qualitative stance is necessary as limited research has been done on the subject. Secondly, most of the studies can be regarded as unidirectional, as they take into account only the wife’s perspective. As it takes ‘two to tango’, it is vital to investigate the wives’ conceptions of how their husbands perceive their career advancement as well as the husbands’ actual perceptions regarding their wives’ career progression, and the effect thereof. This viewpoint is supported by Kenny and Kashy (1991), who note that a limitation in the majority of research done on the subject is that it examines each partner’s isolated perceptions, rather than understanding the couple as an interactive system. By excluding the husbands’ perspectives, the accuracy of the data could not be verified in most of the studies (including: Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Välimäki et al., 2009). Furthermore, Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2008) suggest that future research on spousal support be done to gain insight into the variations across ethnicities, generations, as well as sexual orientation.

Thus, this study will make a unique contribution by providing a holistic picture of the dual perceptions held by Indian couples, by examining the husbands’ and the wives’ perceptions regarding the career advancement of Indian women in South Africa. The research is aimed particularly at providing an opportunity for Indian couples to voice their beliefs, perceptions, and experiences, as they represent a historically silenced and marginalised group. This will assist in explaining the current diffusion and fragmentation of research on the subject and provide valuable insight into and understanding of the perceptions and attitudes of Indian couples and the impact these perceptions have on the career mobility of women in this ethnic minority group.

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

This document contains certain terms that may need some clarification. Brief descriptions of these terms are given below:

1.7.1 Culture

For the purpose of this study, culture will be defined, firstly, as being collectivist in that it is learned or shared by a particular group of people. Secondly, it consists of socially transmitted phenomena that include assumptions, norms, values, customs, shared meanings, and patterned ways of behaving, which has an effect on individuals who are part of the group.

1.7.2 Dual-career couple

A dual-career couple consists of two individuals in a marital relationship, who are “engaged in continual professional employment, are psychologically committed to their work or are employed in upwardly mobile jobs with personal growth attached” (Harvey, Napier, & Moeller, 2009, p. 14).

1.7.3 Egalitarianism

Egalitarianism occurs when male and female partners in a family attempt to find a satisfactory balance between their career and family life, which transpires as a result of the equal sharing of tasks and responsibilities by partners (Tereškinas, 2010).

1.7.4 Hinduism

The term ‘Hinduism’ has been derived from the word ‘Hindu’, which is a geographical term derived from the name of a river, the Sindhu River (Naik, 2007; Rambachan, 2000). Those individuals who resided in the land surrounding the river system were called Hindus, and their traditions are collectively known as Hinduism (Rambachan, 2000). In the South African context, Hinduism is one of the predominant religions followed by Indians.

1.7.5 Indian

For the purpose of this study, an Indian is defined as an individual who is a descendant of migrants from South Asia (Dhalla, 2000).

1.7.6 Islam

The term 'Islam' is derived from the Arabic root word 'Salema'. From this root word, words such as peace, purity, sincerity, submission, surrendering, and obedience can be derived. In essence, Islam means peace through submission to Allah (the Almighty God). In the South African context, Islam is one of the predominant religions followed by Indians.

1.7.7 Muslim

A Muslim is an individual who follows the religion of Islam and submits to the will of God.

1.7.8 Nuclear family

A nuclear family is one that comprises of a husband, wife and their unmarried children (Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005).

1.7.9 Patriarchy

The term 'patriarchy' literally means the rule of father, who is termed the 'patriarch' (Sarshar, 2010). This term is used in the study of families where male domination is clear.

1.8 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The subsequent chapters in this dissertation are demarcated as follows:

❖ Chapter 2: The theoretical perspectives and socio-historic context

This chapter outlines the socio-historic context that has had an impact on the perceptions of participants in the study and delineates the theoretical perspectives applicable to the study.

❖ **Chapter 3: Dynamics surrounding dual-career couples**

This chapter provides a critical review of the available research on the dynamics surrounding dual-career couples.

❖ **Chapter 4: Research design and methodology**

This chapter provides a description of the research design employed in the study, along with the methodological research approach followed in conducting the research.

❖ **Chapter 5: Participants' pre-marital life**

This chapter reports on the results of the study in which the various pre-marital life influences that have shaped the participants' perceptions regarding the career advancement of women are identified and described.

❖ **Chapter 6: Participants' marital life**

This chapter reports on the findings of the study that include the current dynamics and influences transpiring from the participants' marital lives that have moulded their perceptions regarding the career advancement of women.

❖ **Chapter 7: Discussion of the changing perceptions regarding women's career advancement**

This chapter provides a comprehensive discussion on the main findings of the study as compared to prior literature on the subject.

❖ **Chapter 8: Conclusion and recommendations**

This chapter draws conclusions by presenting the study's findings in response to the research questions, the significant contributions and limitations of the present study, as well as the recommendations for future research.

❖ **Chapter 9: Reflections on the research voyage**

This closing chapter entails a reflection on my experience of the voyage undertaken in the completion of this thesis.

1.9 CONCLUSION

The background to the present study together with the problem statement and the purpose of the study were discussed in this chapter. Furthermore, the research questions, contributions of the study, definition of key terms and the layout to be used in subsequent chapters of this thesis were presented.

Chapter 2 describes the theoretical perspectives pertinent to this study, along with the socio-historic context impacting on the perceptions of the participants in the study.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND THE SOCIO- HISTORIC CONTEXT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is aimed at providing the reader with a bigger picture to understand the various contexts in which the lives of Indian individuals are embedded and by which they are affected. The literature review will begin by presenting and discussing the theories applicable to this study. The discussion will then be directed towards the societal context, providing for an examination of both the traditional as well as contemporary Indian culture. The religious dynamics, which include the perspectives of Islam and Hinduism on women and their roles in society, will then be discussed. The familial context will also be reviewed, after which the historical context will be discussed. This includes a discussion of the apartheid and post-apartheid eras, as well as a timeline tracing the employment of Indian women in South Africa.

2.2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Theories are crucial to consider in any study, because they serve as the basis on which ideas are tested, and new knowledge and insights are gained (Venter & Barkhuizen, 2005). The two main theoretical frameworks that will be the focus of this study are the spousal support theory and the socialisation theory. In support of these theories, gender socialisation theory, social role theory, conformance to societal expectations theory, and resocialisation theory will be used as a basis for explaining the various perceptions held with regard to women's career advancement.

2.2.1 Socialisation theory

Social theorists argue that, just as individuals learn a game by playing it, so too they learn life by engaging in it. From this view, Rusconi and Solga (2008) put forth an argument in accordance with Phyllis Moen's 'linked lives' concept. This notion posits that the success or failure of dual-career relationships is a 'social-relational process' (Moen, 2003, p. 10), as the spouses' lives are intertwined and thus influence and are influenced by each other. Therefore, in order to conduct a true investigation of the dynamics surrounding the lives of dual-career couples, one must delve further than simply analysing the characteristics of each partner in isolation.

Socialisation theory not only focuses on the socialisation dynamics between the couple, but, in the broadest sense, includes the manner in which individuals are supported when associating with a single or many social groups (Grusec & Hastings, 2007). Specifically, socialisation is referred to as the process through which a child develops into an adult valuing his or her environments, traditions, laws, and norms (Vuorinen & Tuunala, 1997). In essence, socialisation can be described as being concerned with the manner in which human groups maintain themselves and convey their norms; therefore every effort to comprehend, envisage and mould human behaviour requires an understanding of the concept of socialisation (Kesebir, Uttal, & Gardner, 2010).

In addition, Burman and Reynolds (1986) note that socialisation is a core mechanism for crafting individuals' attitudes, social identities, and emotional attachments. Furthermore, Henslin (1999) argues that the education of culturally defined gender roles is an essential aspect of socialisation. Sebayang (2011) confirms this view by stating that ideas and beliefs about masculinity and femininity are culturally born and represent the treatment of males and females in the particular society. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the broad cultural and social conditions, as well as organisational structures when investigating dual-career couples (Rusconi & Solga, 2008). Consequently, the current study will use socialisation theory as a basis to ascertain the impact that the socialisation of husbands and wives has on their perceptions regarding women's career advancement. Subsets of socialisation theory will be discussed in the subsequent sections as they are applicable to the current study.

2.2.1.1 *Gender socialisation and social role theory*

Gender socialisation and social role theory form significant subsets of socialisation theory. It has been argued that gender is a crucial factor in the socialisation process, as it shapes one's self-image and social identity (Sebayang, 2011). Similarly, sociological theorists view gender as a socially constructed entity rather than a biological given (Bussey & Bandura, 1999) that is constructed and reconstructed by daily interactions of cultural values and expectations, and is legitimised through the laws and regulations of the country (Quek & Knudson-Martin, 2006). Thus, gender socialisation can be understood as a focused form of socialisation.

Gender socialisation focuses on how individuals are trained regarding what it means to be male or female (Morris, 1988). It has also been argued that society reveals its gender expectations through the social roles it assigns to each sex (Sebayang, 2011). This form of socialisation commences as early as the birth of the individual, from the simple question "Is it a boy or a girl?" (Gleitman, Fridlund, & Reisberg, 2000, p. 499). It is gender socialisation that affects the way individuals behave, think, and learn what is gender-appropriate behaviour for positive outcomes to be afforded, as well as what is gender-inappropriate behaviour for which sanctions may result (Crespi, 2003; Ismail & Ibrahim, 2007; Scandura & Baugh, 2002).

As a result, it can be seen that gender socialisation is aimed at explaining the social behaviour of males and females within a particular society. These gender roles are the "shared expectations (about appropriate qualities and behaviours) that apply to individuals on the basis of their socially identified gender" (Eagly, 1987, p. 12). In addition, social role theory suggests that the distribution of tasks between men and women results in expectations (norms) being formed regarding the roles individuals are required to perform and the characteristics they are believed to possess (Wafula, 2010). In essence, this theory can be seen as prescriptive, in that different roles are assigned to individuals based on their gender.

Lazarus (1991) has noted further that, when work has an impact on family, it is more likely that women rather than men will cultivate a pessimistic attitude toward their work, as their employment is more likely to be seen as a threat to their core social role. The present study therefore will investigate the social roles prescribed for Indian women, as well as the impact these roles have on the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours of Indian couples regarding women's career advancement.

2.2.1.2 Conformance to social expectations theory

A theory that builds on the social role theory is the conformance to social expectations theory. This theory dictates what women's work consists of and validates the lopsided split of domestic activities (Bartley, Blanton, & Gilliard, 2005). Further, this theory is based on the notion that societal expectations envision men to be married and supporting their wives, but anticipates women to be employed, or to place great emphasis on their work, only if they are single (Beauregard, 2008). This theory examines the extent to which individuals fit the norms set by their society (Freudenthaler & Mikula, 1998).

According to Landau and Arthur (1992), conformance to social expectations theory speculates that men who are married and are the primary breadwinners in their families need to progress further in their careers than those who are single, and that men who have children should progress even further. Thus, as the role of the wife primarily entails dealing with household and family responsibilities, this theory puts forward that women are not required to progress in their careers to the same extent as men. Individuals usually comply with these norms because of the rewards associated with compliance and the punishments attached to non-compliance (Carlson, Kacmar, & Stepina, 1995). The current study will use this theory as a base to investigate the extent to which husbands and wives conform to societal expectations, and the effect thereof.

2.2.1.3 Resocialisation theory

The roles assigned to men and women by society have been discussed. However, Scott (2006) has argued that the ascribed social roles have been undermined in recent years as a result of the age of new individualism. Similarly, Crespi (2003) indicates that,

especially in Western culture, a transformation is occurring towards a non-sexist environment in which individuals are being raised to believe that gender should not pose a barrier to any kind of activity or way of life. This change can be ascribed to the process of resocialisation.

Resocialisation occurs throughout the human life cycle and refers to the process of abandoning previous behaviour patterns and impulses by embracing new ones as part of a transition in the individual's life (Schaefer & Lamm, 1992, p. 113). In addition, Schaefer and Lamm (1992) explain that resocialisation can turn out to be an intense experience, as the individual may experience a swift break from his or her previous views, which would require the individual to discover and be exposed to fundamentally different values and norms. Resocialisation theory will be used in the present study to ascertain whether resocialisation has taken place, from the traditional Indian values and norms to more conventional ones, including the attitudes, values, and actions of individuals in support of women's career advancement.

2.2.2 Spousal support theory

The spousal support view put forward by Kanter (1977) posits that having a spouse offers additional resources required for job performance. The basic premise of this theory is that spousal support is associated with a greater division of work in the family. According to this viewpoint, men who are married have the ability to devote greater resources to their professions than men who are single. This is primarily due to wives, especially stay-at-home wives, who provide their husbands with additional resources such as taking care of the household responsibilities, providing counselling and work assistance, and affording energy as well as time to the endeavours of their husbands (Pfeffer & Ross, 1982; Reitman & Schneer, 2008). Thus, this theory can be seen to have a positive effect on the perceived career achievements of males.

Women, on the other hand, require greater spousal support than men for their career success (Cohen, Granot-Shilovsky, & Yishai, 2007). The irony of this is that women are less likely to benefit from spousal support than men. This can be attributed to: the husband's career frequently taking preference over the wife's career (Valcour & Tolbert,

2003); the likelihood of married women offering resources for their husbands' careers, rather than obtaining resources from their husbands for their own careers (Beauregard, 2008); the unlikelihood of women having a stay-at-home husband (Scheener & Reitman, 2002); and the unfair division of labour towards women in the management of household tasks (Gershuny & Bittman, 2005). Thus, according to this theory, marriage has an adverse effect on the career success of women compared to that of men, since they are not able to pay attention to their professional lives to the same extent as women who are single, and thus will experience less career progression (Tharenou, 1999; Whiting, 2004). Therefore, this theory implies that single women should progress further in their careers than women who are married, as unmarried women are able to dedicate their resources solely to their careers (Beauregard, 2008). Spousal support theory will be used in the current study to determine whether marriage serves as a barrier to Indian women climbing up the career ladder.

With the applicable theories discussed, I now turn to the Indian culture to shed some light on the cultural background of the group under study.

2.3 BACKGROUND TO THE INDIAN CULTURE

In this section I will take a look at the definition of culture, as well as traditional and contemporary Indian values, in order to provide an understanding of the cultural influences on the topic.

2.3.1 Definition of culture

Culture is a crucial aspect to consider, as it has an influence on both the subjective and objective characteristics of individuals, including the norms, beliefs, and values that influence the behaviour and thinking patterns of individuals (Bergh & Theron, 2006; Foxcroft & Roodt, 2009; Grobler & Warnich, 2006). In addition, the experiences of Indian women may be vastly different from their white or black associates, as cultural standards and norms may differ (Carrim, 2012). Thus, it is culture that ultimately characterises the uniqueness of each individual and hence it is a crucial factor to consider in a study of this nature.

Culture is a dynamic and ubiquitous concept that has been defined in various ways by both earlier as well as modern researchers. These definitions include that culture is:

- ❖ “the socially transmitted knowledge and behaviour shared by some group of people” (Bailey & Peoples, 1998, p. 23);
- ❖ “the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration—a pattern of assumptions that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (Schein, 1992, p. 9);
- ❖ the “software of the mind” that guides individuals in their daily interactions (Hofstede, 2001); and
- ❖ “a shared body of custom, reproduced through time, that makes societies distinctive” (Dressler, 2002, p. 5).

These definitions converge on the notion that culture, firstly, is collective in that it is learned or shared by a particular group of people. Secondly, that it consists of socially transmitted phenomena, which include assumptions, norms, values, customs, shared meanings, and patterned ways of behaving, all of which have an effect on the individuals who are part of that group. In addition, it is crucial to note that culture is adopted from one generation, forced upon the contemporary generation, and imparted to successive generations (Deresky, 2003). In the field of psychology, a paradigm shift is taking place in terms of which culture is receiving growing affirmation as there is increased support for taking into account the historico-cultural contextualisation of the individuals being studied (Patel, 2002). Furthermore, it is important to note that culture is what distinctly defines gender roles, as clearly stated by social role theory, which was discussed at great length in Section 2.2.1.1. Thus, culture can be used to explain the values, behaviours, and attitudes of Indian couples with regard to the roles of women, which in turn influences the perceptions they hold regarding women’s career advancement.

2.3.2 Traditional Indian culture

South African Indian women are influenced by traditions emanating from India. Many researchers have identified the Indian culture as being collectivist in nature (Carrim, 2012; Prag, 2007; Reddy, 2010; Velgach & Rajadhyaksha, 2009). In collectivist cultures, members define themselves in terms of the group, and thus those who want to be viewed in a favourable light are required to adhere to the norms set out by the group (Luk & Schaffer, 2005). In addition, the norm in collectivist cultures is for women to take care of the home domain, while the husband's role is that of being the provider for the family (Patel, Govender, Paruk, & Ramgoon, 2006). According to Triandis (1995), majority of Indians can be labelled as collectivists and thus are likely to: view their self as relational with and mutually dependent on members of the in-group; construct their life goals relative to those of the in-group; portray values such as connectedness, compromise or mutual respect, and social interdependence; and feel a great sense of loyalty to their communities by conforming to social norms and meeting social obligations, even if the demands of society inconvenience them. Thus, group loyalty is a crucial tenet of the Indian population and also trumps individual needs (Maharaj, 1995; Ramisetty-Mikler, 1993).

Dev and Babu (2007) support Triandis's (1995) view by arguing that the individual and society are interrelated and that one cannot create an independent identity. Indian women often have to negotiate between work and social norms, as conformance to these norms affords them with a sense of security, belonging, and control, while social condemnation and feelings of disgrace, guilt, and self-doubt are consequences of non-conformance (Sonpar & Kapur, 2001). Therefore, it can be seen that, among Indians, recognition or social acceptance is more valuable than individual achievement (Banerjee, 2008), and interdependence is favoured over independence (Lande, 2007). This highlights the reasons why there is general consensus among experts that there is a distinct socio-cultural influence on the general behaviour and personality of Indian individuals (Shivani, Mukherjee, & Sharan, 2006). In essence, it can rightfully be deduced that, in the Indian culture, the question "Where do I come from?" is more important than "Who am I?" (Banerjee, 2008).

In addition, Ramisetty-Mikler (1993) highlights that role expectations are formal in the Indian culture. In the prehistoric Indian literature, for example the Vedas, it was prescribed that “men are the breadwinners and sole providers for the family while women play a subordinate role of being an obedient, devoted and dutiful wife, nurturing and loving mother in the family social structure” (Rastogi & Bansal, 2012, p. 180). Other researchers agree with the notion that the traditional Indian culture is focused on women shouldering the domestic responsibilities, while the men adopt the role of being financial providers for their families (Andrade, Postma, & Abraham, 1999; Patel et al., 2006; Salway et al., 2005). Thus, studies conducted on Indian professionals have revealed that many Indian women would place their home roles before that of their careers (Patel & Parmentier, 2005; Rao et al., 2003).

The collectivist nature of traditional Indian societies also encourages the preservation of traditional values such as patriarchy within the family unit (Banerjee, 2008; Carrim, 2012). Patriarchy will be discussed at length in Section 2.5.2.1, but it is essential to note that, in a predominantly patriarchal society, males’ employment is crucial, as money symbolises power, which in turn affects the construction of their masculinity (Ichou, 2008). In sum, Farver, Bhadha, and Narang (2002) declare that the Indian culture, which embraces collectivism, traditional gender roles, and male dominance, is embedded within individuals and passed down to future generations, even after emigration from India. Indian women are thus required to be ‘good daughters’ and ‘good wives’ in order to gain social approval and acceptance in the community (Inman, Howard, Walker, & Beaumont, 2007). They have a limited say in decision making concerning the expenses of their homes, as well as with regard to their education (Bhattacharyya & Korinek, 2007). Furthermore, pursuing a career without (at least) the husband’s approval is virtually impossible for an Indian woman (Gupta & Sharma, 2002). As a result, for many years Indian women have experienced a ‘paradoxical status’, as they are given high respect in society (status of goddess), but their career aspirations and entrance into the working world are frowned upon (Budhwar, Saini, & Bhatnagar, 2005, p. 180).

2.3.3 Contemporary Indian culture

Nonetheless, times are changing, as progressively more women from collectivist cultures appear to be seeking employment (Wafula, 2010). Valk and Srinivasan (2011) assert this view by stating that, in the Indian society, a woman's role in relation to herself, her family, and her society, is being transformed to embrace the novel and extended role of women with an occupational identity. Indians are incorporating Western individualism into the collectivism of Indian culture due to the generations of Indians who have been living in places such as South Africa (Patel, Power, & Bhavnagri, 1996). This phenomenon is also referred to as 'cultural hybridity', which entails the shedding of traditional meanings and the formation of novel symbolic expressions through the process of 'cultural borrowing' (Manfred, 2009, p. 145). However, researchers argue that individuals do not simply replace their traditional values with new ones, but rather choose, shift, and modify them in order to adjust to the new environment (Mujumdar, 2008). Other researchers call this phenomenon 'acculturation', which can broadly be explained as the experience of psychological and social adjustments by individuals in their transformation to a new culture (Mujumdar, 2008). However, Berry (2003) notes that these concepts converge on the notion that this adjustment entails change at the individual (i.e. viewpoints, values, identities, and mindset) as well as the group level (i.e. cultural and social systems).

As a result, traditionally defined gender roles in the Indian society are in the process of being transformed through the search for new meanings (Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005; Velgach & Rajadhyaksha, 2009). Contemporary Indian women therefore are likely to work before marriage, and are progressively more likely to continue working after marriage (Andrade et al., 1999). However, it is crucial to note that even though times are changing, with women being encouraged to seek higher education and pursue careers, their traditional roles have not shifted, as they are expected to fulfil their domestic as well as professional roles simultaneously (Wafula, 2010). The same appears to be true in the Indian society, as women are still required to preserve traditional Indian cultural principles and standards, and thus face difficulty fulfilling traditional expectations as well as handling their new roles (Carrim, 2012; Shaik, 2003). Similarly, a study conducted by Salway et al. (2005) revealed that even though Indian

women in Bangladesh were working, their husbands were still the breadwinners and authority figures. The women in this study protested that, even though they worked and contributed to the household, they still had to be submissive to their husbands, while the men in the study highlighted that women's work created anxiety, since it challenged the conventional gender roles. Thus, it comes the younger generation of Indians have difficulty unifying their traditional Indian values with their Westernised outlook (Ramphal, 1993).

A similar picture is painted for South African Indian women, who have been exposed to cultural subjugation, as their endeavours to pursue careers in male-dominated professions have not been supported by their families because of cultural and traditional preconceptions (Maharaj & Maharaj, 2004). In addition, the study by Patel and Parmentier (2005) in India revealed that many women would feel uncomfortable if their spouses performed work in the home domain. However, a recent study conducted by Panda (2010) on 160 dual-career Indian couples revealed that the majority of female participants recognised the role of their husband in the domestic realm. This author further states that the allocation of domestic tasks solely to the wives is regarded as 'traditional norms' in India, and that times are changing rapidly, as a shift towards gender equality is being achieved with rapid momentum among dual-career Indian families. However, a major cause of stress for employed Indian women is the family adapting to the new roles of women from the traditional ones (Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005). Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009) echo this sentiment as they note that the gender-role attitudes of families are transforming at a much slower pace than those of the working women, as they continue to hold traditional expectations of women. Cieslik and Verkuyten (2006) agree, declaring that individuals have a tendency to preserve their cultural values and/or embrace new ones in their interactions with others. Radhakrishnan (2005) makes a significant point that may possibly explain the difference between Indians who cling to traditional values and those who can be regarded as 'modern'. According to this author, South African Indian women who were not politicised during the anti-apartheid struggle are seen as embracing conservative, patriarchal, and heterosexist Indian traditions, while those who were politically active in the struggle identify themselves partially as Indian and partially as South African or black. Thus

those individuals who identify themselves as partly Indian and partly South African do not hold on to traditions as strongly.

Although there is a lack of understanding why these differences occur, it must be noted that over the past three decades, Indian women have increasingly been overcoming these challenges and have started entering traditionally male-dominated fields, such as information technology, the police and armed forces, the civil service, advertising and so forth (Budhwar et al., 2005). However, even though they occupy positions that afford them social protection and a secure income, these women still face cultural obstacles, such as having to accommodate the age and gender hierarchy in the home domain, restrictions on their travel, as well as holding personal values in favour of professional advancement that clash with family and care-giving obligations (Gupta & Sharma, 2002). Thus, those Indian women who have reached top positions in organisations are viewed as tackling the challenges head on, having the necessary family support and personal drive, as well as being determined to hold on to their positions (Nath, 2000). Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009) encapsulate the essence of the Indian society, describing it as being multifaceted, as it comprises of a complex intertwining of tradition and modernism, as well as contains disparities and inconsistencies that can be perplexing to comprehend, especially when examined from a Western perspective.

Having discussed the Indian culture at great length, I now turn to the religious dynamics surrounding women's career advancement in the South African Indian community.

2.4 RELIGIOUS DYNAMICS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN COMMUNITY

Religion is another crucial factor to consider in explaining the couples' perceptions with regard to the wives' career progression, as individuals in the Indian society, irrespective of social hierarchy, are spiritually aware and inclined towards religion (Peter, 2002). Andrade et al. (1999) stress the importance of religion in social research conducted in Indian societies by stating that religion in societies has an impact on behaviours and attitudes, dictates roles, and has an influence on issues related to personal independence. Specifically, religion is a crucial aspect to consider, as religious values, practices, and norms shape individuals' lives by adding value and meaning to them

(Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007). It is for such reasons that the influence of cultural and religious traditions has been used to elucidate the under-representation and under-utilisation of women in management positions (Carrim, 2012; Omar & Davidson, 2001; Shaik, 2003; Yukongdi & Rowley, 2009).

This study will examine the religious beliefs of South African Indians to determine the extent of the impact that religion has on shaping the couples' behaviours, perceptions, and principles in relation to the wives' career advancement. In South Africa, the vast majority of the Indian community are followers of either Hinduism or Islam (Vangarajaloo, 2011). Subsequently, these religious influences will be discussed, as they assist in explaining Indian women's under-representation in management positions.

2.4.1 Islamic perspective on women and their roles in society

The term 'Islam' is derived from the Arabic root word 'Salema'. From this root word, words such as peace, purity, sincerity, submission, surrendering and obedience can be derived. In essence, Islam means peace through submission to Allah (the Almighty God). Thus, a Muslim is an individual who follows the religion of Islam and submits to the will of God. Zain (2000) points out that Islam differs from other religions, as it is not a religion based on an academic theory, a system of philosophy or ethics, mythology, history, biography or a utopian ideology. Islam is a way of life for all individuals in any society, circumstance or era. The Holy Quran, which is the divine scripture of Islam, and the 'Sunah', which are the traditions and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), are the two sources from which Muslims draw their information on the rights, privileges and status accorded to Muslim women (Moosa, 2004).

A chapter (Surah) in the Quran, titled Surah Nisaa, is dedicated to women (Bunting, 2001). Bunting posits that the Quran emphasises egalitarianism, as stated in the following verse: "O mankind! Reverence your Guardian Lord, Who created you from a single person, created of like nature his mate and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women" (Al-Quran, 4:1). However, other authors, such as Naik (2006), argue that the Quran is patriarchal in that it assigns the responsibilities of decision-making and leadership to men, as stated in the following verse: "Men are a

degree above women and that men are the managers of the affairs of women” (Al-Quran, 2:228). Other authors argue that this same verse can be understood as “men shall take full care of women”, and that men should stand up for women because of their physical strength, rather than implying that they stand above women (Hoffman & Former, 2007). These are examples of the debate surrounding the status of women in Islam, which are endless; to examine this in depth is beyond the scope of the study.

However, it is essential to note that the equality advocated by this religion, specifically gender equality, has been placed under the microscope, to the extent that the role and status of Muslim women is one of the most controversial topics among Islamic and feminist scholars in current times. It has been argued that the role of Muslim women has been misunderstood due to the general ignorance of the true Islamic system and the Islamic way of life, and due to media distortions (Khan, 1993). Jamali, Sidani and Safieddine (2005) have presented an interesting review on the debates among feminist and Islamic scholars with regard to the status of women. They categorise Islamic scholars into two broad types: modern and traditional. The viewpoint of traditional scholars on Muslim women include agreement that women should stay at home and take care of their families; that women should be allowed to work only in certain female-dominated professions; that women are prohibited from engaging in male domains; that strict separation of men and women should be observed; and that women should be compelled to wear the face veil (Gallant & Pounder, 2008).

On the other hand, Jamali et al. (2005) explain that modernist scholars have emerged because they have recognised the need for women to work and advance in their careers. Thus, these scholars support women’s employment and participation; have obligated the wearing of the veil that covers the hair, as this does not create such a profound barrier to women’s employment and participation compared to the face veil; and have stated that a certain degree of mixing between men and women is acceptable and should be allowed. In addition, feminist scholars argue that women have a crucial role to play in the public (economical and political) as well as private (family) fields; that Islamic societies have created institutions to suppress women and seize control of their power; that each woman must be afforded a choice between diverse roles at various phases of her life; and that the development of initiatives for women necessitates that

Islamic jurisprudence be renewed and Islamic thought be revitalised (Jamali et al., 2005).

Vidyasagar and Rea (2004) highlight a crucial point in that, according to Islamic precepts, work for women is a right and not a duty that they are required to engage in when the need arises, as long as it does not affect their femininity and dignity. In addition, Shaik (2003) explains that the primary duty of a Muslim man is to provide for his family, while the main responsibility of a Muslim woman is to raise her children. She explains further that this does not prohibit women from working, but merely is an expectation set for them by society. Thus, in complete agreement with Elamin and Omair (2010), who posit that regardless of the fact that there is disagreement among Islamic and feminist scholars, both views have contributed considerably to influence attitudes about Muslim women and their roles in society.

2.4.2 Hinduism perspective on women and their roles in society

Hinduism cannot be attributed to a particular time, a single founder, or a distinct place (Osborne, 2005). The term 'Hinduism' has been derived from the word 'Hindu', which is a geographical term derived from the name of a river, the Sindhu River (Naik, 2007; Rambachan, 2000). Those individuals who resided in the area surrounding the river system were called Hindus, and their traditions were collectively known as Hinduism (Rambachan, 2000). Hinduism is considered the oldest religion in the world and is deemed to be tolerant, as there is no compulsion on anyone to follow its practices and it does not criticise other religions (Prag, 2007).

Desai (1957, p. 29) reviewed the status of Hindu women as set out in the 'Shastras' (Codes) by stating: "Ideologically, woman was considered a completely inferior species, inferior to the male, having no significance, no personality; socially she was kept in a state of utter subjection; denied all rights, suppressed and oppressed; she was further branded as basically lacking an ethical fibre." Desai and Vahed (2007, p.201) reiterate this patriarchal view of the women's role as "...acceptance of fate, glorification of motherhood and virginity, deference to male authority and, above all, worship of the husband", which was supported by the 'Tusidas Ramcharitramanas' (religious scripture).

Manu, the famous Hindu writer, stated in 200 BC “be a young girl, be a young woman, or even be an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her house” (Budhwar et al., 2005, p. 181). Moreover, according to the scriptures, Hindu women were viewed as lacking the capability to make autonomous decisions and to manage their own conduct (Ramu, 1987). Ramu (1987) further states that Hindu women were thus answerable to their fathers before marriage, to their spouses during marriage, and to their sons after their husband had passed on. Traditionally, when a wife appealed to her husband to assist her, it was viewed as a direct attack on his honoured status: “for to serve the husband gladly and without hesitation is the highest duty of the good Hindu wife” (Meiss, 1980, p. 914). This clearly indicates the submissiveness and dependence of Hindu women on their husbands.

Recent research has shown that, even though the Hindu society is still predominately patriarchal, with the male being the head of the home, mothers have a very high status (Pandey, 2008). Agarwal (2006) outlines that fathers, brothers, husbands and brothers-in-law who wish for their own good must honour and adore their women. There are two core traditional roles Hindu women must fulfil: that of mother and that of wife. As a wife she is expected to be faithful, submissive, respectful, and devoted to her husband, and as a mother she is expected to combine her fostering and affectionate side with being the powerful protector (Nath, 2000; Prag, 2007).

In addition, women in India, especially those who were part of the Hindu society, were not afforded the opportunity to acquire formal education, instead they obtained education related to domestic chores (Naik, 2007). However, in recent years, Hindu women are progressively seeking higher education and many are finding employment away from their homes (Prag, 2007). It is clear that Hindu women are aiming for greater independence from, and equality with, their male counterparts, an aspect that is in stark contrast to their traditional roles of being a devoted wife and/or mother.

A crucial consideration in Hinduism, as is the case with Islam, is that confusion often occurs between what the religions articulate in the religious scriptures and the way society interprets them. This is highlighted in Desai and Goodall's (1995) study, in which women reported that it is the social norms that discriminate against them, rather than

the prescriptions of Hinduism as a religion. This point is also asserted to the religion of Islam, as explained by Jamali et al. (2005) in relation to the varying viewpoints regarding women's career advancement, presented in the previous section. Thus, it is apparent that the issue of Hindu and Muslim women working is surrounded by significant controversy (Shaik, 2003).

With the religious influences discussed, I now turn to the familial context to understand the various family dynamics that may have an impact on the perceptions couples hold regarding women's career advancement.

2.5 FAMILIAL CONTEXT

Carrim (2012), as well as Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009), note that family is the basic unit of the Indian social order and the dominant concern for most Indian women. This view is confirmed by Rajadhyaksha and Bhatnagar (2000), who state that a woman's commitment to family roles is embedded in the Indian culture as being core to her very existence. Furthermore, in the Indian society, females' desires and wishes are required to match those of their families' customs, welfare, and honour (Rana, Kagan, Lewis, & Rout, 1998). Thus, it can be seen that family is held in high esteem in the Indian culture.

Researchers have noted that the changes in family dynamics due to the emergence of dual-career couples has had an impact on various aspects of women's lives, as the image of families has been transformed completely (Panda, 2010; Rastogi & Bansal, 2012). In the following sections, two main types of family structures are identified and discussed, along with the types of relationships that exist within families.

2.5.1 Family structure

Vangarajaloo (2011) identified two common types of Indian families in South Africa: the extended family and the nuclear family. The nuclear family comprises of the husband, wife and their immediate progeny (Steyn, Van Wyk, & Le Roux, 1997), whereas a 'joint' or extended family is described as a "social unit with two or three generations of paternally related males and their dependents who share a common residence, eating

facilities, and more important, property” (Valk & Srinivasan, 2011, p. 43). Etaugh and Bridges (2004) note that there has been an increase in the number of adult individuals taking care of their parents, with almost 50% of the caretakers being the eldest daughters. They identify this as being more prevalent among black individuals than whites. Similarly, Carrim (2012) notes that, although living in a nuclear family is the norm in Western cultures, being part of an extended family structure has been standard in the Indian culture. However, the findings of her study, as well as those of Verma (1995), illustrate that a shift can be seen among Indian families towards the dissolving of extended families as a result of modernisation, which includes women working outside the home. Nuclear families have resulted in women facing multiple role expectations, coupled with a reduction in the amount of social support available to them (Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005). Thus, changes in the family structure are accompanied with changes to the dynamics surrounding women and their roles.

Being part of an extended family has advantages and disadvantages. According to Vangarajaloo (2011), the benefits of an extended family is that there are additional family members who are able to share their experiences in a predicament, and who can serve as role models by portraying family values. In contrast, Rajadhyaksha and Bhatnagar (2000) and Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009) highlight that Indian women, especially those who are part of traditional joint or extended families, are obliged to take care of elderly family members in addition to their childcare responsibilities. A similar picture is painted in relation to women who are employed away from the home (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1997). Valk and Srinivasan (2011) note that the care of dependants is highly prevalent in the Indian context, as Indian women possess a strong sense of family responsibility as they place greater value on their families than on their careers. As a result, marriage was found to have a negative impact on the careers of Indian women due to their social obligations, specifically the attention that has to be given to in-laws and to relatives of the husband (Gupta & Sharma, 2002).

2.5.2 Types of family relationships

From the literature it can be seen that there are two main types of relationships within families, namely patriarchal and egalitarian relationships. Each will be discussed in turn in the subsequent sections.

2.5.2.1 *Patriarchal relationships*

The term ‘patriarchy’ literally means the rule of father, who is termed the ‘patriarch’ (Sarshar, 2010). Sarshar (2010) explains that patriarchy was originally used to describe a specific type of male-dominant family. Specifically, patriarchy has been defined as “a set of values that legitimate man’s power over women by reference to biological difference” (Adams & Govender, 2008, p. 552). Patriarchal ideologies are underpinned by the belief that a woman belongs in the house and that a ‘real man’ is one who provides financially for his family (Jeftha, 2006, p. 62). In a patriarchal society, gender appears to be embedded in power and serves a vital role in affording men with social privileges relative to women (Greig, Kimmel, & Lang, 2000). Specifically, patriarchal relationships can be seen as consisting of traditional attitudes, such as those that “stress the dichotomy between the husband-breadwinner and wife-homemaker-mother, and the differential power relations implied in these specialized roles” (Amato & Booth, 1995, p. 58). In addition, patriarchal ideologies emphasise men having control and power over women, as well as regarding them as their ‘possession’ (Sedumedi, 2009). Thus marriages in which husbands possess patriarchal attitudes are seen to suffer strain, as the husbands may be dissatisfied with their wives’ self-confidence and possibly feel threatened by their wives’ career success (Hochschild, 1989; Kehler, 2001).

Traditionally, Indian families were regarded as being patriarchal in nature, with women occupying submissive positions and their responsibilities primarily including domestic and familial duties in extended family structures (Wassenaar, Van Der Veen, & Pillay, 1998). In such families, the responsibility of being the head of the family is placed on the eldest male in the family (Velgach & Rajadhyaksha, 2009). A typical example of patriarchy is that of cultural marriages in the Indian community, in terms of which most marriages are arranged by the bride and the groom’s parents. In most cases the mother

of the bride remains silent, as failure to comply results in the bride being rejected by the groom's family (Reddi, 2007). In the Indian culture relationships are of prime concern and it is this relationship with the head of the family that provides security and shapes the identity of family members (Banerjee, 2008).

Various historical changes, such as the development of a capitalist economic system, the increase in educational opportunities for women, and changes in the South African legislation to provide greater career opportunities for Indian women through initiatives such Black Economic Empowerment, the Skills Development Act, and the Employment Equity Act, have challenged and undermined this traditional system. As a result, many hybrid arrangements are being developed to accommodate the simultaneous demands of the traditional Indian culture and those of contemporary Western ways (Wassenaar et al., 1998).

2.5.2.2 *Egalitarian relationships*

Egalitarianism stands in contrast to patriarchy, as its non-traditional relationships accentuate shared roles (Amato & Booth, 1995). Specifically, egalitarianism occurs where male and female partners in a family attempt to find a satisfactory balance between their careers and family life, which transpires as a result of the equal sharing of tasks and responsibilities (Tereškinas, 2010). Egalitarian relationships also have greater levels of flexibility, which permit the emergence of new roles and their integration into the marriage (Ruddick, 2007). Rusconi and Solga (2008) note that, in egalitarian relationships, both partners make sacrifices in their careers so that their families can benefit, or to allow for an ideal combination of career prospects for both spouses.

Research has shown that men who adopt egalitarian values appear to be supportive of their employed wives (Sedumedi, 2009). Similarly, a pro-feminist sex-role attitude in husbands can minimise the experience of work-family conflict by their professional wives (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). However, there are mixed views on whether relationships underpinned by egalitarianism are associated with increased relationship satisfaction because of the provision of support, or whether traditional gender roles increase relationship satisfaction as couples hold similar gender-role expectations

(Lande, 2007). Previous research has shown that men have an inclination towards more egalitarian gender-role attitudes if they assisted in the home when they were younger, whereas girls who helped in the home developed more gender-specific roles (De Valk, 2007).

Thus, a transformation is occurring, which has given rise to the construction of the 'new man' (Morrell, 2001, p. 4). Morrell describes the 'new man' as one who digresses from the patriarchal norms and from the perception of a 'real man' who is portrayed as being self-confident, a dominator, and the sole decision-maker in the domestic realm. Sedumedi (2009) declares further that men find themselves in a double bind, as the 'real man' is blamed for various social problems and the 'new man' is rejected and often criticised by both men and women for moving from the conventional societal perception of 'real' manhood. Thus, in the Indian context, which is underpinned by traditional beliefs, individuals who hold egalitarian beliefs are considered the exception rather than the norm (Velgach & Rajadhyaksha, 2009). Furthermore, Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009) revealed that Indian individuals who hold onto traditional beliefs experience greater work-family conflict than those who are egalitarian minded. The different types of family relationships therefore have an impact on the experiences and viewpoints of women and their career advancement.

I now turn to the historical context to shed light on the various historical influences that may have an impact on couples' perceptions in relation to the wife's career progression.

2.6 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In this section a discussion will be presented on racial discrimination during the apartheid era, along with the shift towards racial equality in the post-apartheid period. Furthermore, a timeline tracing Indian women's employment in South Africa will be presented and discussed.

2.6.1 Racial discrimination in apartheid South Africa

South Africa provides a unique platform on which gender studies can be conducted due to the various political and social changes that have taken place in the country (Morrell,

2001). From 1948 to the years leading up to 1994, which is commonly known as the apartheid era, there was a scarcity of South African women occupying senior positions. This has been attributed to the South African legislation, which was opposed to women advancing to top management positions, as well as non-legislative discrimination, which prevented them from attaining their optimal productive potential (James et al., 2006; Ruth, 2009; White, Cox, & Cooper, 1992).

Fiske and Ladd (2004) note that, during the apartheid era, racism was embedded in legislation. Bhavnani (1997) defines racism as a system of supremacy and subordination which is based on the unfounded biological ideologies that human beings can be categorised into racially distinct groups. Under the apartheid regime, South Africans were separated by the Population Registration Act (Act 30 of 1950) into four racially distinct groups, namely: Africans, Indians, coloureds, and whites (Maharaj, 1995). Furthermore, as explained by Fiske and Ladd (2004), apartheid was a social and political philosophy based on four core ideologies. The first was that the different race groups, each with their unique history, language, culture, and social traditions, should live and progress independently in South Africa. Secondly, white individuals were considered the guardians of civilisation, thus it was their responsibility to lead the other race groups to civilisation. Thirdly, in order to succeed in this leadership role whites needed to have their privileges secured. Lastly, whites formed a singular unit, while the non-whites could be separated into many nations.

Maharaj (1995), as well as Carrim (2012), note that varying rights and privileges were afforded to individuals from the different race groups during the apartheid era, with the white race being afforded superiority. They further explain that interaction between the different race groups in South Africa was restricted by the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (Act 49 of 1953), as well as the Group Areas Act (Act 41 of 1950), which ensured the separation of schools, entertainment areas, and residential areas for the various race groups. Furthermore, institutional discrimination, labour market exclusion, and discrimination in society in terms of gender and race were prevalent (Mathur-Helm, 2005). Thus, there was division between the races in virtually every aspect of their lives.

Tengimfene (2009) notes that racial segregation during the apartheid era, along with the preferential treatment of one race over the others, were factors that led to the imbalanced distribution of resources and growth in South Africa. During the apartheid era, Indians were perceived as the 'in-betweeners' (Carrim, 2012), or the 'buffer group' (Radhakrishnan, 2005), as they were not white enough to enjoy the privileges, but were regarded as superior to black people. These privileges included relatively better housing and health care, and a higher standard of education than black people, and the reservation of certain middle management and clerical jobs for Indians (Radhakrishnan, 2005). Furthermore, women from all race groups were given limited opportunities for career advancement compared to their male counterparts. Naidoo and Kongolo (2004) highlight that Indian women were predominantly employed at lower levels in organisations, where they performed menial work. A discussion surrounding the employment of Indian women is presented in Section 2.6.3.

Carrim (2012) notes that cultural values are instilled in Indian women by their society, family, religion, as well as by secular teachers. She further explains that these values were easily inculcated during the apartheid era, as Indians lived in segregated areas and this made it possible for the Indian culture to be preserved as community members followed these cultural and religious practices. Therefore, even though the apartheid era embraced racial discrimination, Indian cultural values were not compromised because Indians strongly upheld these values in the segregated areas in which they lived.

2.6.2 Shift towards racial equality in post-apartheid South Africa

Democracy was attained in 1994, and this allowed South Africa to deal with the unfairness across racial lines as well as to re-establish the dignity of its populace. Grant (2007) notes that the demise of apartheid, the new political dispensation, as well as globalisation, have all contributed to creating a prospect for diversity and equality in South African workplace. Table 2.1 illustrates the diverse population by group and sex. This table shows that Indians account for approximately 2.5% of South Africa's total population. Furthermore, the country has one of the highest Indian Diaspora in the world (Radhakrishnan, 2005).

Table 2.1: Mid-year population estimates for South Africa by population group and sex

Population group	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	% of male population	Number	% of female population	Number	% of total population
African	19 472 038	79,4	20 734 237	79,5	40 206 275	79,5
Coloured	2 188 782	8,9	2 351 008	9,0	4 539 790	9,0
Indian/ Asian	626 690	2,6	648 177	2,5	1 274 867	2,5
White	2 227 526	9,1	2 338 299	9,0	4 565 825	9,0
Total	24 515 036	100,0	26 071 721	100,0	50 586 757	100,0

Source: Statistics South Africa (2011, p. 3)

In South Africa, the advancement of women and other minorities into senior positions has largely been due to the inauguration of the new government in the post-apartheid period (Finnemore, 2002; Ruth, 2009; Schreuder & Theron, 2004). South Africa boasts one of the most progressive constitutions in the world, which promotes equality across various facets including race, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, and religious affiliation (Walker, 2005). Initiatives and legislation enforced by the South African government that are applicable to this study include, but are not limited to: affirmative action, the Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998), the Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998), the Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995), as well as the National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality. These laws accelerate women's opportunities for promotion, shield women's rights, provide recourse against discrimination, ensure pay equity, and warrant the representation of previously disadvantaged groups (Finnemore, 2002; Mathur-Helm, 2005; Tengimfene, 2009).

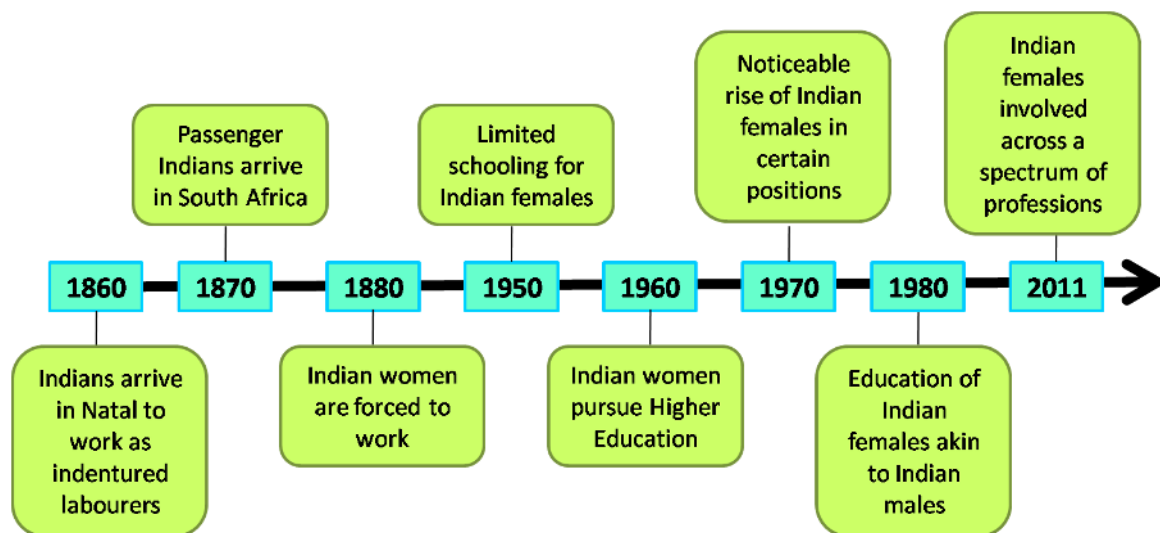
However, Indians proclaim their dissatisfaction with the implementation of the Employment Equity Act, even though they are a target group to benefit from this policy, as they feel marginalised and excluded from job opportunities due to the perception that they are 'not black enough' to fully enjoy the privileges afforded to them (Carrim, 2012). This view is confirmed by Radhakrishnan (2005), whose study revealed that Indians are left unemployed because of employment equity targets that need to be realised and, as

a result, many are seeking work abroad. Thus, the legislative practices that are aimed at providing equal opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups are not well received by all of them

2.6.3 Timeline tracing the employment of Indian women in South Africa

Figure 2.1 is a timeline that illustrates the transformation that has occurred over the years in relation to the employment of Indian women in South Africa. The timeline is discussed at length in the subsequent sections.

Figure 2.1: Timeline portraying the employment of Indian women in South Africa



Indians immigrated to South Africa as two distinctive socio-economic groups. The first group was brought to Natal in 1860 to work on the sugarcane plantations as indentured labourers, while the other group, who were known as passenger Indians, arrived a decade later as merchants to meet the indentured labourers' needs (Carrim, 2012). Under the system of indenture, Indian labourers entered into an agreement for a period ranging from three to five years, in terms of which they were provided with free housing, health care, rations, and other facilities, but the circumstances under which they lived were unjust, extremely harsh and often intolerable (Maharaj, 1995). Maharaj (1995) explains that, upon the lapse of their contracted service time, Indians had the choice of remaining in South Africa as 'free' Indians, receiving a free passage back to India, or renewing their contracts and remaining indentured labourers.

Between 1860 and 1911, approximately 61% of the indentured Indians were adult males, 25% were adult females, and 14% were children (Arkin, Maygar, & Pillay, 1989). Jagganath (2010) notes that Indian women have suffered various hardships and discriminatory practices since their arrival as indentured labourers in South Africa in the 1860s. Research and indenture records also disclose that, during this time, Indian women were at the mercy of Indian and white men (sugar plantation managers), as they were viewed as unemployable and thus were susceptible to sexual abuse and exploitation (Jagganath, 2008). Their grievance with the conditions mentioned above is attributed to colonialism; a combination of the atrocious indentured labour system and social sanctions regarding Indian femininity brought from the Indian subcontinent; as well as the racial inequality and gender discrimination prevalent in an apartheid country (Jagganath, 2010). Desai and Vahed (2007) encapsulate the position of Indian women in South Africa during this time as being the same as that of a child. However, Meer (1972) contends that Indian women were also accountable for their own suppression as they were submissive to the patriarchal dominance.

During the 1880s the laws were amended to force women to work (unless there was a valid reason, such as a legitimate medical condition) in order to be eligible for rations or wages (Jagganath, 2008). However, at this time, employed women were paid meagre wages and many women were sold and exchanged for clothing, rations, or other favours (Carrim, 2012). Over time, the roles of both Indian men and women became more explicit, as sons were expected to be involved in businesses, employment, and education, whereas daughters were to be groomed for marriage and motherhood, which was viewed as their sole objective and the 'natural' career for them (Jagganath, 2008). The patriarchal family structure was the norm among South African Indian families, and led to the oppression of women (Carrim, 2012). This is confirmed by Desai and Vahed (2007), who point out that Indian workers had a narrow-minded outlook as they viewed the wife's sole purpose as being to worship and serve her husband. As women's involvement in the indenture system was abolished, they were deported, married, or subjected to an alternative form of dependency on their husbands or male family members (Beall, 1990).

The division of responsibilities in Indian households, where the husband was viewed as the financial provider and the wife as the caretaker of the home, served as a way of capitalising on the wife's unpaid labour, which confined her to the domestic duties on the home front and limited her schooling during the 1950s and 1960s (Singh, 2007). Additionally, Singh (2007) highlights that during this time there was a change in attitudes towards school-educated girls, as their level of education served as one of the criteria when choosing a prospective wife, along with her caste, language background, domestic ability, and willingness to stay in the home of her husband and his family after the marriage. Singh further explains that the relatively low levels of education afforded to Indian women was a deliberate strategy adopted in most families in order to ensure that they remained focused on becoming good housewives.

Indian women began seeking higher education in significant numbers by the 1950s due to the gradual authorisation of formal education for South African Indian women (Jagganath, 2008; Singh, 2006). As a result, by the 1960s, prospective husbands and their families viewed an educated woman as an asset as she was regarded as an appropriate match for a similarly learned man (Jagganath, 2008). Historically, the number of economically active Indians was significantly lower than that of whites and coloureds at that time, due the low numbers of Indian women entering the workforce (Hiralal, 2010). However, their noticeable increase in professions, which took place around the 1970s, is a comparatively recent historical occurrence (Singh, 2006). Freund (1991, p. 423) illustrates the types of employment in which Indian women were involved at that time: "...of all employed Indian women, 43% were production workers as opposed to 16% employed in services, including domestics and housekeepers, 15% in sales, 8% in clerical jobs and 8% in professional and technical work (mainly teachers)." The teaching profession was a popular career choice for Indian women and was viewed as prestigious up to the 1980s, as it not only complemented the fostering nature of a woman's character, but the hours of work were also regarded as practical for women to be involved in relatively well-paid employment while simultaneously fulfilling their household duties (Jagganath, 2008). Carrim (2012) notes that Indian women were concentrated mainly in the professions of teaching, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing, and low-level jobs due the Job Reservation Act of 1926, which set aside the elite jobs for white individuals.

By the 1980s, women's education was generally akin to that of men, although they outshone the men in quite a few instances (Singh, 2006). There has been an evolution in the traditional expectations related to women and their roles, due to the education of women and the economic pressures that necessitated women to work (Carrim, 2012; Jagganath, 2008). Dias and Posel (2007) assert this view by stating that education has been a vital factor that has impacted greatly on the liberation on Indian women, with larger numbers of Indian women being academically and technically competent for significant, stimulating, and recompensing work. Thus, it can be seen that a major transformation has occurred from the time when Indian women were brought to South Africa as indentured labourers, to current times, where they are involved in various professions and occupy high-level positions.

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a background to the study by identifying the applicable theories and explains them with reference to the current study. Various dynamics were presented, which included the Indian culture, religion, and family, together with a discussion of their impact on Indian individuals. Subsequently, the historical context was outlined in relation to the apartheid and post-apartheid eras, along with the employment progression of Indian women in South Africa. It is important to identify and understand the various factors that have an impact on individuals in order to comprehend the larger context in which these individuals' lives are anchored.

The literature review continues in the following chapter, with the aim of providing insight into the dynamics surrounding dual-career couples.

CHAPTER 3:

DYNAMICS SURROUNDING DUAL-CAREER COUPLES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Against the background to the study, which was presented in the previous chapter, this chapter delineates the dynamics surrounding dual-career couples. Firstly, the gender-role attitudes of dual-career couples will be discussed. This will be followed by a discussion of the main motives for women working that were identified in the literature. The rise of dual-career couples in contemporary society will then be examined. Subsequently, the discussion will focus on the main challenges faced by professional women. The chapter concludes with the coping strategies adopted by professional women, with the support offered to them discussed in detail.

3.2 MOTIVES FOR WOMEN WORKING

The increasing centrality of work in women's lives is one of the most noteworthy social changes that has taken place in the post-war period (Still & Timms, 1998). Nicholson (1996, p. 40) starkly states that careers are progressively becoming more complex, challenging and demanding, as individuals have to think of their careers not simply as 'part of' but 'as' their lives. The importance placed on work is heightened as women move up the corporate ladder. Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2008) have found that female managers view their careers as being fundamental to their identities. Research conducted in the 1900s has reported that work not only endows women with income and social networking, but also rewards them with feelings of accomplishment (Klungness & Donovan, 1987). Recent research verifies this, as Olarte (2000) states that the main reasons why women work are because of economic pressures, personal fulfilment, or both.

Studies have also revealed that there are other reasons that can explain the increased participation of women in the labour market. Etaugh and Bridges (2006) have ascribed it to pro-feminine campaigns aimed at liberating women by moving them away from the home domain. Mujumdar (2008) contends that certain women have a need for

achievement and thus enjoy the challenges encountered by them. Other researchers are of the opinion that education and the influence of Western society, through mass media and other sources, has improved the status of Indian women by highlighting the benefits of eliminating gender-role stereotypes and working towards more equal power relations (Andrade et al., 1999; Muchinsky, Kriek, & Schreuder, 1998). In the South African context, researchers have explained the augmentation of women in workplaces as resulting from the various labour laws and policies, opportunities to obtain higher education, and advances in technology, which make it easier for women from all racial groups to participate in full-time employment while also caring for their families (Tengimfene, 2009; Theunissen et al., 2003). Furthermore, the study carried out by Koekemoer and Mostert (2010) study revealed that some South African women view work as a calling in life, and therefore work to make a contribution to the world. From the above discussion it is apparent that there are many reasons presented in the literature for why women work. However, the two main reasons identified by Olarte (2000) will be discussed briefly, as they appear to be the trending motives in the existing literature on the subject.

3.2.1 Economic reasons

The rising cost of living is one of the most important motives propelling mothers to the workplace. The study done by Patel et al. (2006) on working mothers in a retail institution in South Africa revealed that more than 80% of the participants in their sample were required to work out of sheer economic need. Researchers have explained that this need has been fuelled by the increased economic pressures of, among others, inflation and poverty, which differs from reasons in the past, when women who worked complemented their husbands' income. Currently, their financial contribution is an essential, if not the sole, source of income for many households in South Africa (Franks, Schurink, & Fourie, 2006; Patel et al., 2006; Tengimfene, 2009; Theunissen et al., 2003). This is a common picture, also internationally, as approximately 67% of new entrants in the labour market since the 1970s are single or married mothers (Tengimfene, 2009).

Income derived from dual sources provides the family with many benefits. According to Bartley et al. (2005) it offers protection against financial disaster, as it allows for greater economic stability, relieves the husband from shouldering the sole financial responsibility for the family, and provides the wife with satisfaction gained from work external to the home domain. Also, two incomes are necessary to live a desired lifestyle and in order to provide good care for children, as well as good education and medical care (Giddens, 2004; Tengimfene, 2009). Thus, dual incomes shield families better during times of economic turbulence.

3.2.2 Satisfaction of a personal need

Women do not only work out of an economic need, as research has shown that work satisfies certain personal needs of women who find domestic work monotonous and resent the low status with which housework is viewed in society (Magezis, 1996). Through work, women gain independence and security for their lives, as it provides them with an outlet for achievement beyond success solely in the household domain (Betz, 2006; Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). Researchers have noted further that careers provide women with mental stimulation, alternative social networks, intellectual companionship, opportunities for self-expression, the nurturing of personal and intellectual growth, an augmented sense of personal fulfilment, and an escape from the grind of household work (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2000; Rao et al., 2003). Valk and Srinivasan (2011) studied Indian professionals and revealed that careers endow women with feelings of achievement, personal satisfaction, heightened morale and satisfaction from making use of their abilities, as well as provide them with the drive to explore, as it offers a challenge and allows personal development and self-growth to take place. Careers thus offer women a realm for personal fulfilment, provide a sense of empowerment, afford them a place in society, and provide them with a feeling that they matter (Levinson, 1996; Schieman & Taylor, 2001).

The majority of men view work as a means of gaining income, while women are more likely to view work in terms of personal satisfaction (Fuller & Narasimhan, 2007). This empowerment is not only for personal gain, as research has shown that such women serve as role models for economically dependent women by demonstrating that this

independence serves as a shield against various adverse situations (Sedumedi, 2009). Ruddick's (2007) proclamation, that careers play a significant part in the construction of a women's identity, holds true. These motives have driven many women to the working world and have given rise to the growing number of dual-career couples in modern society.

3.3 RISE OF DUAL-CAREER COUPLES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Perry-Jenkins, Repetti, and Crouter (2000) note that, over the last three decades, there has been a further increase in the number of women in the labour force and in the number of mothers of young children entering the labour market. There are only a small number of traditional families in which the husband is the breadwinner and the wife the caretaker of the household and family (Tengimfene, 2009). This prevalence of dual-career couples has led to a plethora of research conducted globally on the emergence of dual-career couples and the challenges facing them (Abele & Volmer, 2011; Davidson & Burke, 2004; Harvey et al., 2009; Pixley, 2008; Pixley, 2009; Rusconi & Solga, 2008). Studies have also been conducted with a specific focus on couples in the Indian and Asian countries (Baral & Bhargava, 2011; Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000; Rao et al., 2003; Rastogi & Bansal, 2012; Saxena & Bhatnagar, 2009). However, a review of the available literature indicates that there is a lack of research on dual-career couples of Indian descent in the South African context. In addition, the majority of studies conducted are quantitative in nature and seem to lack the richness and in-depth understanding that can be gained from qualitative research.

For the purpose of this study, a clear distinction must be made between dual-career couples and dual-earner couples. Rapoport and Rapoport (1976) noted the difference between dual-career and dual-earner families by the fact that, in the former, the wife is employed in a position that necessitates dedication and a developmental disposition rather than being economically stimulated. In the case of a dual-income couple, the reason why both spouses work is primarily to earn an income, or at least one partner's motivation is to contribute to the overall earnings of the family (Harvey, 1998). Thus, at least one of the partner's incentive to work can be seen as purely tangible in nature. In addition to the monetary motivation to work, dual-career couples are psychologically

committed to their work, engaged in continuous professional employment, and/or are employed in vertically mobile jobs with personal growth attached (Harvey et al., 2009). Dual-career couples therefore include individuals who are attached to work by both extrinsic and intrinsic factors. As a result, the partners in dual-career relationships are viewed as being career-orientated as opposed to simply holding jobs (Kinnunen & Mauno, 2001).

As a result of the gradual emergence of dual-career couples with dependent children during the 1980s and 1990s, the concept of dual-career families has been investigated at length (Glass, 1998). In previous generations, career-orientated women were viewed as “flaunting the socially accepted norms” (Hester & Dickerson, 1984, p. 2). However, studies conducted in the United States and the United Kingdom indicate that 60% of households in these countries comprise of dual-career couples (Catalyst, 1998; Parker & Arthur, 2004). In South Africa there is no absolute number of dual-career couples, although they are highly prevalent (Bosch, De Bruin, Kgaladi, & De Bruin, 2012; Naidoo & Jano, 2002). As a result, dual-career couples, which once were regarded as an exception, can now be regarded as the norm.

However, research has shown that professional women who are wives and mothers advance at a much slower pace through the managerial ranks than their male counterparts (Tharenou, 2001). Specifically, studies conducted globally, including Germany, Switzerland, the United States of America, and Italy, have revealed that significantly less than half of academically educated couples are able to pursue permanent professional occupations appropriate for their educational level and have stable career paths (Rusconi & Solga, 2008). Even though labour legislative practices such as employment equity, affirmative action, and paid maternity leave have been implemented in support of women in the workplace, the real tension is still due to constraining factors on the wives’ careers (Patel et al., 2006). The intertwining of two workplaces, along with the responsibilities associated with jointly running a home, time and again results in dual-career couples facing perplexing dilemmas as the wife’s involvement in the professional arena increases (Fullerton & Toossi, 2001). Thus, the emergence of dual-career couples, which brings with it alterations in family dynamics and experiences, presents various challenges that have to be tackled by them.

3.4 CHALLENGES FACING DUAL-CAREER COUPLES

The challenges reported by dual-career couples today are similar to those identified approximately three decades ago, and include role conflicts, exhaustion, restricted opportunities for career advancement, as well as women doing more household work (Neault & Pickerell, 2005). However, there has been a slight shift in focus – from the challenges of dividing household chores to greater emphasis being placed on work-life quality – with specific emphasis being placed on the importance of fostering marriages as well as careers (Perrone & Worthington, 2001). It must be noted that the focus is not on the challenges experienced in the workplace, as that is beyond the scope of this study. Some of the major challenges experienced by dual-career couples as identified in the literature are discussed below.

3.4.1 Work-family interface

Congruent with the emergence of dual-career couples is a major, if not the most difficult, challenge, namely that of juggling the domains of work and family. Women's careers and personal lives are inextricably intertwined (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005), and thus the on-going conflict between the demands of a professional career and the domestic responsibilities placed on women have for a long time been recognised as a major barrier to the career advancement of women, as they are required to simultaneously adopt the roles of wives, mothers, employees, and members of extended families (Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2005; Lämsä & Hiillos, 2008; Mostert, 2009; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005; Välimäki et al., 2009). Given that families function as social systems, with work and non-work roles being interlinked (Elloy & Smith, 2003), the impact of activities in one domain is undoubtedly transferred to the other domain.

Darcy and McCarthy (2007, p. 532) define work-family balance as “the degree to which an individual is able to simultaneously balance the temporal, emotional and behavioural demands of both paid work and family responsibilities”. When individuals are committed to multiple roles, strain may result due to a lack of sufficient resources to invest in the various roles (O'Neil & Greenberger, 1994). These role demands are explained as being “structural or psychological claims associated with role requirements, expectations, and norms to which individuals must respond or adapt by exerting physical or mental effort”

(Voydanoff, 2005, p. 491). Thus, for individuals who value both their family and work roles, strain may result due to a lack of resources to sufficiently fulfil both roles.

Pittman (1994) refers to work and family as 'greedy' institutions, as they demand the scarce resources of time and energy from an individual, and conflict inevitably results. Inter-role conflict generally results in the attempt to strike a balance between work and family roles. This inter-role conflict has been labelled as what is now commonly known as work-family conflict (Wafula, 2010). Subsequently, work-family conflict (WFC) has been defined as "a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect...such that participation in one domain becomes more difficult due to the demands of participation in the other domain and vice versa" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). Similarly, Boyar, Maertz, Pearson, and Keough (2003) explain that WFC can be understood as the tension that occurs when the strain transpiring from membership in one role hampers with the membership in another role.

There are three main types of conflict that may occur between these domains that have been identified in the literature, namely time-based conflict, strain-based conflict, and behaviour-based conflict. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) explain that time-based conflict occurs when an individual's work and family roles compete for time. When an individual invests time in a role in one domain, he or she is left with little or no time to carry out roles in the other domain. Strain-based conflict occurs when strain produced by one role impedes on the successful performance of another role. Behaviour-based conflict emerges when particular types of behaviour are appropriate in one role and not in the other. Wafula (2010) and Edwards (2008) note that WFC may also occur when individuals identify themselves in a specific role, but are forced to spend their resources on a different role (for example a mother who is forced to work out of economic need).

3.4.1.1 Work-family conflict versus family-work conflict

It is crucial to highlight that there is a difference between work-family conflict (WFC) and family-work conflict (FWC). Researchers who have highlighted the difference between the two have described WFC and FWC as being bi-directional in nature (Aycan & Eskin,

2005; Hill, Yang, Hawkins, & Ferris, 2004; Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998). This means that work may impact on family (WFC) and family can impact on work (FWC). Specifically, WFC occurs when job-related matters interfere with the performance of family roles for example long absences from home due to job demands, or altering family plans for job-related reasons, and so forth. On the other hand, FWC is said to arise when family responsibilities hinder effective performance in the work domain, for example care for children and elderly relatives, fatigue at work due to family demands and so forth (Hill et al., 2004; Mujumdar, 2008; Patel, Govender, Paruk, & Ramgoon, 2006). Thus, the similarity between these two concepts is that the domains of responsibility are the same (i.e. work and family), but the difference lies in which sphere the impact of the interfacing of these two domains is felt (i.e. work impacts on family or family impacts on work).

The study conducted by Tengimfene (2009) revealed that working South African women have to deal with strong emotions related to the upbringing of children while working; make career, professional growth, and children-related decisions; compromise on the quality of work devoted to each role; enter into a 'second shift' after work; assume sole custodianship over the children's upbringing; and rely on strong social support systems and coping mechanisms. Thus, it can rightfully be construed that continuous interference between the work and family worlds is likely to have a negative impact on the women's personal and work life. It can hinder women's career advancement by resulting in lower levels of concentration at work, decreased work satisfaction, decreased work involvement, increased absenteeism, and may even result in elevated turnover rates (Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Martins et al., 2002; Van Aarde & Mostert, 2008). In addition, WFC has been found to have personal repercussions, such as decreased life satisfaction, increased mental and physical health risks, as well as decreased marital satisfaction (Aycaan & Eskin, 2005; Thomas & Ganster, 1995).

Koekemoer and Mostert (2010) have summarised specific consequences that are related to the different forms of interaction as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Consequences associated with the various forms of interaction

Consequences	Work → Personal life interaction	Personal life → Work	Interaction between personal dimensions
Time-based consequences	Difficulty attending to various activities or role players in one's personal life due to time constraints; inability to attend family activities due to lack of time; no time or limited time available for friends or personal activities; lack of time to spend on domestic activities such as cooking and cleaning.	Inability to attend to work activities due to family responsibilities (e.g. attending funerals during the week); difficult being at work on time due to unforeseen circumstances at home; lack of time to perform work-related tasks because of time spent with family or children.	Inability to attend to various activities simultaneously; simultaneous demands, pressures and activities from various roles in personal life.
Mental preoccupation	Constantly thinking of work; inability to concentrate on things outside work due to thinking of work-related matters; overload of information and pressures/demands within the work environment; inability to do tasks at home due to preoccupation with work problems.	Thinking of personal demands or problems at work; inability to concentrate at work due to problems in personal life (e.g. worrying about your sick child); overload of information and pressures/demands in personal life.	—
Build up and spillover of emotions	Experiencing negative emotions (e.g. anger, frustration, hopelessness, etc.) at work that spill over to personal life; inability to control emotions that built up during the day; feeling irritable and edgy at home due to things that happened at work; tension between family members due to emotional tension that arise from problems at work.	Experiencing certain emotions (e.g. anger, frustration, hopelessness) in the personal life and the spillover thereof to work; inability to control emotions that arise from personal dimensions; tension between family members affecting one's emotions; lack of happiness at work due to lack of happiness in personal life (e.g. feeling discouraged from problems at home).	Inability to control emotions that arise from having various demands and responsibilities in personal life; having simultaneous demands and pressures affecting your emotions; experiences anger, frustration and guilt.
Energy depletion	High workload resulting in the total depletion of energy; experiencing overall exhaustion, fatigue and tiredness due to long work hours; limited energy left after work to attend to other activities outside work (e.g. participating in sports activities); draining of energy due to the various work demands.	Lack of energy due to responsibilities in personal life (e.g. attending to small children during evenings); feeling tired when going to work due to attending to children the previous evening; total depletion of energy resulting in overall exhaustion, fatigue and tiredness.	Energy depletion from having too many demands from various roles in personal life; limited energy left after attending to various roles in personal life.
Strain on relationships	Unable to attend to spouse/children or friends due to work obligations causes strain on the relationships; experiencing conflict in marital relationship; strain on relationships with friends or children as a result of not providing enough attention or not attending to their needs.	—	—
Managing responsibilities	Shifting of responsibilities between family members; attaining more responsibilities due to spouse's workload (e.g. attending to the children when spouse is working late); unable to perform certain tasks and responsibilities (e.g. unable to pick up children from school due to working late or unable to cook dinner because of work hours).	—	—
Limiting of work opportunities	—	Unable to pursue good work opportunities due to family situation (e.g. single parent can't work long distances away from family); forfeit of certain work opportunities; limiting your career in terms of the type of work due to personal responsibilities or circumstances.	—
Energy generation	—	Feeling energised from personal life; having meaningful experiences in personal life resulting in more energy; stimulating personal life experiences; having meaningful relationships in your personal life that make life worthwhile.	—
Learned skills	—	—	Due to the variety and simultaneous demands in personal life, learning of new skills took place (learn more patience; learn interpersonal skills to help with own children, etc.).

Source: Koekemoer and Mostert (2010, p. 9)

Thus, it is apparent that families in which both spouses work are more prone to experience conflict between the work and family domains (Livingston & Judge, 2008). Consistent with majority of the literature, WFC is considered as being bi-directional in nature in this thesis. Thus, the impact of work on family, as well as that of family on work, will be investigated in order to obtain a holistic picture of the dynamics surrounding the career advancement of Indian women. It must be noted that the majority of studies conducted have shown the negative effects of the interaction between work and family domains, but have failed to mention the positive effects of the unification of the two.

3.4.1.2 Positive outcomes of the work-family interface

There are a few researchers who have begun to acknowledge a favourable side to this field of study and support the notion that women may also benefit personally from multiple roles (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002; Rothbard, 2001; Ruderman, Ohlott, Panzer, & King, 2002). These researchers declare that two main approaches exist: depletion and enrichment. On the one hand, depletion, which is the dominating view, perceives family and work life as two incompatible spheres as they compete for the individual's psychological and physiological resources, which are limited. Thus success in both of these domains becomes virtually impossible. On the other hand, the enrichment perspective suggests that the work and family domains can have a positive impact on each other. Specifically, commitment in one role can give support to another role (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Greenhaus & Foley, 2007), as the different life roles can contribute positively to the psychological well-being of the women by ensuring greater life satisfaction and self-validation, as well as increased self-esteem (Andrade et al., 1999; Ruddick, 2007; Ruderman et al., 2002; Shaik, 2003). Also, women with multiple roles have multiple outlets for achievement (Betz, 2006; Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). Thus, the enrichment perspective can be seen as bi-directional, as success in the motherly role can alleviate the stressors and disappointments the woman may experience as a result of her not meeting her career targets, and satisfaction with her job can have a positive influence on her home life (Ruddick, 2007).

Various studies have confirmed the enrichment perspective. In their study on working mothers in a retail institution in South Africa, Patel et al. (2006) revealed that the majority of their participants reported positive influences of the family on their jobs. Van Aarde and Mostert (2008) affirm this view by stating that women who are involved in multiple roles are more satisfied, committed and engaged employees, as this situation offers opportunities and resources that may be used for inspiring development and enhanced functioning in other domains of life. Women's participation in the labour market also appears to create a greater sharing of domestic tasks, as certain husbands appreciate the financial contribution of their wives to the household as it lessens the financial burden on them (Koenig, Ahmed, Hossain, & Mozumber, 2003). Furthermore, Ridley (1973) highlighted that partners would understand each other better if they both worked, as they can relate to each other's experiences.

From the above it can be seen that various benefits and challenges are faced as a result of the interaction of work and family domains. This study will not focus specifically on the positive or the negative outcomes of the work-family interface, but a holistic approach will be adopted by looking at the concept of work-life balance in totality to determine what transpires among Indian dual-career couples.

3.4.1.3 Impact of race, culture, and gender on the experience of work-family conflict

Cross-cultural researchers have explained the differences in the experiences of work-family conflict globally as being due to the different cultural values of the inhabitants of these countries (Tengimfene, 2009). Wafula (2010), for example, notes the importance of taking into account the effects of culture, as work-family conflict transpires differently in collectivist and individualistic cultures. Thus, for the purpose of this study, culture is an important consideration, as this study focuses on the Indian culture, which is collectivist in nature.

Wallis and Price (2003) have declared the need for research to be conducted that focuses on the broader economic and social concerns, specifically the effects of race and class on the challenges experienced by South African employed mothers, due to the country's unique historical background. Researchers have also noticed a difference

in the experience of WFC across racial lines (Carrim, 2012; Coetzer, 2006; Joplin, Shaffer, Francesco, & Lau, 2003). Thus, it is crucial that the effects of the race of women in dual-career relationships is studied, as women of each colour that make up South Africa's 'rainbow nation' face different challenges due to the country's history, diversity of cultural beliefs and practices, and socio-political interaction. This history has been discussed at length in the previous chapter and will not be discussed further in this section.

Tengimfene (2009), on the other hand, argues that it is gender that matters most in studying WFC, rather than race or cultural background, as the participants in her cross-cultural study had similar experiences related to WFC. Previous research has yielded mixed results regarding whether men or women experience more conflict relating to the interface of work and home domains, and thus this issue remains inconclusive. There are a few studies that have supported the notion that the experiences of WFC and FWC are the same for men and women (Byron, 2005; Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Kinnunen, Geurts, & Mauno, 2004). However, most studies have revealed that the experiences of WFC and FWC differ between men and women, and that women experience more WFC and FWC than men (Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Behson, 2002; Cinamon & Rich, 2002; Davidson & Fielden, 1999; Duxbury, Higgins, & Lee, 1994; Hammer, Allen, & Gringsby, 1997). Thus, the next focus is on women experiencing more WFC and FWC than men.

Researchers have noted that the boundaries between the work and family domains appear to be blurred for professional mothers and, as a result, WFC is more prominent among females who are highly motivated and dedicated to both their work and home roles (Edley, 2001; Kargwell, 2008). Researchers have explained that women experience more WFC than their employed husbands because of their prescribed cultural, societal, and generally accepted role as the primary caretakers of their children, and thus are held responsible for taking care of family-related issues, even at the expense of their jobs (Edwards, 2006; Kinnunen et al., 2004; Lo, Stone, & Ng, 2003; Olarte, 2000; Tengimfene, 2009). As working mothers they do not only breach workplace principles that expect them to be men, but also social norms that require them to curb their involvement in work and take on the responsibility of being caretakers

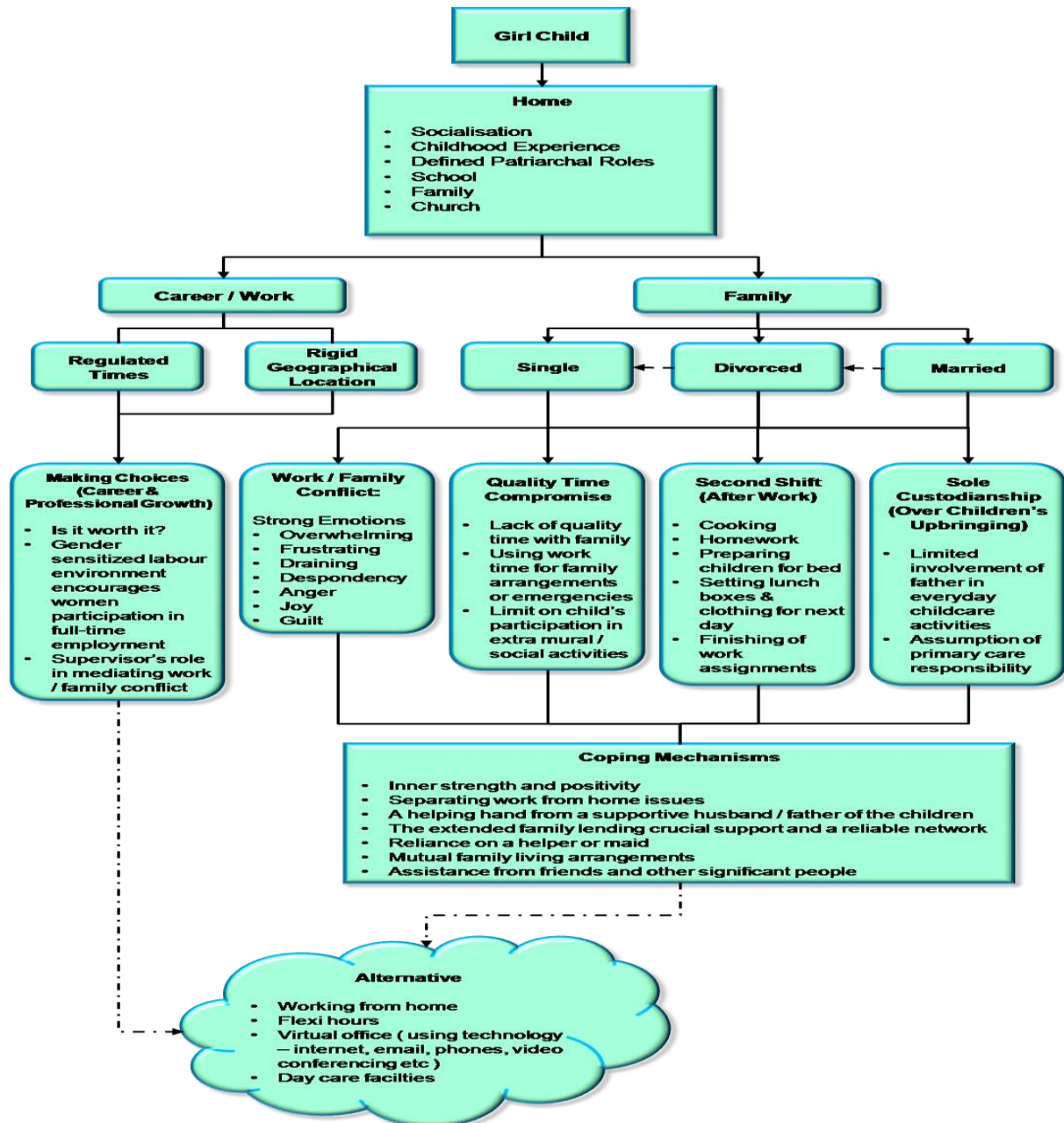
of the home (Butler & Skattebo, 2004; Rapoport, Baily, Fletcher, & Pruitt, 2002). Similarly, Bain and Cummings (2000) have stated that women are as capable as men in meeting the requirements of an organisation, but that they are not able to demonstrate this equivalent ability due to critical family responsibilities. The expectations attached to being a 'good' mother cannot simply be sacrificed or disregarded to accommodate the demands of their professional lives, as it involves "being present with the children in a way that the construction of 'good fathering' (currently) does not" (Hardill & van Loon, 2007, p. 169). In addition, women experience more conflict when their work obligations make it difficult to complete their family obligations (WFC), whereas FWC is viewed as less conflicting because it is believed to be natural and expected (Cinamon & Rich, 2002). For example, a woman is expected to excuse herself from work if her child has fallen ill, whereas a man can shift his attention to his family after work (Carrim, 2012).

Women experience conflict due to role overload, which has been attributed to women shouldering more of the household responsibilities than men, as well as regarding the man's career as more important (Crampton & Mishra, 1999). This disproportionate responsibility assumed by women for child-rearing and domestic duties is based on the assumption that, in the work-family trade-off, women will choose family as their primary responsibility (Bowles & McGinn, 2005; Eagly, 2007; Mostert, 2009; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005). Career-orientated mothers have to put in extra effort to be viewed as good and competent mothers, as they are judged as having abandoned their home roles, whereas fathers who supply income for their families are viewed as fulfilling their roles (Ridgeway, 2001). Specifically, the message passed onto men by society is that it is acceptable to choose their professional life over their family life, whereas women do not have this luxury (Cinamon & Rich, 2002). Thus, the limited involvement of husbands in taking on domestic and child-rearing responsibilities can be explained by the patriarchal system, which promotes maternal guilt, confined gender roles, and career structures that are hostile to the family (Campbell, 2002).

Figure 3.1 depicts the findings from the study conducted by Tengimfene (2009) on the work-family conflict experiences among South African women of different race groups. It illustrates that women often have to make perplexing decisions related to their careers and family life. The study also revealed that, irrespective of marital status, women are

being held primarily responsible for their children and, as a result, most women enter into a 'second shift' due to their commitments and long hours at work. Thus, women utilise coping mechanisms that include friends, family and paid help.

Figure 3.1: Experiences of work-family conflict among South African women of different race groups



Source: Tengimfene (2009, p. 142)

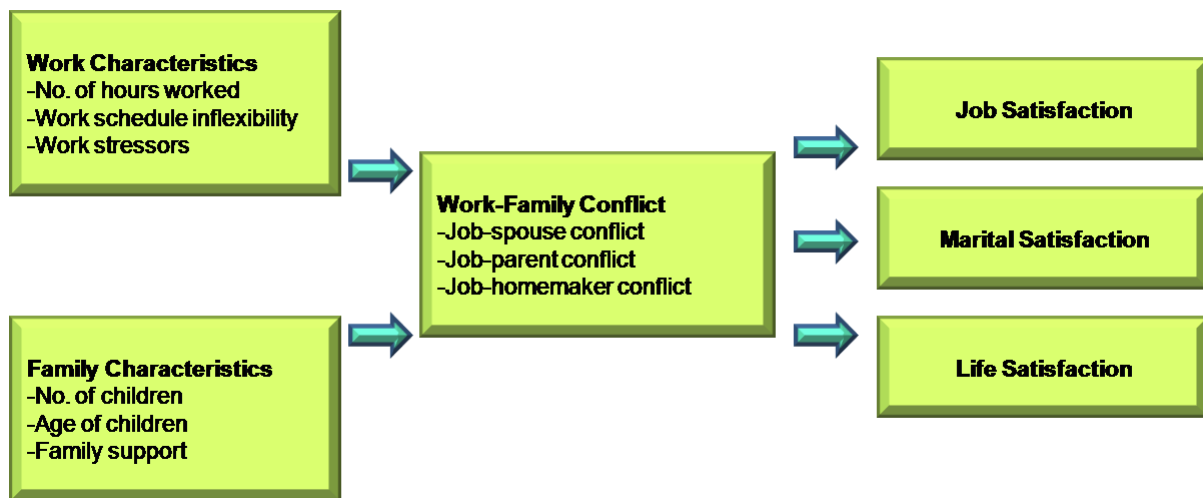
As a result of their obligations to their families, women's careers may take on significantly different directions, forms, as well as continuity and advancement patterns from those of men (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005). Subsequently, women can be seen as facing greater risks than men when making career moves, which could explain the low numbers of Indian women in senior and top managerial positions.

3.4.2 Job-spouse conflict

Job-spouse conflict can be understood as a subset of WFC, as it focuses specifically on the interface of work and marital life. However, it is placed as a separate challenge because it focuses particularly on the couple and thus a lengthy discussion of job-spouse conflict is deemed important for this study. Lupton and Schmied (2002) note that conflict is often the result of a discrepancy between the husband's and wife's perceptions of women being involved in work. When this scenario occurs, women view their work as having a negative impact on their family, as the husbands may feel that their conventional breadwinner role is threatened and/or may become bitter about the additional household and family tasks expected of them as a consequence of having wives who are employed (Patel et al., 2006). Thus, spousal conflict is more common among dual-career couples than couples in which only one partner is employed (Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler, & Wethington, 1990).

Figure 3.2 illustrates the framework constructed by Kim and Ling (2001) of WFC. They identify the antecedents of WFC as consisting of both work characteristics (hours worked, work schedule rigidity, and work stressors) as well as family characteristics (number of children, age of children, and support from family). They also took into consideration the multiple roles that married couples play in the family and divided WFC into three parts: job-parent conflict, job-homemaker conflict, and job-spouse conflict. It was found that WFC impacts on an individual's marital, job, and life satisfaction. It is crucial to highlight that their study revealed that job-spouse conflict had the greatest influence on marital, job, and life satisfaction. This affirms the need for the current research, which places a specific focus on the job-spouse interface.

Figure 3.2: Framework for work-family conflict



Source: Kim and Ling (2001, p. 206)

Other studies have been conducted on the job-spouse conflict that occurs as the marital relationship takes a toll from the inability to effectively balance work and family life (Aryee, 1992; Day & Chamberlain, 2006; Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001). Stressors at work (such as role overload and pressure to meet deadlines) creates strain, which results in negative emotions such as irritability and anxiety being felt when this strain is transmitted from work to the family, and ultimately results in a negative impact on the marital relationships of professional women (Kim & Ling, 2001). Job-spouse conflict arising from divergence in their domestic and professional roles also has a major impact on wives' career advancement, as it often compels the wife to quit her job (Panda, 2010). This conflict is heightened in the Indian context, as women who are employed do not conform to traditional expectations, which require them to be passive and dependent, but contrastingly are more self-assured, less dependent, and more aggressive in their marital relationships (Andrade et al., 1999). In addition, a large number of Indian dual-career couples face spousal conflict as a result of them not being able to provide adequate care for their children (Panda, 2010). Thus, many young Asian women who had been employed before marriage are required to stop working because their husbands object (Salway et al., 2005). Limitations have been identified for studies mentioned above. Firstly, they focus on the conflict and downplay the positive influence families can offer. Secondly, the family is studied as a unit, with a limited focus on the

members who make up the family, such as parents, spouses and children, and the particular impact they may have on the career advancement of women.

Furthermore, Rusconi and Solga (2008) state that, in order to understand dual-career couples, one also needs to examine the inner-couple level. These authors explain that this level includes studying the organising and negotiating processes of the couple with regard to their family, employment, and careers. Taking this into account, the main causes of job-spouse conflict highlighted in the literature will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

3.4.2.1 Perceptions of inequality and unfairness in household labour

A well-researched issue facing professional mothers is their perception of inequality in the distribution of household tasks between them and their spouses. Much of the research that has been conducted supports the notion that the perception of equality, rather than the reality of equally distributed household responsibilities, has a greater impact on marital satisfaction (Bartley et al., 2005). Furthermore, the traditional division of childcare was found to be related to women's higher stress levels, and ultimately heightens the experience of WFC (Lavee, Sharlin, & Katz, 1996). In the past, studies have revealed that approximately one-third of couples perceived the division of household labour as being unfair, although recent studies have shown that the majority of both spouses concur that a more equal distribution of household labour would be fair (Bartley et al., 2005). The perception of equality by employed mothers is crucial, since the husband's contribution in the home arena may be a symbolic representation of their love and support for their wives (Hochschild, 1989). Thus, it is no surprise that marital conflict is higher when there exists a perception of inequality in the division household tasks and when husbands contribute relatively little to responsibilities in the family domain (Coltrane, 2000).

In addition, earlier research has revealed that the majority of couples believe that the ideal marriage is one in which both husbands and wives share equally in the responsibilities of taking care of the children and the home (De Stefano & Colasanto, 1990). However, recent studies have shown that women participate in housework and

parenting tasks much more than their husbands, even if the women earn more (Greenhaus et al., 2000; Perrone, Webb, & Blalock, 2005). Researchers have attributed women's continuance in performing these tasks to society, which has shaped them to believe that childcare and domestic duties fall under their realm of responsibility (Etaugh & Bridges, 2006), while men use emotional and domestic incompetence as defences to reduce their assistance with childcare (Coltrane & Adams, 2001). Women who bear most of the domestic work in addition to their full-time careers have been categorised as carrying the burden of the 'second shift' (Studer, 2007). This second shift involves supervising the children's homework, putting them to bed, cooking, as well as other essential activities in the home domain (Tengimfene, 2009). Specifically, Yoder (1999) found that women take on more of the 'second shift' family work, as they average around 33 hours of domestic and childcare activities after work, with their spouses averaging 14 hours. Similar results were obtained from the study conducted by Galinsky, Bond, and Friedman (1993), which revealed that approximately 80 to 90% of married professional women bear primary responsibility for housework, cooking, and shopping. This study also indicated that, if the women outsourced their childcare or household cleaning services, they were still held responsible for the arrangements surrounding them. Thus, the uneven split of domestic responsibilities among spouses is clearly evident.

Other researchers have argued that perceptions of fairness are viewed as more important than perceptions of equality (Weigel, Bennett, & Ballard-Reisch, 2006). Fairness is defined as the degree to which individuals view their roles in the marriage as being reasonable, even though the splitting of tasks between the spouses may not be equal (Weigel et al., 2006). It is also crucial to highlight that, even though there may be an unequal division of domestic roles, the majority of couples describe the division of roles as fair, with men typically being more satisfied with the division of tasks than women (Coltrane, 2000). Regardless of whether equality or fairness is more important, studies have revealed that a positive correlation exists between both equality and fairness in the relationship and marital satisfaction (Coltrane, 2004; Perrone et al., 2005; Weigel et al., 2006). Thus, equality and fairness in the relationship can be seen as crucial dynamics to explore in such a study conducted on dual-career couples.

3.4.2.2 *Gender-role attitudes in dual-career couples*

Roles consist of beliefs that depict how people should or should not behave (Weigel et al., 2006). In addition, individuals are responsible for different roles and therefore possess different identities (Thoits, 1995). Thus, roles can be viewed as identity shapers. However, these identities have varying levels of salience for individuals, and therefore they are likely to invest more time and energy in a particular role because it serves as a source of their identity (Noor, 2004). Studies have revealed that the approval of these role attributes depends strongly on the gender identities of both spouses, but particularly on that of the husband (Moen & Sweet, 2003; Rusconi & Solga, 2008). Specifically, role ascriptions and power dynamics are core dimensions on which marital relationships are fabricated (Steil, 2000). Also, as discussed earlier, couples ascribe their judgements of fairness and equality to their perceptions of roles and influence levels within their relationships (Coltrane, 2000). Thus, an understanding of the various roles adopted by individuals is an essential area to explore when examining dual-career couples.

In addition, gender is a significant concept to consider in gaining an understanding of the various life roles of an individual and their importance (Cinamon & Rich, 2002). Role expectations of 'husband' and 'wife' are highly attached to gender-role expectations of 'mother' and 'father', which shape the couples' careers, as they externally define how and by whom the responsibility for taking care of the household and raising of their children is organised (Behnke & Meuser, 2005). There also is a legacy of traditional thought, which Levinson (1996) refers to as 'gender splitting'. According to him, 'gender splitting' deals with the rigid division of what is categorised as masculine and what is characterised as feminine in all domains of an individual's life, from the colour of baby clothes to the role expectations of men and women. Similarly, in the family context, the family is viewed as a 'gender factory', with roles and responsibilities being distributed along masculine and feminine lines (Redelinguys, Botes, & De Wet, 1999, p. 56).

Traditional gender roles stipulate that males seize power in the external (work) domain, while females seize power in the home domain by taking care of the children and the household, supporting their husband's career, and maintaining their marital relationship (Bartley et al., 2005; Ruth, 2009; Tengimfene, 2009). In the past it also was not acceptable for women to be employed, let alone occupy management positions (White et al., 1992). In the exceptional case of women being involved in external employment, it was viewed as menial and did not receive much acknowledgement (Ruth, 2009). Thus, men possessed the greater valued resources of earning power and prestige, as they provided financial support for the family, which, in combination with their conventional patriarchal position of ultimate authority, exempted them from many responsibilities in the home domain (Steil, 1997).

Researchers have rationalised that women are predominantly held responsible for domestic duties and men for the provision of income due to their natural dispositions (Nichols & Schwartz, 2004). Additionally, Apter (1993) states that there is an underlying myth that, since women have the biological makeup required to conceive and bear children, they possess the necessary skills and capabilities to care for them. However, researchers in the fields of psychology, anthropology and sociology beg to differ. They define gender roles as "those behaviours and attitudes prescribed and assigned to males and females by the broader culture solely on the basis of gender" (Bartley et al., 2005, p. 72). These researchers agree that gender is socially constructed, as the relationships people have with each other either verifies or denies that their behaviour is consistent with their biological sex (Ruddick, 2007). Furthermore, they agree with the notion that an individual is not born a woman, but develops into one by acquiring and enacting femininity (Connell, 2002). Professional women in South Africa thus can be seen as social actors, as they live within the boundaries of diverse cultural norms and social structures (Tengimfene, 2009).

These researchers view gender roles as stemming from gender stereotypes, which time and again have proven that people differ in their views about men and women (Diekman & Eagly, 2000). Norms and stereotypes of the gender groups are created through agents of socialisation, who are considered the 'teachers' of society (Crespi, 2003). Families are representatives of society, as they encapsulate the societal culture, beliefs,

values, norms, and traditions (Tengimfene, 2009). Other key agents include cultural and peer groups, teachers, schools, the media, and general cultural institutions that define and further shape these systems of beliefs and values in terms of what is expected of them (Crespi, 2003; Nicholson, 1996). They create traditional beliefs, such as men are to be the breadwinners of the family and that they are agentic in that they portray characteristics such as being confident, competitive, strong, rational, and independent (Cunningham, 2008; Olarte, 2000; Powell, Butterfield, & Parent, 2002; Sebayang, 2011). On the other hand, there is an expectation and preference for women to be communal in that they should manage domestic activities and adopt the motherly role by portraying characteristics such as being friendly, dependent, affectionate, nurturing, helpful, and kind (Aleem & Danish, 2008; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003; Newport, 2001; Olarte, 2000).

Furthermore, this communal versus agentic divide is consistent with the overall distribution of labour that gives women the disproportionate responsibility in the private sphere of family and household obligations, and men the disproportionate responsibility in the public sphere of career and striving for status (Dindia & Canary, 2006). By assigning different responsibilities to men and women, society defines what is the appropriate behaviour for each gender and holds individuals morally accountable for that behaviour (Gerson, 2002; Olarte, 2000). Thus, women's climb to top management positions can be seen as being in total contrast to these prescribed, socially constructed roles.

It can be seen from the discussion above that gender roles in traditional dual-parent families have supported the notion of the woman's role as the nurturer and homemaker, and that of the husband as breadwinner and one who retains power over her (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006; Patel et al., 2006). Rosenbaum and Cohen (1999) note that if gender roles between the spouses are traditional, with the wife seen as the primary caretaker and the husband seen as the breadwinner, these professional women are likely to experience a high level of conflict. This explains why the trade-off between family and career life can be seen as a major, if not the greatest, obstacle to the career progression of Indian women, as Indian women are required to place the needs of their families before their own (Salway et al., 2005). Similarly, Gupta, Koshal, and Koshal (1998) have

noted that Indian women prefer advancing in their careers at a slower pace because they are able to better balance their work and home lives.

However, due to various reasons, couples have relinquished these traditional roles, with more men becoming involved in household and parenting duties and more women entering the work domain (Theunissen et al., 2003; Välimäki et al., 2009). Hence, with the escalation of women's involvement in the paid labour force since World War 2 there has been a transformation from women fulfilling their traditional caretaker roles to them being relieved from their domestic responsibilities as they embrace opportunities to enter the working world with open arms (Giddens, 2004). Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2008) concluded that husbands are able to engage in behaviour that contest stereotypical gender norms, for example taking care of the children, being empathic listeners, and limiting their work to accommodate that of their wives, which all illustrate that gender roles are undergoing transformation. As a result, traditional gender roles are beginning to gradually fade away, with more men participating in household tasks that traditionally were considered the wife's responsibility (Kaufman, 2005; Schreuder & Theron, 2004).

Researchers have also highlighted that the gender-role expectations of men and women in society appear to have altered only slightly, as professional women are still not liberated from responsibilities in the home domain (Brink & De la Rey, 2001; Noor, 2002; Tengimfene, 2009). This situation has been termed the 'tipping point', as traditional social norms have decreased in significance, but have not been substituted by new social norms in order to construct alternate family and work-life arrangements (Nickols, 1994). An employed mother is thus seen as a 'super mom' (Yoder, 2007, p. 180) or a 'superwoman' (Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004, p. 261), as she adopts multiple roles of job, self and family. The concept of the 'stay-at-home' mother is progressively becoming more of an exception rather than the norm (Tengimfene, 2009) as the career aspirations of women that have given rise to the escalating number of dual-career couples (Rusconi & Solga, 2008). This study will investigate whether these social roles are true for South African Indian women, as well as the impact that these social roles have on the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours of Indian couples regarding women's career advancement.

3.4.2.3 *Earnings of spouses*

The earnings of spouses relative to each is another crucial aspect to consider. Hart (1997, p. 15) states starkly that “gender inequality boils down to male–female wage differentials”. However, all researchers have not agreed with this notion, as studies have shown that the husband’s earnings have a positive impact on marital outcomes, whereas mixed results are obtained in relation to the wife’s salary (Brennan, Barnett & Gareis, 2001).

On the one hand lurks the danger that marriages in which the wife earns as much or more than her husband have higher reported rates of divorce than those where the husband earns more, as wives view their marriages less favourably when their earnings are greater (Rossi & Rossi, 1990). In addition, it must be noted that economic independence does not necessarily result in the emergence of social independence (Salway et al., 2005), as previous research has indicated that gender norms are not altered when women provide income to the family – even when they earn more than their husbands (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008; Ruddick, 2007). Other researchers concur with this notion, as their study revealed that women who brought in higher incomes than their husbands expressed greater fears of arousing competitive feelings in their husbands than any other group (Steil & Weltman, 1991). This may be due to women’s participation in the economic environment which has left certain men feeling robbed off their responsibility as the chief of the domestic domain (Morrell, 2002). Furthermore, such relationships have resulted in a decrease in the husband’s self-esteem (Menaghan, 1991), as men’s ability to provide financially for their families appears to serve as an affirmation of their masculinity and helps to construct their self-confidence, dignity, and sense of self-worth (Augustine, 2002). Thus, women who are financially independent, make certain men feel intimidated, threatened, belittled, and inadequate when they compare themselves to men who are seen as providing for their families adequately, which ultimately results in increased tension in the marital relationship (Ichou, 2008; Sedumedi, 2009).

On the other hand, there also is a favourable side to women bringing in greater earnings and resources relative to their husbands. Researchers have noted that the wife's earnings provide her with an added source of power in negotiations (Ruddick, 2007; Studer, 2007). Other researchers have indicated that increased income, regardless of the source, results in greater family stability and, subsequently, marital stability (Bartley et al., 2005; Brennan et al., 2001). Brennan et al. (2001) state that times have changed, in that men are no longer threatened by the loss of the sole provider role. Their study revealed that the fluctuations in women's earnings relative to their husbands' over time had no noteworthy effect on their assessment of the quality of their marital relationships. However, it must be noted that their study focused predominantly on white couples, and thus failed to include other crucial factors, such as age and race, which may differ among the various groups.

It is also important to highlight that researchers have contested the view that the relative earnings of spouses have an impact on their marital relationships (Barnett & Rivers, 1998). They argue that it may not be income per se that impacts on the relationship, as studies revealed that if women advance in their careers to a greater extent than their spouses it puts a strain on the relationship, and husbands are more satisfied if they are more successful in their careers, even in a situation where their earnings are less than that of their wives. From the discussion presented in this section it is clear that studies have yielded mixed results on whether earnings have an impact on the marital relationship, and if so, the extent of such impact. This study therefore will explore the dynamics surrounding the earnings of the couples to determine what holds true in Indian dual-career couples.

3.4.2.4 Decision making and power

Earlier researchers viewed the act of balancing power as being based on the relative resources provided by each of the spouses, with the spouse who provides greater resources having more control in the decision-making process (Blood & Wolfe, 1960). Similarly, recent research has revealed that the partner who earned the income ultimately has control and authority over it; even when couples aim to share the money, they are aware of who actually earned it and this can have an impact on their feelings of

entitlement (Burgoyne, Clarke, Reibstein, & Edmunds, 2006). It is this financial equality that is essential for women, as it provides them with greater parity in terms of decision making and power within the marriage (Ruddick, 2007). Similar findings were obtained in the Indian context, where working women were found to have increased decision-making power (Pandey & Singh, 2005). Thus, in addition to many other benefits, income also appears to provide women with greater freedom from the patriarchal clutches of their husbands.

Ruddick (2007) found that husbands do play a part in their wives' decision making, although their function is more a reaffirmation of decisions already made instead of spurring new ones. However, other researchers have found that men still have the final say in important decisions, even in marriages that are viewed as being egalitarian or where the wife earns more, with the women being left to make the trivial, day-to-day decisions (Bartley et al., 2005; Tichenor, 2005). Contradicting this are the findings of the study by Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2008), which revealed that men also behave in ways far beyond mere acts of care and concern by performing actions previously viewed as being the domain of women, including altering their lifestyle and career to accommodate the wife, such as relocating, limiting work, and remaining at home to look after the children. Power within the marriage is thus dependent on the couple and the way in which the husband perceives his wife's employment (Mujumdar, 2008). From the above discussion, the available research on the subject appears to be inconclusive. In this study, decision making within dual-career couples will be explored to determine what holds true in the South African Indian context.

3.4.3 Abuse

Another challenge faced by professional women, as identified in the literature, is abuse. Panda (2010) notes that the empowerment of Indian women, coupled with traditional expectations and values, has resulted in a noticeable increase in the rate of spousal violence. Certain males view violence as a legitimate response to their wives career aspirations, as employed wives who do not fulfil their domestic obligations deserve to be punished by their husbands (Jeftha, 2006; Salway et al., 2005). Furthermore, women who contest their socially constructed roles, regardless of their economic status, are

often abused by their husbands so that they do not deviate from the patriarchal norms (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). Section 1 of the Domestic Violence Act (Act 116 of 1998) defines domestic violence as physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological, and economic abuse; intimidation; harassment; stalking; damage to property; entry into the complainant's residence without consent where the parties do not share the same residence; or any other controlling or abusive behaviour towards a complainant where such conduct harms or may cause imminent harm to the safety, health, or well-being of the complainant. Violent domestic behaviour is thus a stark manifestation of divergent gender relations within the household (Salway et al., 2005).

Sedumedi (2009) explored the perceptions of black South African women (African, Indian, and coloured) on the effect that women's changing socio-economic status has on their intimate relationships. The study revealed that such changes made the women more susceptible to abuse and separation, as it posed a threat to the masculinity of their partners, leaving certain men feeling emasculated, intimidated, and insecure. Similarly, a study conducted by Barkhuizen and Pretorius (2005) on the emotional abuse of professional women in South Africa revealed that their partners were jealous of their career and/or academic success. These women were made to feel worthless and incompetent by being dragged into serious and strident verbal arguments in which they were called derogatory names, derogatory jokes were made, and they were often accused of adultery. McCloskey (1996) revealed that some women were abused by their husbands because they earned higher salaries than them, and this was understood as a repercussion of their husbands' frustration and anxiety over their failure to fulfil their gendered role as the financial provider.

Other studies have revealed that women's financial independence may also serve as a barrier shielding them from domestic violence. Researchers have explained that women's financial independence creates an egalitarian relationship in the home domain and provides the women with self-confidence and the courage to leave their partners if they are being abused (Kim et al., 2007; Koenig et al., 2003; Salway et al., 2005). Furthermore, Sedumedi (2009) highlights that, besides the economic gap, there are other factors that result in women being abused by their husbands. One such factor is alcohol abuse. Although it is beyond the scope of this study to explore these factors,

determining the impact that Indian women's financial independence has on their marital relationships is crucial.

3.4.4 Guilt

Guilt has been identified in the literature as another challenge faced by professional women. Olarte (2000) notes that, when a woman chooses to go back to work after her child is born, she may feel a sense of inadequacy, firstly, as a woman and secondly, as a mother, if she pursues her career life in spite of her love for her child. Research has thus shown that the most severe repercussion of professional women having to juggle their multiple roles is the emotional cost of feeling guilty, primarily because they are unable to offer and accomplish more in each of their roles (Ruderman et al., 2002; Ruth, 2009; Sedumedi, 2009; Thanacoody, Bartram, Barker & Jacobs, 2006).

Research has also shown that men do not experience as much work-related guilt as women do (Aycan & Eskin, 2005), as society expects them to enter the work domain and they therefore do not have to make a choice between their families and their careers (Olarte, 2000). Guilt is felt by working mothers for not spending enough time with their children and spouses, as well as not making time for themselves (Greenhaus et al., 2000). A large part of these feelings of guilt has been attributed to societal expectations, as well as those set by their parents (Thanacoody et al., 2006).

Shaik (2003) highlights that feelings of guilt and inadequacy are greater among women who work out of sheer economic need, as they do not value their careers and are unable to stay at home and fulfil their more salient roles in the home domain. These feelings of guilt can have an impact on women's career development, as it often results in their careers being disrupted and delayed more than the careers of men, and also results in them being less committed to their work, which is likely to have an impact on their productivity levels (Duxbury et al., 1994; Roodt & Odendaal, 2003). However, Rosenbaum and Cohen (1999) argue that in certain cases it is not necessarily role overload that occurs, but rather the females' perceptions of the consequences of external employment on their maternal roles. This study therefore will determine whether guilt occurs among Indian professional women, as well as the impact thereof.

With the many challenges facing professional women having been discussed, I turn to the main coping strategies adopted by these women, as identified in the literature.

3.5 COPING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY PROFESSIONAL WOMEN

Despite all the work and family challenges faced by women in their climb up the corporate ladder, the study conducted by Tengimfene (2009) on working South African women revealed that all the women in the study fully embraced their responsibilities and set aside time and energy to accomplish them. However, these women experienced mixed emotions of guilt, frustration, enjoyment and high levels of responsibility from occupying the roles of both motherhood and full-time professionals due to these often conflicting demands. Koekemoer and Mostert (2010), as well as Ruth (2009), explain that women are able to cope with their multiple roles using various coping strategies, including prioritising their work and family tasks; being organised; making use of the available support mechanisms, such as family, paid support, friends and colleagues; religion; socialising; as well as making time to exercise, participate in sport, and for relaxation.

The different coping strategies adopted by professional women are a result of the diversity of work cultures and alternative career paths, which provide various approaches for dual-career couples to reconcile work and family life (Rusconi & Solga, 2008). Furthermore, work-family conflicts are resolved through changes in the spouse's family and work-related behaviour (Karambayya & Reilly, 1992). Thus, couples' coordination strategies are not fixed or permanent, but rather a transitional stage in their life course that changes as the family-work dynamics change (Schneider, Limmer, & Ruckdeschel, 2002).

The main coping strategies identified in the literature are discussed at length in the following sections.

3.5.1 Women scaling back on their careers

A crucial predictor of occupational outcomes for dual-earner couples is the extent to which one spouse's career takes precedence over that of the other (Pixley, 2008). Pixley (2008) explains that, if one partner's career takes preference incessantly, it will have major repercussions for the other partner. In addition, most women and mothers scale down or put their careers on hold in order to effectively juggle work and family demands (Rusconi & Solga, 2008; Ruth, 2009). The study conducted by Rao et al. (2003) of 60 married women working in the banking sector affirms this notion, as it revealed that the majority of participants had put their families before their careers and had turned down a job promotion to managerial level. This also appears to be the case in the Indian context, as a survey of 2 700 Indian couples showed that a mere 19% felt that being employed in a full-time job was a viable option, with 60% of the working mothers under study suggesting that the ideal situation would entail being involved in part-time work (Banerjee & Sachdeva, 2008). However, it must be noted that part-time work has associated drawbacks, such as a decrease in pay, lower earnings than men in the same profession, and being involved in work that requires a low skill level (Ruth, 2009).

In addition, researchers have noted that there are various reasons why a certain partner's career may take preference over the other. Prior research has found that couples who hold a traditional gender outlook results in the husband's career taking preference over that of the wife (Gammie & Gammie, 1997). This is seen to exist in the Indian community, as Indian husbands' careers take priority as the women still are bound by tradition, even though they occupy senior and top managerial posts (Carrim, 2012). Another reason why the wife's career, rather than the husband's, may be put on hold is that organisations favour males because of occupational gender segregation, the glass ceiling effect, the worsening labour market position, and the lack of future career prospects (Rusconi & Solga, 2008). However, research conducted on dual-career couples has also revealed that the majority of women view motherhood as an "inalienable part of their being" (Hardill & Van Loon, 2007, p. 176). Similarly, Rusconi and Solga (2008) note that the addition of a child to the family may only be an indirect cause of women's decreased commitment to their careers or their decision not to work

at all, as the biological clock may tick louder for women than for men. Thus, it can be seen that there are various explanations why a particular partner's career takes preference.

The mixed results evident from the research can be explained by the concept of role salience. Role salience is explained as the prominence placed by an individual on a particular life role (Perrone & Civileto, 2004). Specifically, Matzeder and Krieshok (1995) explain that role salience is understood as the devotion to a certain role, which entails feelings and thoughts, involvement in the role, as well as acquaintance with the role. Furthermore, Langley (1999) highlights the significance of examining the importance that an individual places on various life roles, as this will aid in understanding what shapes and provides meaning to a person's life. Hakim (2006) further explains that there are three types of women: adaptive women, work-centred women, and home-centred women. This author explains that adaptive women are those who choose to combine both work and family roles, as they view both domains as important. Work-centred women are those who are solely devoted to their jobs, thrive for career advancement in a similar way that men do, and do not display much interest in other demands, such as marriage or children. Home-centred women are the typical housewives who are happy to stay home, as they are primarily concerned with taking care of their families and are not worried about being part of the workforce. Thus, the decision to place their motherly roles above their professional careers should not simply be generalised as inequality on the wife's part, as she may have made this choice voluntarily. It therefore is crucial that the importance individuals place on various roles be taken into account.

3.5.2 Shared parenting and responsibilities

Over the last two decades, the increasing number of women across various professions has resulted in women requesting more assistance from their husbands (Carrim, 2012; Ismail & Ibrahim, 2007). In this regard, the feminist movement has been a major advocate of egalitarian relationships, which are understood as being a solution to a patriarchal society (Olarte, 2000). Although egalitarian relationships were discussed in

the previous chapter, they will be discussed further in this section by making reference to the impact they have on women's attempts to strike a work-life balance.

Tengimfene (2009, p. 94) highlights that it is more difficult for women who are part of patriarchal relationships to balance work and family life, as they enter boardrooms while wondering "what's for dinner?". In contrast, work and family responsibilities rest on the shoulders of both the husband and wife in egalitarian relationships (Coltrane, 2004; Tereškinas, 2010). Specifically, shared responsibility includes shared household work, joint and active participation with childcare, value given to both spouses' careers and life goals, equal access to and influence over finances, mutual decision making, and shared emotional work (Zimmerman, Haddock, Current & Ziemba, 2003). Husbands who adopt a flexible and open-minded outlook with regard to gender roles may allow their wives to deal better with their careers and effectively balance their work and family lives (Välimäki et al., 2009).

Studies have revealed that there have been relatively slow changes in the distribution of family tasks between spouses, however, as only a minority of couples have reported equal division of such tasks (Coltrane, 2004). In addition, the study conducted by Bartley et al. (2005) revealed that 50% of the participants in their study viewed themselves as egalitarian, although they failed to actually share the family responsibilities. Coltrane (2004) explains that the attitudes towards equality in the division of tasks between spouses have changed more rapidly than their actual behaviour. Ruddick (2007) supports this view, saying that the reason why arguments for equality among dual-career couples fall flat is the notion of the 'traditional undercurrent'. She explains that, if one was to look beneath the surface of couples' relationships – even those who regarded their relationships as egalitarian – there would be an undercurrent of traditionalism that views women as being predisposed to domestic responsibilities, hence the predominant responsibility in the home domain rests with the wives. From the above it can be deduced that egalitarianism appears to be more of a perception than a reality.

Rogers and Amato (2000) support this notion, as they declare that even though there has been a shift towards a more equitable sharing of household responsibilities by dual-

career couples, the wives are still held responsible for the majority of this work. Thus, as women increase the time they devote to paid employment, they have not received a reciprocal reduction in their hours dedicated to tasks in the home domain (the second shift). Earlier studies revealed that women perform approximately 80% of household labour compared to men; however, more recent studies have shown that 66% of household work is executed by women, compared to 34% carried out by men (Bartley et al., 2005). The average woman thus performs approximately double the amount of housework than the average man (Coltrane, 2004). In addition, Galinsky et al. (1993) have reported that women are considerably more likely than men to take time off from their jobs to attend to the needs of their children. Similar results were obtained in the Indian context, as Indian women spend considerably more time on household and childcare tasks than men (Velgach & Rajadhyaksha, 2009). Thus, although there has been a shift towards equality, the literature indicates that this point of parity has not yet been reached.

It can be deduced that, even though men's contribution in the household has increased over time, their support with household and childcare related tasks is secondary to their wife's role. They are often seen as the playmates, helpers, and occasional disciplinarians, for example by caring of the children where the wife is unable to (Olarte, 2000). The lion's share of responsibility still lies with women, and men only serve as a support mechanism when the women really cannot manage. As a result, the children of working mothers are accustomed to the mother figure as the one who "wakes them up for school and returns at night in a business suit for homework and other family responsibilities" (Tengimfene, 2009, p. 129). However, it is crucial to note that the division of household tasks is also dependent on other factors, including the spouses' working hours, living arrangements, income levels, beliefs about gender and family, family size, and ethnicity (Coltrane, 2004). According to Coltrane (2004), the partner with the fewer resources and less power is likely to be responsible for the majority of household work. Studies have also revealed that the wife's fear of emasculating her husband prevents her from requesting more help with housework (Hertz, 1999).

Regardless of the rationale behind the inequality in the division of housework, women are still being held fundamentally responsible for both childcare and household duties

that affect not only themselves, but also their careers and children (Erdwins, Buffardi, Casper, & O'Brien, 2001). Women therefore experience problems with conflicting role demands and time pressures. It is this responsibility in the home domain that influences the degree to which women feel they can enter the world of work (Ruddick, 2007). Undoubtedly, this also has an influence on their decisions whether or not to advance in their careers.

3.5.3 Outsourcing of childcare and domestic tasks

Hertz (1999) notes that the outsourcing of childcare and household tasks by using paid help is more likely to occur in households where women work. Similarly, Nelson and Burke (2000) highlight that this is a common manifestation among female managers, as they experience considerable demands due to the positions they hold at work. This scenario transpires when the longer time that dual-earner couples spend at work results in them having less time to spending on domestic chores and care giving, which consequently increases their dependence on external help (De Ruijter & Van Der Lippe, 2007). The dual income provides the couple with the benefit of higher purchasing power, which allows them to acquire particular types of support to assist with childcare and household responsibilities (Nelson & Burke, 2000; Tengimfene, 2009).

Employing a domestic worker is a common South African practice to cope with the domestic and childcare responsibilities of a family (Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010; Mills, 2002). Similarly, in the Indian context, a typical support mechanism for professional women is that of domestic assistance (Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). Research done globally has revealed that the ability to outsource housework and childcare tasks permits women to realise and negotiate with their spouses the pursuance of careers (Rusconi & Solga, 2008). Research conducted on couples who are unable to outsource such tasks has revealed that the women are the ones who bear the brunt, as they are more likely to be the ones compromising, which in turn has negative effects on their careers (Northouse, 2010; Rusconi & Solga, 2008).

These helpers or maids offer great support to professional women, who are able to shift their childcare and domestic responsibilities to their maids. Maids assist over a million

households in South Africa (Mills, 2002; Tengimfene, 2009). Specifically, maids and cooks serve as a critical support system in minimising the effects of WFC, as the responsibility for household and childcare tasks is shared, which reduces the time spent by these professional women on such tasks (Kim & Ling, 2001; Ruth, 2009; Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). The study conducted by Carrim (2012) revealed that female South African Indian managers would not have been able to cope with work and family demands if they could not outsource these tasks to domestic helpers or au pairs. Furthermore, crèches and day-care centres play a fundamental role in the socialisation and parenting of pre-school children from dual-career, post-modern Indian families, as these functions are no longer dependent solely on the parents due to their work obligations (Panda, 2010; Rao et al., 2003). The outsourcing of childcare and household tasks thus serves as a crucial support mechanism for professional women.

3.5.4 Social support

Social support was also found to be essential to professional women. Social support, according to Aycan and Eskin (2005, p. 454), is the “interpersonal relationships and social interactions that help to protect individuals from the effects of stress”. Social support therefore has a positive impact on individuals’ lives. Specifically, social support aids in reducing the severity of work–life conflict, as conflict is less likely to transpire from these role demands in individuals who receive support (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2005; Namayandeh et al., 2010; Tengimfene, 2009).

Emotional and instrumental support are the two forms of support largely under examination by researchers investigating social support (Beehr, Jex, Stacy & Murray, 2000). According to House (1981, p. 39), social support may take the form of:

- ❖ **Emotional support** – this entails providing empathy, care, love and trust.
- ❖ **Instrumental support** – this includes actual aid in time, money and energy.
- ❖ **Appraisal support** – this refers to providing information relevant for self-evaluation.
- ❖ **Informational support** – this consists of offering advice, information and suggestions.

Social support could also be acquired from work-related sources, which include supervisors and colleagues, as well as non-work-related sources, such as the spouse or partner, relatives, friends, siblings, children, parents, and extended family members (Marcinkus, Whelan-Berry, & Gordon, 2007; Namayandeh et al., 2010; Van Daalen, Willemsen, & Sanders, 2006). Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009) have highlighted that support, particularly to alleviate WFC in Indian societies, is primarily obtained from non-work-related sources. For childcare support in particular, women search beyond their nuclear family by turning to their mothers, sisters, and extended family members (Tengimfene, 2009). Many Indian dual-career families have even relocated their residential accommodation closer to that of their parents or in-laws in order for them to be assured that their children are in safe hands (Rao et al., 2003).

Furthermore, support from non-work-related sources results in reduced FWC because it assists in reducing the experience of family role uncertainty, family role conflict, and family time demands (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999). Specifically, support from non-work sources has been provided women with emotional companionship, assists them in dealing with life's issues, and allows them more time to engage in coaching and other developmental activities (Etaugh & Bridges, 2004). It also reduces the role overload from the home domain (Moorosi, 2007), counterbalances the emotional drain experienced by women in their various roles (Ross, 1997), and enables these women to spend a greater amount of time at work and on other career-related activities (Tengimfene, 2009). Social support therefore is vital to minimise and even eliminate the impact of WFC and FWC.

Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009, p. 9) have noted that, in Indian societies, social support tends to be “informal, ad hoc, contingent and bound in a web of reciprocal relationships of dependence and counter-dependence”. Research has also shown that men in general receive greater social support from their spouses than do women, and women receive more social support from friends and relatives than do men do (Van Daalen, Sanders, & Willemsen, 2005). For the purpose of this study, social support in the home domain will be explored with a specific focus on the husband as a support system, as previous research has shown that husbands serve as an instrumental, if not the most vital, source of support for married professional women (Gordon & Whelan-

Berry, 2004; Janning, 2006; Xu & Burleson, 2001). Spousal support subsequently will be discussed in a separate section and at greater length than the other coping strategies adopted by professional women, as it is the main focus of this study.

3.6 SPOUSAL SUPPORT

Although couples turn to other individuals for different types of social support, the spouse still remains a crucial source of support for the success of dual-earner families (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2005; Noor, 2002; Xu & Burleson, 2001). The need for this support is heightened because the transformation of extended families into nuclear families has resulted in a reduction of support networks and placed a greater demand on support from the husband (Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005). Also, the husband is seen as the closest person to a married professional woman, and thus the one who has an immediate understanding of her situation (Noor, 2002). Moreover, sources of social support external to the marital relationship do not provide sufficient psychological compensation for the absence of spousal support (Xu & Burleson, 2001). Husbands thus play a crucial role, as they are the ones who are viewed as being able to fill the void experienced by their professional wives.

Spousal support has been described as a “rich and multi-faceted phenomenon” (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008, p. 1126). In addition, Aycan and Eskin (2005) explain that spousal support involves the assistance, guidance, understanding, and the like that spouses offer each other. Specifically, spouses serve as a key source of support as they can provide assistance with childcare, provide stability at home, and alleviate the experience of work–life conflict (Rao et al., 2003). Janning (2006) highlights further that empathy is a crucial form of spousal support, which involves an understanding of the other partner’s situation.

It has also been stated clearly that social support enhances professional success (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000). However, particularly spousal support is of tremendous importance to women who belong to cultures in which there are low levels of gender egalitarianism (Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999). Earlier research has shown that, in such cultures, women rather than men adopt conventional gender roles and embrace the

belief that parental and marital relationships suffer as a result of women seeking work outside of the home realm (Emmons, Biernat, Tiedje, Lang, & Wortman, 1990). From the discussion above it can be seen that spousal support is a crucial area for investigation, as previous research has revealed that it is a factor that has a major impact on the career advancement of married women.

3.6.1 Types of spousal support

Parallel to the trending forms of social support that have been investigated, researchers have noted emotional and instrumental support as two main types of spousal support (Adams, King & King, 1996; Valk & Srinivasan, 2011; Xu & Burleson, 2001). Aycan and Eskin (2005, p. 455) define emotional support as the “emphatic understanding and listening, affirmation of affection, advice, and genuine concern for the welfare of the partner”. Emotional support has also been explained as the husband’s moral support for his wife’s career endeavours (Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). On the other hand, instrumental support consists of physical assistance from the spouse in terms of day-to-day household tasks and childrearing activities (Aycan & Eskin, 2005). Research has also revealed that women place greater value on emotional support, as instrumental support can be purchased (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999).

Gordon and Whelan-Berry (2004) expanded on the identified types of support in their study by measuring four types of support roles that exist in the United States of America. Table 3.2 illustrates these support roles and provides a description of each. These researchers illustrate that the partners and spouses of employed women are engaged in various support roles, including career management and support, financial management, home and family responsibilities, as well as interpersonal support. They further explain that spouses can provide both interpersonal and career support by assisting their wives in making decisions on whether to accept a promotion or venture into a new job, offering a different perspective during perplexing assignments, as well as providing feedback and advice in general.

Table 3.2: Support roles of partners and spouses of employed women

Support role	Description of support roles
Earnings and personal financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide financial security for the family • Manage the family's finances
Home and family responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage household activities • Organise the family's activities
Career management and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a mentor • Provide career advice
Interpersonal support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a sounding board • Provide a calming influence

Source: Adapted from Gordon and Whelan-Berry (2004, p. 266)

Expanding on this, Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2008, p. 1117) propose a typology of spousal support for female executives in the American context. Their typology clusters six support behaviours as portrayed by the spouses of these managerial women:

- 1) **Emotional support** – includes behaviours that are defined as encouraging and understanding, as well as attentive listening.
- 2) **Esteem support** – includes support in terms of appreciation, a sense of pride, and belief in the wife's work and abilities.
- 3) **Help with family members** – refers to caring for children and elderly family members, as well as looking after pets.
- 4) **Career assistance** – entails emotional and instrumental support for the wife's career ambitions, which includes offering technical assistance and professional advice.
- 5) **Husband's career and lifestyle choices** – refer to the extent to which the husband's career and lifestyle choices support the wife's high-profile job.
- 6) **Help with the household** – consists of activities such as cleaning, cooking, and taking care of bills, as well as a willingness to spend money on assistance.

Välimäki et al. (2009) conducted a study in Finland that led to the categorisation of spouses across a continuum, ranging from supportive to non-supportive husbands. The five types of spouses include the determining spouse, supporting spouse, flexible spouse, instrumental spouse and counterproductive spouse. A summary of their findings can be seen in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Types of spouses constructed by women managers

Type of spouse	Description of key characteristics	Influence on woman manager's career	Link between spousal gender roles and woman manager's career
Determining spouse	Spouse's job preferences largely determine woman's career choices and orientation	Woman's studies, career breaks and orientation are based on spouse's career changes and career moves	Woman's career is subordinated to spouse's decisions: man's gender role is dominant between spouses
Supporting spouse	Spouse actively encourages and supports woman in her career	Spouse's psychosocial and practical support enables and helps woman's career advancement	Woman makes her own career decisions but after discussing with her spouse; relationship between spouses is open, respectful and balanced
Instrumental spouse	Woman utilises her spouse as an instrument beneficial for her career	Spouse creates social status, ensuring financial security and comfortable living environment	Woman is grateful for benefits to her career received from spouse; woman is more dominant between spouses
Flexible spouse	Spouse is flexible and willingly adapts to woman's career demands	Spouse takes responsibility for home and children; he adjusts his own work and career in favour of woman's career advancement	Spouse's action is subordinated to woman's career decisions; woman is more dominant between spouses; spouse may face external stereotyping and negative attitudes
Counterproductive spouse	Spouse has unconstructive attitude to woman's career and is reluctant to approve of or understand it	Spouse is unsupportive and negative, which has restrictive effects on woman's career	Spouse prefers traditional gender roles where woman is subordinate to man; his insecurity about his own position is problematic for woman's career

Source: Välimäki et al. (2009, p. 609)

The three previously discussed studies, namely those of Gordon and Whelan-Berry (2004), Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2008), and Välimäki et al. (2009), provide excellent typologies of the forms of spousal support, the roles of husbands, and the influence they have on their wives' careers. However, limitations were identified. Firstly, they were conducted in Finland and America, where gender roles may differ from those in the South African context due to cultural and societal differences. Secondly, the studies focused solely on the wives' perceptions. By excluding the husbands' perspectives, the data's accuracy could not be verified. Therefore the current study will be conducted with the aim of understanding the dynamics of spousal support among Indians in the South African context. The results will be examined to determine whether they tie in or contrast with other research conducted on the subject. In addition, both husbands and wives will be included in this study to obtain a dual perspective and thus enhance the validity of the findings.

3.6.2 Spouse support-gap hypothesis

Tichenor (2005) notes that couples have not experienced much success in attaining equality and comparable levels of mutual support in their marriages. A survey conducted among husbands in India revealed that a mere 34% of husbands assisted their wives willingly (Rajadhyaksha & Smita, 2004). This survey also revealed that 22% occasionally lent a hand, while the majority of husbands subscribed to traditional roles and did not assist their wives at all. However, there are men who have relinquished their careers to stay at home and take care of the children in order for their wives to succeed in their careers (Bhagat, 1999). Kaila's (2007) study of Indian female managers revealed that husbands do assist in household tasks. However, researchers have illustrated the existence of a support gap, as women have claimed to receive lower levels of spousal support than men (Tichenor, 2005; Xu & Burleson, 2001). Xu and Burleson (2001) further highlight that both husbands and wives experience similar levels of support from their spouses. However, these levels of support surpass what most men anticipate or desire but is unsuccessful at fulfilling the expectations of most women.

The mixed results obtained from these studies can be attributed to various factors. Researchers note that support can take the form of being “invisible” (not perceived when provided), as well as “illusory” (perceived even when not provided) (Bolger, Zuckerman, & Kessler, as cited in Xu & Burleson, 2001, p. 538). This assertion has been used by researchers to distinguish between support provided and support received, in order to explain the differences in spousal support. There also are unique factors that have an impact on ethnic minority women in the predominantly white corporate world, which include dynamics surrounding their race and ethnicity, gender, and religious affiliations, as well as the related family, cultural, and community expectations of them (Carrim, 2012). These are some of the rationales used by researchers to explain the spousal support gap; the main reasons identified in the literature will be discussed at length in the subsequent sections.

3.6.2.1 The husband's personality

Friede and Ryan (2005) argue that an individual's personality is a crucial factor to consider, as it determines how the person assesses his/her roles, experiences, and life in totality. Greenhaus et al. (2000) suggest that professional women experience reduced marital satisfaction, as their success at work builds up resentment in their husbands. These researchers analysed the dynamics of jealousy and competitiveness within dual-career couples, which revealed that there is a greater tendency amongst dual-career couples to compete with each other relative to traditional couples. Theunissen et al. (2003) explain that, in traditional couples, both partners experience satisfaction, with the husband being viewed as successful in the work domain and the wife as being prosperous at home. However, when both partners are career orientated, one may be more successful than the other. Thus husbands are more likely to be accepting of their wife's career, provided that his career is not jeopardised by it (Hertz, 1999).

Previous research has revealed that, if the husband is competitive and insecure about his capabilities, he tends to direct his wife's decisions in the direction of staying at home rather than pursuing a career (Olarde, 2000). According to Olarte (2000), these men rationalise their 'support' by stating that it will be in the best interests of the children, even though it may not be in the best interest of the mother. Through this the husband

gains a relative economic and professional advantage, while being portrayed as nurturing, as he supports his wife by compensating financially for her concession to stay at home. Thus the husband's personality can be seen as a crucial aspect to consider in understanding the perceptions couples hold with regard to women's career advancement.

3.6.2.2 *Age*

Studies have been conducted to determine whether age is a factor that impacts on the attitude of men to women and their roles. However, these studies have yielded conflicting results. On the one hand, researchers have argued that a transformation in gender-role attitudes is occurring as the more conservative, older cohorts age and die, and their attitudes and conventional outlook on life is replaced by younger, more liberal generations that have a tendency to be more egalitarian in their gender-role attitudes (Brewster & Padavic, 2000; Ciabattari, 2001; Elamin & Omair, 2010; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Ichou, 2008). Similarly, the study conducted by Ichou (2008) revealed that many men from the older generation are opposed to women attaining financial independence, as they consider women to be inferior to men and that it would be disrespectful to men if women became financially independent. In addition, research conducted by Tichenor (2005) suggests that younger and less traditional couples deal with the atypical situation better when wives bring in more income than their husbands. Furthermore, Gordon and Whelan-Berry (2004) found that younger women expect their husbands to have egalitarian views and also to contribute in the home domain.

On the other hand, studies have found that no relationship exists between age and gender-role attitudes (Abdalla, 1996; Bryant, 2003), stating that other factors can be used to explain the differences in gender-role attitudes. The varying results obtained from previous research could possibly be attributed to the cultural differences between the participants under study. The study conducted by Sedumedi (2009) on African (black, Indian, and coloured) professionals revealed that the perceptions of women's upward social mobility appears to be influenced by age, as younger males appear to agree to women's financial independence and their endeavours for success, whereas the older generation of men appear to struggle to accept women's undertaking to be

financially autonomous. Earlier researchers have noted that there is a noticeable difference in values between the older and the younger generations, specifically amongst South African Indians, with the older generation subscribing more to traditional beliefs and values and the younger generation largely having become accustomed to Western values (Arkin et al., 1989). Similarly, Desai and Goodall's (1995) study of Hindu women revealed that the younger generation of women admire men who contribute to the performance of household tasks, while the older women felt a sense of disappointment and shame if they did. Therefore, one of the aims of this study is to determine whether the interaction of age and culture has an impact on the attitudes of Indian husbands towards their wives who advance in their careers.

3.6.2.3 Influence of parents

Another crucial aspect to consider when understanding the differences in spousal support is the role models of the individuals being examined (Olarde, 2000). Earlier researchers noted the influence of parents, in that the behaviour of adults and their relations with others transpires from the parents' behaviour which they observed in their earlier years (Papalia & Olds, 1988). Marcia (1993) highlights that parents have a major influence on the gender formation and beliefs of their children. Therefore, in this section there will be a specific focus on the parents and the impact they have on their children's lives, as it appears that they serve as vital role models.

The study carried out by Adams and Govender (2008) on why teenage males ascribe to traditional male-dominant norms revealed that 61% of the participants stated that their fathers were the primary breadwinners in their homes. Researchers have also highlighted the importance of considering the mother's work experience when explaining the daughter's decision to enter the world of work (Redelinghuys et al., 1999; Sedumedi, 2009; Tengimfene, 2009). These authors declare that if the mother has worked, it can be expected that her daughter will follow suit.

Mothers draw on their childhood experiences, as well as on role models, when raising their children, running their homes, and making decisions related to their adult life (Tengimfene, 2009). In patriarchal societies, girls absorb from childhood, by observing

their mothers, that their role is to nurture and fulfil domestic duties (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). In addition, previous research has shown that less stereotyping of domestic roles is likely to exist and a high likelihood that a comparable arrangement in their children's families may occur if the parents' roles and responsibilities are split across the gender line (Redelinguys et al., 1999). Specifically, if the father is involved in childcare and housework activities, and the mother participates in traditional masculine work on a regular basis, it is likely that the children will do the same (Bhagat, 1999; Etaugh & Bridges, 2004).

Children who are exposed to dual-career arrangements have greater financial stability, greater self-esteem, as well as the opportunity to develop independently (Muchinsky et al., 1998). However, even though there is a marked increase in the number of dual-career couples, most children are being raised having working mothers who shoulder the majority of household responsibilities, with some mothers even having to care for elderly family members (Edwards, 2008; Etaugh & Bridges, 2004; Greenhaus et al., 2000; Kaufman, 2005). It therefore would appear that Olarte's (2000) declaration, that there seems to be a deficit of role models of both husbands and wives who have been successful in their professional as well as personal lives, without having feelings of guilt or self-doubt, appears to hold true. This may pose a major problem, as these role models have a great impact on whether women are submissive or successful, as well as on how they cope with everyday challenges, since individuals imitate behaviour learnt in their childhood in their workplaces (Ruth, 2009). From the above discussion it can be seen that parents play a crucial role, as they serve as role models for their children.

3.6.3 Impact of spousal support on the different spheres of life

Earlier research suggests that support and contributions from husbands in the home domain have both personal and professional advantages and consequences for women (Rosin, 1990). A study conducted by Kirrane and Buckley (2004) that investigated support emanating from various sources, such as workplace supervisors and colleagues, members of the extended family, the spouse-partner, and non-work friends, established that only spouse-partner support was significant. Thus, the impact of spousal support on the various spheres of a professional female's life will be examined

in turn. It must be noted that the impact of the husband's support on the wife's personal life will be discussed briefly, but the impact of his support on the wife's career will be discussed at greater length, as it is the focus of this study.

3.6.3.1 Impact of spousal support on personal life

Previous research has revealed that spousal support is strongly associated with greater levels of psychological well-being and marital satisfaction (Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Edwards, 2008; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005; Stevens, Kiger, & Riley, 2001) . Specifically, the marital satisfaction of employed mothers is explained as being an outcome of support received from their husbands (Edwards, 2008). As mentioned previously, researchers have highlighted that instrumental help is of less importance to the well-being and marital satisfaction of women than emotional support, as instrumental help can be purchased (Erickson, 1993; Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999). However, other researchers have contested this view by highlighting the importance of instrumental help, as their studies have revealed that couples' satisfaction with the division of labour alleviates the effects of WFC and is positively related to their overall marital satisfaction (Edwards, 2008; Stevens et al., 2001). As a result there are researchers who state that all types of support from husbands, whether it be financial, with family and household tasks, with career management, or interpersonal support, all have a positive effect on the wife's life satisfaction (Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Edwards, 2008; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005).

Similarly, Rosenbaum and Cohen (1999) contend that employed mothers with traditional views of gender roles are less likely to feel that their role as good mothers and wives in the home domain is threatened by them also pursuing a career if they receive emotional support from their spouses, as this serves as an indication of approval by the husbands for them to be employed outside of the home. Employed wives thus view spousal support as an endorsement from the husband that conveys the message that they are doing the right thing (Noor, 2002). From the above discussion it is apparent that spousal support is associated with various benefits in an individual's personal life.

3.6.3.2 *Impact of spousal support on career life*

Earlier research conducted by Spitze and Waite (1981) revealed that women's attitude to their own work was influenced by their perception of their husbands' attitude toward them working. Similarly, Still and Timms (1998) found that female professionals and managers examined their own careers and ambitions in reaction to the experiences, concerns, preferences, and attitudes expressed by their husbands. Similar results were obtained from recent research conducted by O'Neil and Bilimoria (2005) and Välimäki et al. (2009), who concluded that the spouse has a considerable impact on the decisions relating to a female manager's career. However, there is a dearth of literature focusing on the impact that husbands may have on their wife's career advancement, despite the husband being regarded as an important family member and a crucial source of support (Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Noor, 2002; Xu & Burlison, 2001). In comparison, the few studies that have been conducted, which focus specifically on the influence husbands have on their wife's career aspirations, have yielded mixed results.

Studies have revealed that support from husbands is crucial for wives to manage and effectively cope with both personal and professional demands. Ruddick (2007) found in her study that husbands do in fact influence the experiences of their wives, as the husbands of the participants in her study could be categorised into two different groups, namely those who were supportive of their wives' choices and those who were inflexible about the division of domestic labour in the relationship. Other studies have determined that the role of husbands was perceived by the wives both positively and negatively (Lämsä & Hiillos, 2008; Tengimfene, 2009), with some husbands being very supportive, while others are unable to cope with their wives' professional success. The study conducted by Ruth (2009) revealed that, in most cases, husbands are supportive and serve as a secure foundation for their wives to build their careers on. However, some women feel that being married serves as a barrier to their upward career mobility. Tharenou (2001), for example, revealed that women who receive career support from their husbands are more likely to progress within two years when compared to those who do not receive such support.

Similarly, Sedumedi's (2009) study of African professionals revealed that the majority of females expressed that their husbands expected them to adopt all of the woman's socially-constructed domestic roles, even if they were employed. The women in her study therefore had to relinquish senior occupational positions due to the expectation that their spouses would be unsupportive and disapproving. A similar picture is painted in the Indian context, as the career decisions of Indian professional females are significantly affected by their family responsibilities (Rastogi & Bansal, 2012). Rastogi and Bansal (2012) further explain that the lack of spousal support is one of the main factors, along with aspects such as the degree of child rearing responsibility and the structure of the family that poses a major threat to women's career advancement. The study carried out by Rao et al. (2003) concurs with this, as it revealed that professional Indian women would have withdrawn from work had their husbands not supported them in their endeavours.

Other studies have reported that spousal support in terms of domestic and childcare responsibilities, as well as socio-emotional support, was found to be meaningful and valued, as it served as a buffer to alleviate the effects of WFC and FWC experienced by female professionals (Aryee, 1992; Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Carlson & Perrew, 1999; Gupta & Sharma, 2002; Kim & Ling, 2001; Martins et al., 2002; Koekemoer & Mostert, 2010; Moorosi, 2007; Noor, 2002; Namayandeh et al., 2010; Tengimfene, 2009). Lower levels of WFC and FWC are experienced because women who receive support from their husbands are afforded time to devote to work and other career-related activities (Tengimfene, 2009). Similarly, Moorosi (2007) studied female principals in the South African context and found that juggling work and family responsibilities was tough, but was even more difficult when the husbands did not provide assistance with household tasks. Moreover, Parasuraman, Purohit, and Godshalk (1996) explain that both tangible and emotional support assist in alleviating such conflict, as tangible support received from the spouse lessens the load of demands in the home domain, while emotional support augments feelings of self-efficacy in both the home and work domains. Furthermore, research has shown that support from husbands was consistently shown to be the most noteworthy antidote of WFC (Namayandeh et al., 2010).

From the reviewed literature it is evident that the majority of researchers support the view that the spouse has a major, if not the greatest, impact on the career advancement of women.

3.7 CONCLUSION

From this chapter it is apparent that the concept of a 'dual-career couple' is multi-faceted. The dynamics identified in the literature that were pertinent to this study were explored in detail in this chapter to shed some light on the subject. From the literature perused it can be seen that various challenges are faced by professional women who attempt to strike a work-life balance. It also is evident that these women draw on various resources to aid in alleviating the adverse effects resulting from the interface of the work and home domains. Specific focus was placed on the spouse as a support mechanism, along with the type of support offered and the impact thereof, which is the focus of this study. The information presented in this chapter therefore will serve as a basis for the present study. Chapter 4 will present the research design and methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”

- Hurston(1942, p.143)

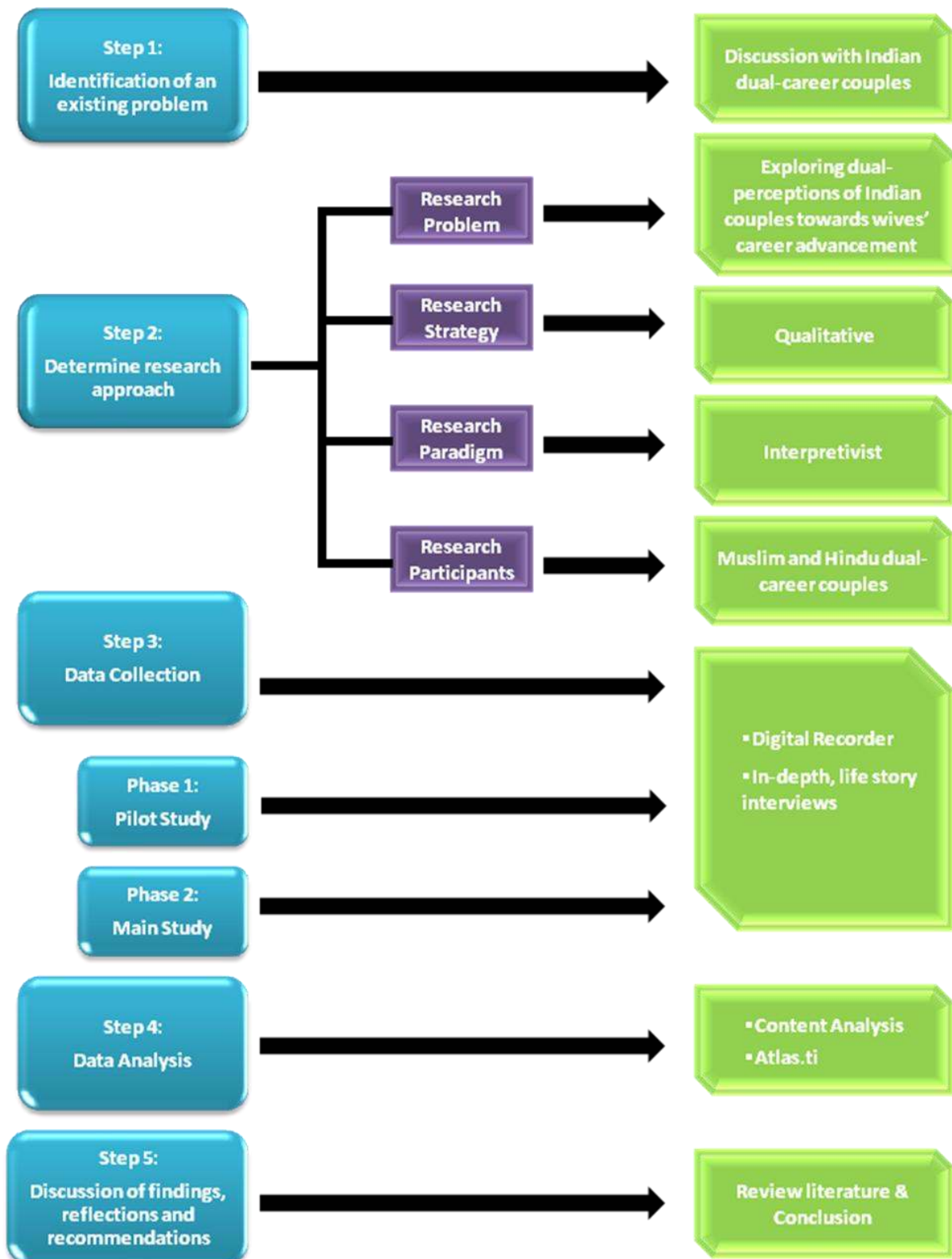
4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a detailed discussion of the research design and methodology used in this study to show that my “poking and prying” was done with a purpose in mind. Specifically, this chapter focuses on the research design, which is described as a “road map” (Myers, 2009, p. 19) or a “blueprint” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 77) for commencing a research study in order to address the problem concerned. It is important that the research design is suitable for the research question, the research aim, as well as the nature of the study, so that the research goals can be achieved (Henning, Smit, & Van Rensburg, 2004; Leedy & Omrod, 2010). Thus, in this study the research design served as the overall plan that guided the research process in order to achieve the intended aims. In addition, this chapter also presents a discussion of the research methodology, which is a term used to describe the procedures, steps and strategies employed in a research study for the collection and analysis of the data (Polit & Hungler, 1999, p. 648).

As discussed in Chapter 1, the primary aim of this study was to understand the dual attitudes and perceptions of Indian couples in relation to women’s career advancement in South Africa. As stated previously, there is a lack of research that focuses specifically on the impact of husbands’ support on wives’ career advancement, not only in South Africa, but also globally. This study can thus be described as being exploratory in nature. Exploratory research is essential when a researcher is examining a relatively new topic, as it almost always provides new insights into the topic under study (Babbie, 2007). By examining the perceptions of these couples through exploratory research, the aim was to develop an understanding of the perceptions; the underlying reasons why these perceptions exist; as well as the impact thereof on the wife’s career advancement.

A comprehensive account of the research design and the methods used in the study is provided in this chapter. Specifically, the research strategy and approach will be discussed first, along with the rationale for using them. This will be followed by a discussion of my ontological and epistemological beliefs. With regard to the research methodology, this chapter specifically details the sampling methods, biographical distribution of the sample, the data collection techniques, as well as the method of data analysis employed. Figure 4.1 provides a graphical representation of the steps that were followed in the research process, which will be discussed at length in the subsequent sections.

Figure 4.1: Overview of the research process followed in this study



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

4.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

4.2.1 Research strategy – qualitative method

There are three main strategies that can be employed when conducting research, namely quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research. With regard to the quantitative research strategy, the investigator relies on numerical data to test the relationship between variables; adopts an objective approach and seeks explanations and predictions that will generalise to other individuals and contexts (Charles & Mertler, 2002; Leedy & Omrod, 2010; Maree, 2010). In comparison, qualitative research focuses on meanings, characteristics, processes, and qualities that are examined rigorously, but cannot simply be reduced to numerical values in terms of quantity, frequency or amount (Leedy & Omrod, 2010; O’Neil, 2010). Thus, in essence, the term ‘qualitative’ refers to a quality or character, whereas ‘quantitative’ refers to a quantity or an amount (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Table 4.1 further delineates the differences between the two approaches. The third approach that can be adopted is the ‘mixed methods’ approach. In the broadest sense, this approach can be understood as the combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research (Creswell, 2009). Specifically, in mixed methods research the researcher obtains both numeric and textual data, in sequence or concurrently, and makes the critical choice about which variables and units of analysis are deemed most important to address the purpose of the study and obtain the desired outcomes (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Table 4.1: A comparison of quantitative and qualitative approaches in social research

Quantitative approach	Qualitative approach
Epistemological roots in positivism	Epistemological roots in phenomenology
Purpose is testing predictive and cause–effect hypotheses about social reality	Purpose is constructing detailed descriptions of social reality
Methods utilise deductive logic	Methods utilise inductive logic
Suitable for a study of phenomena that are conceptually and theoretically well developed; seeks to control phenomena	Suitable for a study of a relatively unknown terrain; seeks to understand phenomena
Concepts are converted into operational definitions; results appear in numeric form and are eventually reported in statistical language	Participant’s natural language is used in order to come to a genuine understanding of their world
The research design is standardised according to a fixed procedure and can be replicated	The research design is flexible and unique, and evolves throughout the research process. There are no fixed steps that should be followed and the design cannot be replicated exactly
Data is obtained systematically and in a standardised manner	Data sources are determined by the information richness of settings; types of observations are modified to enrich understanding
The unit of analysis is variables that are atomistic (elements that form part of the whole)	The unit of analysis is holistic, concentrating on the relationship between elements, contexts, and so forth. The whole is always more than the sum of the parts

Source: Fouché and Delport (2005, p. 75)

O’Neil (2010) highlights that each approach provides equally critical, but diverse, perspectives on the topic, problem, or phenomenon under study. In addition, Maree (2010) explains that the type of knowledge sought, the methods and strategies used to obtain this knowledge, as well as the researcher’s philosophical orientation, are crucial considerations when choosing an approach. Taking this into consideration, a qualitative approach was deemed most appropriate for exploring the research questions, as well as achieving the research aim.

Qualitative data is defined by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) as being based on meanings expressed through words. Thus, in this study, the data collected from the interviews were non-numerical and textual. Specifically, qualitative studies:

- ❖ deal with naturalistic approaches to gain an understanding of phenomena in context-specific situations such as real world settings where researchers do not influence the phenomena they are interested in (Patton, 2002);
- ❖ are characteristically more flexible and permit greater spontaneity, as well as adjustments to be made in the relationship between the researcher and the study participant (Maree, 2010);
- ❖ are effective in creating a better understanding of variables that are difficult to quantify, such as attitudes, religious beliefs, or political opinions (Deeptee & Roshan, 2008);
- ❖ adopt a subjective approach, which offers detail and depth through precise quotation and careful accounts of observed behaviours, circumstances, interactions, and events (Labuschagne, 2003); and
- ❖ allow researchers to explore important personal issues (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

This research approach is highly applicable to the study, as the perceptions of Indian couples in relation to women's career advancement delve into the personal lives and issues faced by the participants, which are subjective in nature. Thus, by adopting a qualitative approach in this study, my aim was to gain an in-depth understanding of the authentic perceptions held, with a greater degree of flexibility. In addition, research on the impact of spousal support in dual-career arrangements is limited, thus qualitative research was deemed appropriate in light of the exploratory nature of the study, as the aim was to obtain rich, in-depth information and further understanding of the topic. This approach allowed for detailed information to be obtained on the perceptions held, as well as on the underlying reasons for these perceptions. Furthermore, qualitative research is particularly valuable in obtaining cultural-specific information about individuals' attitudes, behaviours, fears, value systems, motivations, ambitions, ethnicity, and lifestyles (Clough, 1998). Therefore, this strategy was used to elicit information about the 'human' side of the issues that transpired, as well as to explore the contextual

factors, such as participants' gender roles, culture, and religion, and the impact they may have on Indian couples' perceptions of women's career advancement.

However, this strategy is not without its drawbacks. The main criticisms of qualitative research include that it is too subjective and impressionistic, as the researcher's values, biases, and theoretical inclination may impact on the outcomes of the research; it is difficult to replicate, as it often relies on the researcher's ingenuity and lacks standard procedures; it raises problems with regard to generalisation, as the scope of the findings is restricted; and it lacks transparency, as it sometimes is challenging to establish what the researcher did and how he/she arrived at the conclusions (Bryman & Bell, 2007). I was aware of these criticisms and aimed to combat these limitations by employing various strategies (refer to Section 4.5) to ensure the validity and reliability of the study.

4.2.2 Research paradigm

A research paradigm is defined as "the researcher's point of view, or frame of reference for looking at life or understanding reality" (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delpont, 2005, p. 261). In essence, a paradigm is what guides the research process in all assumptions made with regard to a particular study (Ponterotto, 2002). The present study was steered by the interpretivist paradigm.

The key belief of interpretivists is that reality is socially constructed rather than being objectively established (Husserl, 1965). In addition, interpretivists are concerned with the "empathic understanding of human action" (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 18). Therefore, interpretivists believe that there is not one reality that exists but many, and the majority of an individual's knowledge is obtained through social creations such as joint understandings, language, perceptions, resources, and other artefacts which enclose meaning in an individual's life (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Maree, 2010; Trauth, 2001). Furthermore, this approach is based on a number of assumptions, as identified by Maree (2010) as well as Hussey and Hussey (1997):

- ❖ The placement of individuals in their social environments provides a greater opportunity to understand the insights they have of their own actions.

- ❖ Human life can only be understood from an internal perspective and not from an external reality. Thus the focus is on the subjective experiences of individuals and the manner in which they ‘construct’ their social world.
- ❖ An individual’s “mind is the purposive source or origin of meaning” (Maree, 2010, p. 59). This means that, by discovering how meanings are created, researchers can gain insight into the meanings conveyed so as to obtain an improved, holistic understanding of individuals.
- ❖ An individual’s behaviour is affected by the knowledge he/she possesses of the social world. Interpretivism posits that a phenomenon has multiple realities, and not just a single reality, and that these realities may differ over time as well as in the situation in which they are created.
- The social world does not exist independently from the knowledge of people. This implies that the knowledge that an individual possesses is constructed by the experiences or situations to which he/she has been exposed.

In sum, interpretivism is concerned with the exclusivity of a particular circumstance, which contributes to the essential pursuit of contextual intensity (Myers, 1997). Therefore the rationale behind adopting the interpretivist research perspective is that it is aligned with the purpose of the study, which aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the dual perceptions of Indian couples regarding the wives’ career advancement by seeking to understand how the participants’ subjective perceptions have been constructed through their social experiences, historical background, and cultural and religious norms.

4.3 KEY SCIENTIFIC BELIEFS

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) note the importance for researchers to state their ontology, as well as their relevant underlying assumptions, so that they may account for the impact that these beliefs may have on the results of their study. This section explains my scientific beliefs as these have a bearing on my outlook on the study, as well as the subsequent actions in conducting it. Archer (2012) has summarised the three main

theoretical frameworks identified by Babbie and Mouton (2001), as presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Meta-theoretical frameworks

Paradigm	Ontology	Epistemology	Methodology
Positivist	One 'scientific', 'real' reality. Search for certainty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Explain events through knowable facts, causes and effects, law-like underlying regularities ❖ 'True' findings ❖ 'Objective' observation ❖ • Absolute knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Quantitative ❖ Experimental ❖ Testing ❖ Predicting ❖ Control ❖ Generalisation
Constructivist/interpretivist	Multiple subjective realities that are constructed and interpreted. Constructed through human interactions	Events understood through interpretation, influenced by interactions with social context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Qualitative ❖ Case studies ❖ Understanding and interpretation of particular contexts
Critical / emancipatory paradigm	Reality shaped by historical, social, political and economic values, persons in society, power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Understand events in social and economic contexts. ❖ Emphasis on ideological critique and praxis. ❖ Findings are value mediated and socially constructed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Argumentative and controversial ❖ Aims for social justice and emancipation ❖ Discourse analysis ❖ Critical action research ❖ Feminism

Source: Adapted from Archer (2012, p. 20-23)

The constructivist/interpretivist paradigm was chosen as the overarching meta-theoretical framework for this study. The following sections describe this paradigm, along with the rationale for its use in the study.

4.3.1 Ontological position

Ontology is a philosophical choice made by individuals on how to define reality (Crotty, 1998; Maree, 2010). It questions what the truth or reality is (Maree, 2010). Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p. 11) explain that, ontologically, social researchers raise questions about “whether or not social reality exists independently of human conceptions and interpretations; whether there is a common, shared social reality or just multiple context-specific realities; and whether or not social behaviour is governed by 'laws' that can be seen as immutable or generalizable”. Furthermore, the view of qualitative researchers from an ontological position is that reality is socially constructed and thus the researcher cannot be detached from the research (Maree, 2010).

As a qualitative researcher, I believe, ontologically, that reality has been socially constructed and that multiple realities therefore exist due to various factors that have an influence on people’s lives. Crotty (1998, p. 42) defines social constructivism as “the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context”. The perceptions of Indian dual-career couples would therefore vary, as they have evolved over time as a result of various factors, including social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender dynamics that have shaped them to regard these perceptions as real or true. Thus, these realities are subjectively constructed, as they are influenced by the context in which they reside. I was interested in discovering the reality that exists with regard to the spousal support of Indian dual-career couples and the impact thereof, in order to understand their motives, actions and intentions in a meaningful way.

4.3.2 Epistemological position

While ontology deals with the truth or reality that exists, epistemology deals with the “nature of knowledge and how it can be acquired” (Snape & Spencer, 2003, p. 23). Specifically, it is concerned with “how one knows reality, the method for knowing reality, or how one comes to know reality” (Maree, 2010, p. 55), as well as what is regarded as adequate knowledge in a discipline (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Saunders et al., 2009).

Furthermore, epistemology is concerned with the relationship between the researcher and the research participant, as reality is constructed through this relationship (Ponterotto, 2002, p. 396). Epistemology therefore is subjective, as the researcher and subjects are involved jointly in creating meanings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Qualitative researchers believe that every situation is unique, and thus it is crucial that the contexts in which they are embedded are analysed (Maree, 2010). Epistemologically I adopted interpretivism, as it was deemed most appropriate in order to understand the participants' worlds from their point of view. This was explained at length in the preceding section, along with the rationale for adopting this stance. However, it is crucial to note that a social researcher who conducts research from an interpretivist stance explores and understands reality through both the participants and his/her own perspective (Snape & Spencer, 2003). I believe that both the participants and I contributed to a joint creation of findings and I understand that my experiences and background have an influence on the study. To prevent my preconceived ideas from obscuring the results of the study, I will be transparent about my experiences and background.

I am an Indian female who has first-hand experience with dual-career couples and the dynamics surrounding them, as my parents as well as many of my family members and friends' families have such an arrangement. I therefore have been exposed to some of the cultural, societal, and family issues that have impacted on these individuals. Despite my exposure, my self-reflection (refer to Chapter 9) has made me aware of the preconceived ideas I could have brought to the study, and I did not let these cloud my judgement. I was determined to pursue this study with an open mind and have done my best to be objective at all times.

4.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of a research methodology section is to focus on and explain the rationale behind the chosen research methods and techniques (Welman, Kruger, & Mitchell, 2005). The subsequent sections highlight and justify the methodological choices made in this study.

4.4.1 Locating research subjects

For this study, the contact details of Indian female managers were obtained from Indian as well as non-Indian employees (key informants) working in lower level positions. The study that I was conducting and its objectives were then discussed briefly with the potential participants. Those participants who were interested in participating were contacted via email or telephone so that they could be given more information about the objectives of the study, as well as to request that they find out whether their husbands would be willing to participate as well. Each couple that met the criteria (refer to Section 4.4.3.1) and agreed to be interviewed was then contacted via telephone or email to enquire about their availability. A meeting was set up on a date and at a venue best suited to the participants. The participants in the study also served as informants, as they recommended other participants to form part of the study.

4.4.2 The research setting

The interviews were conducted face-to-face at a venue chosen by the respective participants to be the most convenient and where they would feel the most comfortable. Most of the interviews were conducted at the participants' homes, while the others were conducted at their workplaces or at my home when participants feared that their spouses or other family members would listen in to what they were saying.

4.4.3 The sampling methods employed

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) explain that there are two kinds of sampling methods that researchers may employ: probability sampling, whereby units in the population are chosen randomly; and non-probability sampling, which entails elements being selected purposely to mirror specific characteristics of individuals or groups within the population being sampled. For this study, which was qualitative in nature, it was not practical or theoretically sensible to make use of a random sampling technique, hence non-probability sampling methods were employed. Specifically, a combination of purposive and snowball sampling methods were used to recruit participants for the study.

4.4.3.1 *Purposive sampling*

In its most basic sense, a purposive sample is constructed to serve a very specific need or purpose (Sommer & Sommer, 2002). Specifically, this sampling strategy entails selecting specific individuals by virtue of characteristics considered by the researcher to be representative of the greater population and/or provide the most information about the issue under investigation (Barbour, 2008; Leedy & Omrod, 2010). It must be noted that the purposive sampling strategy is appropriate for the research design chosen for the present study, as qualitative research is aimed at contextualisation rather than generalisation (Saunders et al., 2009). However, a major drawback of this sampling strategy is that different researchers adopt different methods to extract a sample, thus it is impossible to assess the degree to which such samples are representative of the population (Welman et al., 2005). In order to allow other researchers to understand and assess the degree of representativeness of the chosen sample, I am transparent about the predetermined criteria that determined which couples would be invited to take part in the study, along with the rationale for these criteria. The criteria are as follows:

- ❖ **Both spouses had to be professionals with the wives occupying a managerial position.** Being a professional requires that individuals attach a certain level of importance to their work, as opposed to merely holding jobs. Thus, by investigating dual-career couples, interesting dynamics could be explored from both the work and home domains. The rationale behind this criterion that the wives should occupy a managerial position is that I wanted to explore the greater pressures faced from the work domain as one climbs up the career ladder, coupled with the personal dynamics that the wives face as a result of holding such a position relative to their husbands.
- ❖ **The participants followed either the Muslim or Hindu faith.** As stated previously, South African Indians predominately follow the religions of Hinduism or Islam. I was interested in exploring the religious and cultural contexts in which the perceptions reside and the impact thereof. Thus, participants from these religious denominations were included.
- ❖ **Both partners had to be Indian** (refer to Chapter 1 for the definition). As mentioned in the previous chapters, Indians are regarded as being a fairly

conservative and traditionally-bound cultural group. I believe that it is crucial to consider the participants' cultural context in order to understand the unique dynamics they face. Through this understanding, interventions can be implemented to assist in minimising the challenges faced by them, while capitalising on the talent that this ethnic minority group has to offer. There also is a dearth of literature that focuses specifically on South African Indian female professionals, thus this study will give Indian couples a voice so that this underrepresented group can be better understood.

- ❖ **Only heterosexual couples were included.** This was done to exclude other factors unique to homosexual couples that may impact on the results obtained.
- ❖ **Participants had to be married.** Marriage requires a greater commitment to one's family and to one's husband in particular. Thus, it was assumed that the inclusion of this criterion sets the scene for interesting dynamics to transpire, especially when coupled with the level of commitment required from professionals in the work domain.

The potential participants were screened before being interviewed to ensure that these criteria were met. Although age was not mentioned as a specific criterion, I aimed to include at least two couples from each age category, namely 25 to 34 years old; 35 to 44 years old; and 45 to 54 years old, to account for the generational differences and/or similarities in the perceptions held.

4.4.3.2 *Snowball sampling*

In addition to purposive sampling, snowball sampling was also used. Snowball sampling is a sub-set of purposive sampling in terms of which participants serve as informants by being asked to recommend potential participants for inclusion in the sample (Sommer & Sommer, 2002; Welman et al., 2005). This sampling method was used as it was not easy to find participants who matched the required criteria for this study, but through networking with other Indian couples I was directed to other potential candidates, who were contacted about inclusion in the study. However, this method, like all others, does not exist without its drawbacks. Ruddick (2007) has noted that snowball sampling results in a specific cohort of participants being included in the study, as well as results

being representative of a specific group. Thus, a combination of snowball and purposive sampling strategies was used to combat the associated drawbacks, while capitalising on the advantages of employing them.

4.4.3.3 *Description of the sample*

For the pilot study, one Muslim and one Hindu dual-career couple, that met the requirements for the main study, were interviewed. For the main study, the sample initially comprised of six dual-career Indian couples, which in turn resulted in twelve individuals being interviewed. This number of participants was deemed appropriate in terms of the research methodology, as well as the required scope of study. Although the data began showing signs of redundancy after the sixth couple was interviewed, a primary analysis of the data was conducted and additional participants were included until the researcher deemed the data to be saturated. Data saturation is the point in the study where no new insights would be attained from increasing the sample further (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The final sample consisted of nine dual-career couples, which resulted in eighteen individuals being included. Four couples were from the Hindu population and the other five were from the Muslim population.

A brief biographical questionnaire was provided to the participants to complete prior to the commencement of the interview. Kerlinger and Lee (2000) note that the collection of biographical information such as race, age, marital status, income, and education is vital, as it is used to ensure the adequacy of samples as well as to establish relationships between variables. The biographical information was also used to ensure that an even distribution of participants made up the sample. Each participant was allocated a pseudonym to ensure his/her anonymity and confidentiality. A summary of the participants' biographical information obtained from the biographical questionnaires and the interviews can be seen in Table 4.3 and Table 4.4. It must be noted that the spouses were shuffled around, such that Wife 1 is not necessarily married to Husband 1, Wife 2 is not necessarily married to Husband 2, and so forth.

This was done to ensure confidentiality of the information provided by the participants to prevent spouses from recognising what their partners have said based on the information they themselves have provided. Furthermore, information gathered from the biographical questionnaire, such as the participants' fields of work and job titles, have been excluded from the tables below due to certain instances where there was a single participant employed in a particular field. Such information was excluded to ensure the anonymity of participants is not compromised.

Table 4.3: Biographical summary of wives in the study

Pseudonym	Religion	Age range	Children	Job level relative to spouse	Earnings relative to spouse
Wife 1	Hindu	25-34	Yes	Higher	Similar
Wife 2	Muslim	45-54	Yes	Higher	Similar
Wife 3	Hindu	35-44	Yes	Equal	Lower
Wife 4	Muslim	45-54	Yes	Higher	Higher
Wife 5	Muslim	25-34	Yes	Higher	Lower
Wife 6	Muslim	35-44	Yes	Equal	Higher
Wife 7	Hindu	45-54	Yes	Higher	Similar
Wife 8	Muslim	25-34	Yes	Higher	Not aware
Wife 9	Hindu	45-54	Yes	Higher	Higher

Table 4.4: Biographical summary of husbands in the study

Pseudonym	Religion	Age range	Children	Job level relative to spouse	Earning relative to spouse
Husband 1	Muslim	45-54	Yes	Lower	Similar
Husband 2	Hindu	25-34	Yes	Lower	Similar
Husband 3	Muslim	45-54	Yes	Equal	Lower
Husband 4	Muslim	35-44	Yes	Lower	Not aware
Husband 5	Hindu	45-54	Yes	Lower	Similar
Husband 6	Hindu	45-54	Yes	Lower	Lower
Husband 7	Muslim	25-34	Yes	Lower	Higher
Husband 8	Muslim	45-54	Yes	Lower	Lower
Husband 9	Hindu	45-54	Yes	Equal	Higher

4.4.4 Data collection method: Interviews

In this section the method of data collection will be discussed. This entails a discussion of the interview procedure, the pilot study conducted, as well as the information obtained from the interview feedback form. Furthermore, in-depth, semi-structured, life story interviews are examined along with their associated advantages and drawbacks.

4.4.4.1 Interview procedure

In this study, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data on the basis of culture and personal history, as well as the participants' experiences and/or viewpoints. The process of conducting the interviews was as follows: at the beginning participants were informed of the purpose of the interview; I then obtained permission to record the interview; next, I explained the purpose of the consent form and requested participants to sign it if they were willing to participate, I then reiterated aspects mentioned in the consent form, such as anonymity and confidentiality, after which I requested that the participants complete the biographical questionnaire and told them a bit about myself. This is a method suggested by Welman et al. (2005) in order to build a relationship of mutual confidence and trust between the interviewer and the participant before proceeding with interviews in which the participant's innermost feelings and viewpoints would be revealed. I then commenced with the interview. Furthermore, husbands and wives were interviewed separately as it was deemed the most appropriate way to obtain truthful responses, as the information sought was of a sensitive nature as it required tapping into their personal lives and emotions.

4.4.4.2 In-depth interviews

One of the main types of data generated in qualitative research comes from the in-depth interview (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003). An interview is defined by Kvale (2005, p. 5) as "...a conversation with a purpose". In-depth interviews are most advantageous for obtaining data on individuals' personal histories, as well as their viewpoints and experiences, especially when exploring sensitive matters (Nkiwi, Nyamongo, & Ryan, 2001). In addition, Robson (2002) indicates that in-depth interviews are particularly

useful in gaining insight into the undertakings of individuals, as well as to seek out fresh perspectives on the phenomenon under study.

I was also made aware from discussions with other qualitative researchers, and from information provided by Bryman and Bell (2007), that the process of interviewing, transcribing the interviews, and analysing the transcripts is time consuming and can be tiresome. However, the decision to conduct in-depth interviews was based on the premise that cultural, marital, family, and organisational issues are sensitive in nature, which the participants would be reluctant to share by other methods. In addition, in-depth interviewing aided in achieving the aim of the research, which was to explore the perceptions comprehensively by taking into account the organisational, familial, and cultural contexts in which these perceptions reside. Thus, the use of in-depth interviews gave a human face to the study and offered the participants a rare chance to express their views on the subject.

The main drawbacks of this method are that participants can be uncooperative, especially when they know that the interview is being recorded, and that they might distort information to depict themselves favourably (De Vos et al., 2005). I took heed of these factors and aimed to minimise their occurrence by ensuring that the participants were put at ease before beginning to record the interview, as well as by building trust between myself and the participants so that they could feel comfortable and thus be open and honest in their responses. Additionally, in order to gain in-depth information, open-ended questions relating to the main research questions were asked. Open-ended questions allow participants freedom in their responses in that they may focus on the issues of greatest significance to them, as opposed to the entire schedule being determined by the interests of the researcher (Barbour, 2008). These types of questions also allow the interviewer to probe and ask follow-up questions in order to gain in-depth information and understanding on the phenomenon under study (O'Neil, 2010). This gave rise to a deeper, more complex, and more comprehensive understanding and exploration of the perceptions of Indian couples about the wives' career advancement. Furthermore, the rationale behind choosing this data collection method, coupled with a qualitative approach, was to clearly identify, provide an understanding, and describe the complexity of the issue at hand.

4.4.4.3 *Semi-structured interviews*

De Vos et al. (2005) highlight that semi-structured, one-to-one interviewing is a valuable data collection method to obtain in-depth information relating to the participants under study. These authors further explain that a semi-structured interview is one in which the researcher is guided by a pre-determined list of questions based on specific topics that he/she wants to cover, but the interviewee is given flexibility in his/her responses and the interviewer is given flexibility to include questions that arise as a result of the responses obtained. I chose this data collection method as it was deemed the best to elicit the rich, in-depth information required from the participants.

An interview guide was drawn up, which was the framework that guided the interview process. A semi-structured interview format was followed, with the questions being asked in a systematic way. Barbour (2008) states that it is usually best to start off with the least-threatening questions before gradually moving to questions that are more in-depth. Following this approach, the interviews began with questions pertaining to the participant's childhood to put them at ease, before moving to the personal questions relating to their marital life, which is a more sensitive area of investigation. Questions pertaining to the participants' childhood, societal and cultural background, religious beliefs, as well as their marital, work, and family lives formed part of the interview. In addition, I probed to shed light on unclear responses as well as to ensure that questions were answered completely (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). I was also mindful of the sensitive nature of the study in the formulation of the questions, as well as when probing. The questions were checked against the guidelines set out by De Vos et al. (2005, p. 297), which include that the questions should be neutral rather than leading, that jargon and ambiguous questions should be avoided, that open-ended questions should be asked, and that judgemental and biased questions should be avoided. Questions that did not meet these criteria were rephrased or excluded from the interview schedule.

4.4.4.4 *Life story interviews*

Atkinson (1998, p. 123) defines life story interviews as “a qualitative research method for gathering information on the subjective essence of one person’s entire life that is transferable across disciplines”. This method thus entails the reconstructed past, the perceived present and the anticipated future of the individual and is aimed at establishing an identity, given that a story is the greatest available structure that individuals have for integrating and making sense of a life in time (McAdams, Reynolds, Lewis, Patten, & Bowman, 2001, p. 475). Shamir and Eilam (2005) explain that, by revealing their life stories, participants attempt to understand reality in terms of the meaning such stories add to their self-concepts and their lives in general.

This interview method also aids in understanding the manner in which individuals adopt different roles in society (Cohler, 1993). This approach can be seen as intrusive, as it enquires into the participants’ personal lives, although a vantage point is that a deeper understanding of phenomena can be obtained (Biesta, Hodkinson, & Goodson, 2005). Atkinson (1998) points out that this approach has advantages for both the researcher and the participants, in that it allows participants to simultaneously view their lives objectively and subjectively while given support in forming identities, as well as aids researchers in affirming, validating, and supporting the social experiences and relationships of the participants. These advantages were capitalised on through the life story approach, which aids in understanding the participants’: development and personality (McAdams, 1993); cultural similarities and variations (Abu-Lughod, 1993); and relationships, group interactions, and memberships (Linde, 1993).

Furthermore, Rounds (2006, p. 136) declares that “life is understood backwards but lived forward”. Thus, it is crucial to understand the participant’s background, as it has an impact on their current and future life. The life story interview approach used in this study is based on the premise that individuals do not exist in isolation, due to various historical factors and experiences shaping who they are and moulding their perceptions. Thus, in order to truly understand the perceptions and viewpoints of the participants in the study, life-story interviews were conducted. The questions were structured by focusing firstly on the participants’ childhood, then their young adult years, followed by

their marital life. Concurrently, they were questioned on aspects relating to the impact of apartheid, culture, religion, family, and work dynamics on their lives. Aspects of their life story that were not relevant to the study were excluded. In sum, the life story approach was used in this study to link the participants' childhood to adulthood in order to obtain a holistic understanding of the perceptions they hold towards their wives' career advancement.

4.4.4.5 *Pilot study*

Pilot interviews were carried out in preparation for the main interviews. Pilot testing is "...a small-scale trial run of all the aspects planned for use in the main study" (Monette, Sullivan, & DeJong, 2002, p. 9). Pilot tests assist the researcher in determining whether there are any restrictions, flaws, or other weaknesses in the interview design, and allow the researcher to make the required modifications prior to the execution of the study (Kvale, 2007). In order to obtain this information, Turner (2010), suggests that the pilot tests be conducted with participants who have similar interests, characteristics, and/or qualities to those who will participate in the main study. This is done to ensure that pertinent information is obtained from the correct participants (Rose, as cited in De Vos et al., 2005).

Taking the above into account, as well as the feasibility and time constraints, two pilot tests were conducted on couples meeting the requirements for the main study (refer to Section 4.4.3.1). For the pilot study, one Muslim and one Hindu dual-career couple was interviewed. Upon conclusion of the interview, a debriefing session was held in which the participants were asked about their experience of the interview process, questions that were identified as being unclear were modified, and the interview schedule was improved for the main study. I also ascertained whether the proposed questions elicited the required information and where it did not, alterations were made. Through the pilot study I also was able to familiarise myself with the questions and the interviewing process, which allowed me to be better prepared in the main study. I also learnt that I would need to probe more with regard to aspects relating to the participants' current marital lives, as greater depth of information was required, especially from the men. The

information obtained from the pilot interviews was analysed to generate themes that were explored further in the main study.

4.4.4.6 Interview feedback form

Field notes in the form of an interview feedback form (refer to Appendix A) were recorded. Field notes are detailed observations and notes taken down by the researcher (Welman et al., 2005). The notes were used to record the facial expressions, body language, and tone of the interviewees. In addition, reflective notes were recorded on the feedback form. These notes include my subjective thoughts, which include my “speculation, feelings, problems, ideas, hunches, impressions, and prejudices” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 121). Furthermore, contextual information about the time, place, and date, as well as any other interesting or valuable events surrounding the interviews were noted on the interview feedback form after the interviews were conducted. In some of the interviews, valuable information was mentioned by the participants after the recorder had been switched off. Where possible, I switched the recorder back on, or took notes on the interview feedback form while they were speaking or immediately thereafter. This information was used in the triangulation of data as well as in order to contextualise the data in preparation for the analysis.

4.4.5 Data recording

Once permission to record the interviews was obtained from the participants, the interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder and then transcribed verbatim for further analysis. The advantages and disadvantages of audio-recording interviews according to Saunders et al. (2009, p. 341) are summarised in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Advantages and disadvantages of audio-recording the interview

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Allows interviewer to concentrate on questioning and listening ❖ Allows questions formulated during an interview to be accurately recorded for use in later interviews, where appropriate ❖ Can re-listen to the interview ❖ Accurate and unbiased record provided ❖ Allows direct quotes to be used ❖ Permanent record for others to use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ May adversely affect the relationship between interviewee and interviewer (possibility of ‘focusing’ on the audio-recorder) ❖ May inhibit some interviewee responses and reduce reliability ❖ Possibility of a technical problem ❖ Time required to transcribe the audio-recording

Source: Saunders et al. (2009, p. 341)

In line with the purpose of the interviews, the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages, and thus the decision to record the interviews was made. Having verbatim accounts of what the participants said was crucial in the reporting of the data as direct quotations are used, as well as in the data analysis phase. To reduce the possible disadvantages I used two recording devices in case of any technical complications. I also began the interviews with a brief explanation of why the interview needed to be recorded, reassured the interviewees of confidentiality, and requested their consent before proceeding to record the interviews. Furthermore, the interviews started with general questions in order to put the participants at ease and to build a relationship of mutual trust.

4.4.6 Data analysis and interpretation

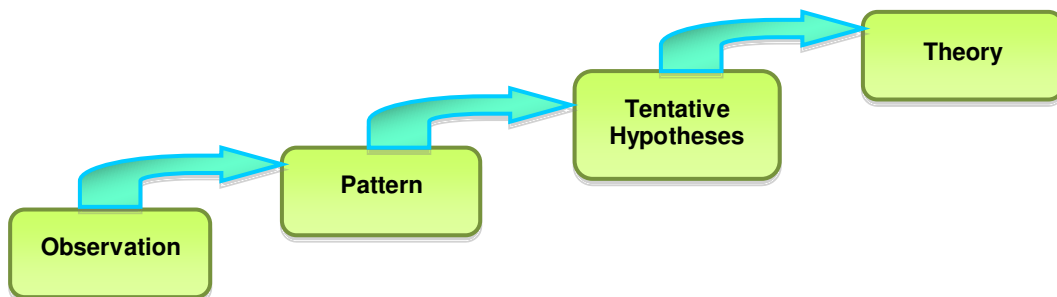
The data analysis phase in the qualitative research process involves making sense of the data collected (Creswell, 2009). Specifically, it brings order, meaning and structure to the large amount of data collected (De Vos et al., 2005). Babbie (2007) explains that data analysis involves interpreting the accumulated data with the aim of revealing patterns of relationships and underlying meanings. The subsequent sections detail the analysis strategy as well as the process of data analysis followed in this study.

4.4.6.1 *Strategy of analysis: Thematic content analysis*

Content analysis is broadly defined as a family of systematic, rule-guided procedures used for data analysis (Mayring, 2000). Specifically, Maree (2010, p. 101) explains that content analysis “is a process of looking at data from different angles with a view to identifying keys in the text that will help us to understand and interpret the raw data”. By using content analysis, words can be distilled into smaller amounts of content-related categories, as it is believed that when words, phrases, and so forth are categorised they share the same meaning (Cavanagh, 1997). Ritchie and Lewis (2003) note that, with content analysis, both the content and context of the information are analysed. Thus, in essence, the goal of qualitative content analysis is to obtain a summarised, yet broad portrayal of the phenomenon, with the aim being to obtain ideas or categories that portray the phenomenon (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Content analysis was used in this study to analyse the responses obtained from the qualitative interviews in order to gain a better understanding, attain new insights, and make sense of the data.

Content analysis also fits in with the qualitative-inductive approach adopted in this study, as content analysis is an inductive process (Maree, 2010). An inductive approach was deemed most appropriate due to the exploratory nature of the study. Bryman and Bell (2007, p. 14) explain that the inductive process involves “drawing generalizable inferences out of observations”. Specifically, Babbie (2001) notes that inductive reasoning involves a shift from a set of particular observations to the uncovering of a pattern that represents a certain degree of order among all given events. Furthermore, with the inductive approach findings precede theory (Trochim, 2006a), as depicted in Figure 4.2, which illustrates the inductive process followed. In relation to an under-researched topic such as the current one, drawing themes inductively is valuable (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). Content analysis was therefore used to channel the inductive process.

Figure 4.2: The inductive process



Source: Trochim (2006a, p. 1)

Interpretive content analysis is also termed ‘thematic analysis’ (Schwandt, 2007). Thematic analysis, as the name suggests, is “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Themes are explained as ‘umbrella’ constructs, which represent a specific pattern found in the data (Joffe & Yardley, 2004; Welman et al., 2005). Applied thematic analysis is the result of a blending of the more useful techniques from grounded theory, positivism, interpretivism, and phenomenology, which are adapted to an applied research context (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). In this study, thematic analysis was used to analyse the data.

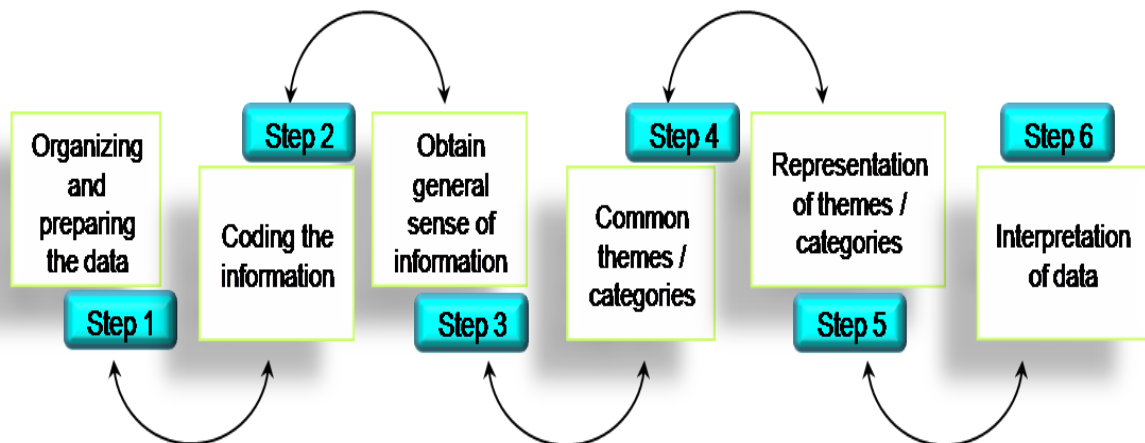
The advantages of thematic analysis is that it is relatively easy to conduct; it allows for a rich and detailed analysis of the data to be presented; and it is flexible as it allows for a wide range of epistemologies, research questions, and analytical options to be employed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Guest et al. (2012) also note that it is the most useful analysis method for obtaining the complexities of meaning from the collected data. However, Braun and Clarke (2006) have also identified common pitfalls of thematic analysis, which include paraphrasing the data content, which actually results in the data not being analysed at all; using the data collection schedule as the reported themes; non-coherence and inconsistency in the generation of themes; failure to support the analytical claims with data extracts; as well as a mismatch between the theoretical frameworks and the analytical claims made. They suggest that the researcher should take heed of these pitfalls to avoid a poor analysis of the data. Regardless of the potential pitfalls, thematic analysis was deemed the best suited analysis method for the

current study, as my aim was to obtain an in-depth and detailed analysis of the data collected. I was aware of the pitfalls and ensured that they were avoided, while ensuring that the analysis was steered by the research questions and the theoretical assumptions.

4.4.6.2 Process of data analysis

Figure 4.3 depicts the process that was followed for the analysis of the data (Creswell, 2009). It should be noted that the various stages are interrelated (Creswell, 2009), and thus an ‘iterative’ process was followed, which is a “repetitive interplay between the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 582), as opposed to a linear one. Thus, a flexible approach between the various stages was adopted which entailed that a pre-analysis be done of the data while some of the data was still being obtained. This aided in realising when data saturation was reached.

Figure 4.3: Process of data analysis



Source: Adapted from Creswell (2009, p. 185)

The first step in the process involved organising and preparing the data for analysis. I began by transcribing the interview recordings verbatim. Actual quotations are used when I present the results on my findings in Chapters 5 and 6, as well as in the data analysis. Thus, it was necessary to transcribe the data collected from the interviews verbatim. The interview feedback form, which contained the field notes, was typed out in order for all the data to be available electronically in preparation for the data analysis phase. This was followed by ‘data cleaning’, which is the process of ensuring that the

transcriptions as well as the associated field notes are accurate, complete, and free from any errors (Saunders et al., 2009). Other considerations in the preparation of the data, as highlighted by Saunders et al. (2009), were also taken into account. These included ensuring the anonymity of the participants by removing all identifying information from the transcripts and the field notes, as well as saving the files with a filename that does not reveal their identity. Furthermore, the data was stored appropriately and consistently for analysis using the Atlas.ti program (refer to Section 4.4.6.3 for a more in-depth discussion on this program).

Next, a general sense of the data was obtained by reading through all the information gathered, as well as reflecting on the findings to date. The interview transcripts were read several times concurrently with the field notes in order to obtain an overall picture of the data, as well the general context of the results. Furthermore, during this stage, key pieces of text were highlighted and notes were made for use in the subsequent stages of the analysis.

The third step in the process involved initiating a comprehensive analysis with a coding process. The coding process involves classifying or categorising the raw data (Babbie, 2007). This entails that the data be broken down into different segments in order to bring meaning to it (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). One of the main criticisms of qualitative data analysis is the issue of losing the context of what was said when coding segments of text, as the process fragments the data (Bryman & Bell, 2007). I was also aware that the coding process is more complex in qualitative research than in quantitative research, as words usually have multiple meanings, which numbers do not (Welman et al., 2005). These drawbacks were combated, as initial codes were generated by systematically working through all of the data. A data analysis software package called Atlas.ti aided in generating the codes systematically as well as inclusively so that the context was not lost.

In the fourth step the researcher has to make sense out of the data that was revealed and collate the codes into themes, which are described as sections or groups of data (Creswell, 2009). This involved sorting and grouping together codes to generate common themes or categories that emerged according to the context of the data.

Atlas.ti was used for the processing of the coded data, which involved clustering codes into families and networks to depict relationships in a clear and easy manner.

The fifth step was to review the themes. This was done in order to determine the validity of individual themes, as well as the validity of the collection of themes relative to the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This phase entailed a discussion with my supervisor of the chronology of events, an in-depth discussion of the themes that emerged and the rationale behind generating them, as well as the interconnection of these themes. I then refined the themes until they were satisfactory.

Once the themes have been generated, the final step involves an interpretation of the data by testing the findings against previous literature and theories, as well as reflecting on the lessons that have been learnt throughout the study. A comprehensive understanding was formed during the data analysis, as I dissected the data in such a way that I could create a holistic picture of the underlying meaning behind the participants' perceptions and an understanding thereof. This was reported in a coherent, non-repetitive, logical, and concise manner, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006).

4.4.6.3 *Data analysis using Atlas.ti*

Atlas.ti is a computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) program (Silver, 2006). Rubin and Rubin (2005) note that CAQDAS programs are advantageous as they allow the researcher to instantaneously regroup interview data, thereby enhancing the researcher's ability to connect concepts and themes, refine them, and trace evidence. Atlas.ti specifically provides various tools that enhance flexibility and facilitate analytical development (Silver, 2006). According to Silver (2006), the program supports the management of data and enables the creation of networks to assist in the theory-building process. Atlas.ti was chosen as it was deemed the most appropriate CAQDAS program to achieve the study's aims. The data collected was stored appropriately and consistently for analysis using the Atlas.ti program. In addition, a qualitative codebook was created with this program that was used to record the codes applied. Atlas.ti was further used for the processing of the coded data, which involved

clustering codes into families and networks to depict relationships in a clear and easy manner.

Certain drawbacks were brought to my attention, such that computer software can overwhelm the researcher by offering a wide variety of possibilities (Rubin & Rubin, 2005) and requiring time and skill to be utilised effectively (Creswell, 2009). I attended two training workshops on the use of Atlas.ti and used the program in another project, after which I felt adequately equipped to use the program and benefit from the advantages that it has to offer.

4.5 ASSESSING AND DEMONSTRATING THE QUALITY AND RIGOUR OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Two crucial considerations for ensuring the quality and rigour of a research design are validity and reliability (Patton, 2002). On the one hand, qualitative validity entails that the researcher adopts certain measures to check for the truthfulness of results (Creswell, 2009). On the other hand, Creswell (2009) notes that qualitative reliability deals with whether the approach adopted by the researcher is consistent across various researchers and research endeavours. Due to the qualitative nature of this study, no statistical techniques were adopted to ensure reliability and validity. The evaluation criteria for qualitative studies as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were used for this study, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria serve as alternative terms to the traditional quantitative criteria used to ensure the quality of good research (Schurink, 2009). Table 4.6 is a depiction of the terms used in quantitative research, along with the corresponding terms employed in qualitative research. The subsequent sections explain these criteria in greater detail.

Table 4.6: Qualitative versus quantitative terms to ensure quality research

Quantitative term	Qualitative term
Internal validity	Credibility
External validity	Transferability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Confirmability

Source: Trochim (2006b, p 1)

4.5.1 Credibility

Credibility involves confidence in the truth of data by determining how accurately the findings of the study represent the reality of the phenomenon under study (Polit & Hungler, 1999; Shenton, 2004). In essence it deals with “how believable are the findings?” (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 43). Bryman and Bell (2007) further state that it is vital to ensure credibility in research, as multiple accounts of social reality can be construed, and thus the credibility will determine its acceptability to others.

One strategy employed to ensure the credibility of this study was triangulation of the data. Triangulation is an approach whereby “multiple observers, theoretical perspectives, sources of data, and methodologies are used” (Denzin, 1970, p. 310). As a result, employing numerous methods such as interviews, recordings, and observations enable more legitimate, consistent, and diverse constructions of reality to emerge (Golafshani, 2003). In the current study, triangulation of the various sources of data, including the actual interviews, recordings, and primary observations, was done by scrutinising them to build a coherent justification for the themes that had emerged. I also consulted with other Indian individuals who had greater insight into the Indian culture and the religions of Islam and Hinduism, as well as individuals who had lived through the apartheid era. I followed discussions relating to the topic on a Facebook group called *Ask Chaachi Ma Fans* (ACMF), which consists of 12 400 individuals of whom the majority are Indians from South Africa (an example of such a discussion can be seen in Appendix B). This was done to provide further insight into and understanding of these

perceptions. Furthermore, I aimed to reduce bias in the data collection process by interviewing both husbands and wives to verify the accuracy of the information provided.

Secondly, during the data collection process I used various communication techniques, as suggested by De Vos et al. (2005), which included probing, paraphrasing, summarising, clarifying, and reflecting, to ensure that I understood the message being conveyed correctly. I further aimed to develop a relationship of mutual trust between myself and the participants by explaining to them the purpose of the study and the process to be followed, as well as obtaining their consent before proceeding with the interviews.

Thirdly, in order to ensure an objective assessment of the study's results, another qualitative researcher who was not familiar with the research project was requested to review the entire project and to validate the conclusions drawn from the data. Meetings also were held with my supervisor (Dr N. Carrim), who audited the entire research project and provided feedback on the accuracy of the findings.

Fourthly, member checks were conducted to validate the information provided (Creswell, 2009). After the final analysis the themes were presented to the participants to determine whether they believed the themes and interpretations were accurate and true.

4.5.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of the data can be generalised or transferred to other settings or groups with relative confidence (De Vos et al., 2005). In this study, thick, rich descriptions of the participants and contexts were provided to enhance transferability, as suggested by Maree (2010). In addition, detailed descriptions were provided of the research approach and design so that another researcher would be able to understand and apply the design and approach to his/her study with relative confidence. Furthermore, a purposive sampling method was used to enhance transferability, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) (refer to Section 4.4.3.1).

4.5.3 Dependability

Dependability is described as the constancy of the researcher's decisions, choices, and analysis over time and over conditions (Polit & Hungler, 1999). In essence, dependability deals with the question, "Are the findings likely to apply at all other times?" (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 43). Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that, in order to enhance the dependability of the research, the researcher should assume an 'audit' approach. They explain that this can be achieved by keeping records throughout all phases of the research process, from problem formulation to data analysis and beyond.

In this study, records were kept of all the research meetings, interview recordings, interview transcripts, raw notes, correspondence with participants, personal memos, as well as data analysis decisions. All documents were stored electronically, in line with the requirements of the University of Pretoria Ethics Committee. A comprehensive depiction of the research process followed is also provided to determine how consistent I was throughout the process and to illustrate to other researchers how the study may be replicated.

4.5.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is concerned with the objectivity or neutrality of the data, by making certain that the researcher has been ethical and has not overtly allowed his or her individual biases, values, or theoretical inclination to impact on the study's approach and results (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Polit & Hungler, 1999).

Pilot interviews were conducted in order to ensure that the requirement of confirmability was met by bringing to my attention any form of bias that was present so that modifications could be made to mitigate the possible bias. Triangulation (as discussed in Section 4.5.2) was also used to minimise my personal bias. In addition, all data, documents, memos and notes were kept and are available to other researchers who wish to verify the results of this study after publication. It is a daunting task to entirely exclude bias when collecting qualitative data, thus self-reflection was done by keeping a journal. In this journal I recorded my thoughts and feelings to identify my own biases throughout the research process and how they ultimately may have had an impact on

the validity of the study. This is known as ‘reflexivity’, which is used to discover and understand the various elements that have an impact on the research process (Nadin & Cassell, 2006). The reflections on my research voyage are presented in Chapter 9.

4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLIED

Ethics in social research refers to the “moral deliberation, choice and accountability on the part of the researcher throughout the research process” (Edwards & Mauthner, 2002, p. 15). Ethical considerations and strategies were employed throughout the research process, as suggested by Creswell (2009) and O’Neil (2010). These included:

- *Ethical clearance*: The necessary permission from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of Pretoria was obtained prior to embarking on the research project. This was done to ensure that the proposed research plans were ethically compliant. In addition, the University of Pretoria’s Code of Ethics for Research (refer to Appendix C). served as a guide in conducting the research
- *Protection from harm*: It was crucial to ensure that the study did not pose any physical, psychological or emotional harm to the participants. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, the participants were informed that they may experience a degree of emotional discomfort during the data collection process. They also were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any point or skip any questions with which they felt uncomfortable. They were also informed of the purpose and nature of the study prior to the commencement of the interview.
- *Informed consent*: A letter of informed consent (refer to Appendix D) was drafted and signed by the participants prior to the interviews. This was used to ensure that the participants were informed of the nature and purpose of the study, that they were not put at risk, that their participation was voluntary, to assure them that their anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed, and to inform them how the results would be used and whom to contact should they have any questions regarding the study.

- *Participants' involvement in the research:* The participants were encouraged to ask the interviewer to clarify any issues that they were unsure of.
- *Data protection:* The assurance of confidentiality was reiterated throughout the data collection process. In order to ensure the confidentiality of the information obtained, all identifying information was removed from the transcripts and pseudonyms were assigned to the participants. The pseudonyms were used in the analysis, during discussions, as well as in the writing up of the findings.
- *Data analysis and interpretation:* Various validation strategies were put implemented (refer to Section 4.5) to ensure that the findings of the research are portrayed as fairly and accurately as possible.
- *Data storage:* The data will be stored in a safe place so that other researchers who wish to conduct follow-up studies relating to this topic may peruse the data, once consent has been obtained from the participants.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter delineated and explained the research design and methodology for this study. In line with the aim of the research, an exploratory qualitative strategy was chosen to understand the perceptions that dual-career Indian couples have of women's career advancement. My ontological and epistemic beliefs in relation to this study were stated in order to account for the impact these beliefs might have had on the present study. The research methodology adopted in this study was also explained in that data was collected from dual-career Indian couples through in-depth semi-structured interviews. Thematic content analysis was the chosen strategy to analyse the data. Lastly, the ethical considerations related to the study were also highlighted.

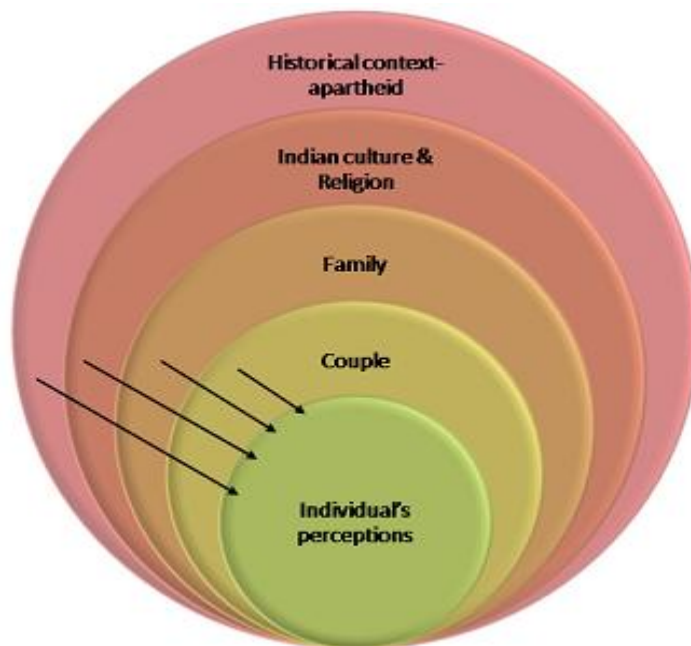
In the next chapter the results of the study are presented together with a comprehensive discussion of the themes that emerged.

CHAPTER 5: PARTICIPANTS' PRE-MARITAL LIFE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, “Life is understood backwards but lived forward” (Rounds, 2006, p. 136). I therefore delved into the pre-marital life of participants in order to obtain a holistic picture of their lives, with the ultimate aim of gaining a greater understanding of the perceptions they hold of women’s career advancement. Similar to Carrim (2012), I approached this analysis by adopting a framework that embraced the various life contexts of the individuals under study. I adapted this framework by adding a concentric circle to include the inner couple context, as it is the crux of my study. This framework can be seen in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Individual's life contexts



Source: Adapted from Carrim (2012, p. 101)

This investigation includes the position of Indians and the impact of the broader socio-historic context of South Africa, namely the impact of apartheid on them, as well as the familial, cultural, and religious contexts in which the participants were raised. I approached the study from this stance, as these various life contexts play a crucial role in shaping the identities of individuals, as well as moulds the perceptions that they hold (Carrim, 2012). Thus, these life contexts will form the basis for understanding the findings relating to the perceptions the couples hold. In this chapter I share my understanding of these influences on the nine couples who participated in the study.

In Chapter 6 I discuss the marital life of the participants by exploring the inner-couple dynamics, balancing of work and family life, as well as the current viewpoints regarding women's career advancement.

5.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF PARTICIPANTS – APARTHEID

In this section I dissect the outermost layer of the individual's life context framework (refer to Figure 5.1) to understand the impact of apartheid in shaping the participants' perceptions regarding women's career advancement. This involves a discussion of racial discrimination during the apartheid era, which includes residential and educational segregation, as well as limited educational opportunities. A discussion surrounding the emancipation of Indian women from the apartheid rule is also presented.

5.2.1 Racial discrimination during the apartheid era

The apartheid era was an oppressive period, where segregation on the grounds of race was rife in virtually all aspects of individuals' lives. This included separate entrances to restaurants, separate beaches, public toilets, residential areas, and benches to sit on, as well as separate modes of transport, parks, and so forth. All were clearly demarcated through the use of signs stating 'For Whites Only'. As a result, Indians were aware of the differences between them and white people, as the whites were given preference and viewed as being superior. The participants in this study made mention of at least one incident of racial discrimination that they vividly remember. Husband 3 provided an example of such an incident:

“During the apartheid era we were separate. Blacks were on the one side of us, we were in the middle, and then the whites had the best of both situations. There was a time when we were in Boksburg my grandmother took us to see how the train works and there was a little lake, there’s slides and swings and things like that and me and my little brother went to play on that which was the regular thing we used to go there and play. There was this white gentleman, the security guard, he came up to us and said ‘What nationality are you?’ I said we Indian and he said ‘I’m so sorry but you not allowed to play here’. So I tried to explain to my little brother that he can’t play here and he cried. This is the way it is was you got to understand it, that was not our place. So that culture I grew up with, with the understanding that there was a place for everybody: Blacks had a certain place, Indians had a certain place, coloureds had a certain place and the whites had a certain position.”

5.2.1.1 Residential segregation during apartheid

On the basis of the Group Areas Act (Act No. 41 of 1950) there was segregation of residential areas along racial lines. Although the areas where the participants resided were home predominately to Indian families, they also described their communities as being “mixed”. The term “mixed” included coloured and black individuals with whom they lived, worked, or went to school, while the white racial grouping was excluded, as they were separated through legislation. It must be noted that, although the majority of participants grew up in predominately Indian communities, no religious segregation occurred, as Hindus, Muslims and other religious denominations lived among each other. The residential circumstance of Wife 6 mirrors that of the majority of participants during the apartheid era:

“We grew up in the apartheid era so there were specific areas for different races. So in my town as well certain areas were just for the Indians.”

5.2.1.2 *Educational segregation and limited educational opportunities during apartheid*

Educational institutions were also separated, so that black (Indian, coloured, and African) individuals attended different educational institutions to that of their white counterparts. A restriction was also placed on the entry of black individuals, as they had to apply for ministerial consent to attend certain universities. The majority of participants attended the University of Durban Westville, which was described as an ‘all Indian’ university. There was a quota system that placed a barrier on certain non-white individuals from pursuing tertiary education at white universities, as Wife 6 explained:

“During the university years it was an era where you couldn’t just apply to go to university, you had to first go and write to the Minister of Education to get his permission and you had to motivate why you needed to go to university – because you fell within the quota system. In that quota system, majority percentage was allocated to whites and a very small percentage to blacks, Indians, and coloureds. So you had to fall within that percentage to get to university. I was lucky I actually got in but a lot of my friends didn’t get in because the quota was filled. People didn’t get to actually go and study because they didn’t get permission.”

This was the first hurdle they had to overcome, as once they entered the institutions their student life consisted of protests, marches, boycotts, and all-night vigils to overcome the oppressive apartheid regime. This had a negative impact on their education, as they had to extend their studies due to the intermittence of certain courses as a result of the riots that occurred. Even those who chose not to participate in the revolutionary activities were affected, such as in the case of Wife 9:

“There was all this rioting to the extent that for three months in my second year we didn’t go and we had to repeat second year because of the riots and the boycotting and things like that. That was in nineteen-eighty I think. So it did affect my life and my career, but I was not an activist. I suppose because I came from a poor home and I knew how difficult it was to qualify. Somebody was paying for my studies and things, I had to be very careful, I

couldn't you know become radical and there was no one in my family that was politically radical.”

Regardless of the challenges experienced, the participants explained that the University of Durban Westville produced excellent professionals and was a world-renowned university. As a means to overcome the atrocities of apartheid, the lecturers were motivated to provide a comparable level of education to that received by the white students. This is highlighted by Wife 4:

*“Although we went to institutions where there were only Indians or only blacks, our **teachers** were **very** intelligent and **determined** to give us an equal education to the white students. We didn't get an inferior education and some of our lecturers or most of our lecturers had studied overseas and they came back to South Africa and **they taught us**. So we were on par with international standards – especially the university where **I** studied.”*

Due to the Job Reservation Act of 1926, Indians could pursue education primarily in the fields of medicine, teaching, and accounting. Barriers were placed on individuals with regard to their entrance into university, as well as in terms of the educational paths they could pursue. Thus, Indian women who sought tertiary education and became professionals were in the minority and were regarded as the exception rather than the rule.

The next section details the predominant roles of Indian women within the macro-environment during the apartheid era.

5.2.2 Indian women breaking free from the clutches of apartheid

Due to their pursuit of education and engagement in professional employment, Indian women were beginning to craft cracks in the apartheid system. Surprisingly, a common theme that emerged, specifically among the female participants, was that the oppression of apartheid served as a motivating force that encouraged these women to put extra effort into their studies, as well as to work harder in their professions. This was

done because it was seen as an escape route through which Indian women could triumph over the apartheid regime. Wife 4 echoes the sentiments of many of the women:

“I felt that this would be one way of getting on top of things. If I had a career I’d be self-sufficient because apartheid was very oppressive. I’d be able to earn if I had a profession. If I became a doctor or a teacher or something, that would help us to find a way through the apartheid system. We didn’t know whether there was going to be civil war, so I also wanted to get a career so that I may want to leave the country at some stage and you could only do that if you had a career.”

Nevertheless, there were a significant number of Indian women who remained housewives, even though many women were forced to seek employment due to the rising cost of living. Most Indian women who worked were involved in low-level jobs such as secretarial or administrative posts, while others assisted their husbands in their businesses because apartheid laws restricted them from pursuing careers of significance to them. As a result of the women’s limited opportunities for career progression, men remained the breadwinners in the home while the wife’s financial contribution was limited. The women who went against the apartheid system were in the minority as they were the cream of the crop in terms of academic achievements, and worked extremely hard in order to gain such positions and remain in them. Husband 8 encapsulates the barriers placed on working women:

“It was more encouraged for men to work. The opportunities were there for men. Very few and limited opportunities for women. They occupied secretarial functions, nursing functions, and teaching functions but that was about where they went. Management and senior management was exclusively reserved for the whites and for the male. So, at that stage there weren’t opportunities like you have now for women advancement. They were not major players in the economy. If you look at it today, women have advanced in all careers, in all fields, they are there in every sector of the economy, they are holding senior positions, and their career advancement is

unlimited. In those days it was not like that. If they were really exceptional they would progress to a certain level but that was up to where they would progress, they couldn't go beyond that even if they had the capabilities to go beyond that."

The participants also noted that the restrictions of apartheid were not the sole reason for Indian women not pursuing higher-level careers, as it was also a personal decision made by the women. Although the opportunities were limited, there were career opportunities available to them, as Husband 4 explained:

"They were more involved in secretarial, administration, and the lower-level jobs, even though it was in big institutions. Personally I think a lot of women were happy doing that. I don't think they wanted the responsibility as such. My sister, I know at one stage she was in a major dilemma because they wanted to promote her and she didn't want the promotion."

In addition to apartheid and its restrictions, the Indian culture also had a significant impact on the career advancement of women. This will be discussed in the next section.

5.3 IMPACT OF INDIAN CULTURE ON THE CAREER ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

In this section I analyse the second last layer of the individual's life contexts framework (refer to Figure 5.1) to understand the impact of the Indian culture in moulding the participants' perceptions regarding women's career advancement. This analysis involves an understanding of the Indian cultural values, as well as how they tie in with the roles allocated to Indian women.

5.3.1 Indian cultural values

The Indian culture was described by the participants as being very traditional and conservative compared to the other cultural groups. The participants noted that male-dominance was emphasised in the Indian culture, as women were inherently treated

differently to men, as the women are sheltered and protected by their fathers or male family members. Husband 3 explained:

*“The women weren’t able to do anything and everything. Being out on the street was of course a big no-no, standing out with boys on the corner was a big problem, you don’t go to parties, you don’t go to things like we can go to now. That was totally taboo – the girls were always kept under strict wraps. My sisters, from the way my parents treated the females in the house, if they went anywhere for any school function or whatever, I **had** to go with. They had to be chaperoned.”*

This tied in closely with the emphasis placed on upholding the family’s reputation, as the family’s reputation is a core aspect amongst Indian families. The family therefore existed as part of a larger community that to a great extent dictated how the family operated. Thus ‘showing face’ was important, even under trying circumstances, as Husband 3 explained:

*“My mom was married to an Indian guy. He was **very** abusive and violent with us and I was the eldest at the time. She always showed this prim and proper face. Like there’s **no** problem at home, everything was beautiful and rosy.”*

The institution of marriage also holds a lot of weight in the Indian culture. Parents’ approval or choice of spouse for their children is required in order for the marriage to be viewed as blessed. Wife 7 explained how she was shunned by her family and community for walking out of her home and marrying a person that her family disapproved of:

“Coming from a very orthodox background, my parents were very well-known in the community. Also the background that they came from was very much the old Gujarati principles coming from India. My parents were not in favour of me getting married to my first husband so when I turned twenty-one I just decided that I needed a change, I wanted to actually find my way. I used to

be scared of just being at home with family, just following the set lifestyle. So when I turned twenty-one I walked out of the house and got married. When I left home, I basically lost a lot of respect in the community and people actually looked down upon me. They felt maybe there was something lacking in my upbringing and I don't think it was that because we were quite a close family and I think my mom did a fantastic job. When we were married things just didn't work out so we decided to go our separate ways. I lost a lot of respect in society because the family that I came from was very orthodox and my family actually didn't have anything to do with me for almost twenty-two years. So I was basically a single parent that had to raise two kids and I just needed support, I only had the support of my friends."

The cultural values mentioned above are portrayed in the roles assigned to Indian women, which are explored in the next section.

5.3.2 Roles of women in the Indian culture

The majority of both male and female participants in the study were in agreement that stereotyped gender roles existed in the Indian community. Specifically, the predominant role of Indian women at the time when they were growing up was that of being housewives. This entailed that they were held primarily responsible for the upkeep of their homes, ensuring their children were well taken care of, providing meals for their families and being submissive to their husbands. The words of Husband 8 describe the role of women in the Indian culture, as concurred by the majority of participants in the study:

"Well majority of the women were housewives. When they grew up they married, they looked after the household, and they brought up the children. They were all predominantly housewives. I think when we grew up the life was different; the men were the breadwinners, they earned a living, they saw to the financial aspect of the house and the income. The women saw to the domestic function and bringing up the children."

Even though the majority of women were housewives, the participants indicated that women were beginning to educate themselves. It must be noted that most of the participants responded to the education of Indian women by making reference to the younger generation of Indian women in the era in which they were raised, as in they referred to them as “girls” rather than ladies or women. Thus a transformation was occurring in that the mothers at the time were predominantly housewives, while the younger Indian women were educating themselves. The participants did note, however, that although a large number of women pursued education, it was the beginning and the end of the path for them, as many did not continue to work due to either a personal choice or as per the dictate of the spouse. Wife 5 explained that this was a common occurrence among her contemporaries:

“I think at the time when I was studying a lot of other families in this community were also encouraging their daughters to study. Although a lot of my friends would come to university just to study but never to work. So I think at that time they would just say they are coming to study but they are not really going to work. There were very few of them who actually said that they wanted to work.”

Wife 1 recalled a friend of hers who did not continue to work, even though she was educated, because of her in-laws’ preference:

“...I can think of one that dropped out of working. She was a qualified lawyer but she’s a Muslim girl and I think she married into a very orthodox Muslim family, so she stopped.”

Thus, parents who were educating their girls were condemned by the Indian community, as pointed out by Wife 6:

“At that stage when we went to university, most families didn’t actually send their daughters to university. They felt that it was not necessary – a woman’s place is at home, she’s going to get married and have kids. Okay send her to do a degree now and then when she gets married and has kids then you’ve

wasted all your money as she just stays at home and does nothing. I think that was the attitude of the community and of our culture. Perhaps it was well founded because a lot of women do degrees (laughs) and do nothing with it thereafter. So I think my father received a fair amount of criticism from the family, ‘Why you wasting money? You know they are going to get married and whatever’. But it wasn’t something he did for himself, making us educated. He did it for us you know. It wasn’t for him an issue that ‘okay I’ve paid for the education but what will they pay me back?’ I think maybe that’s why a lot of people are reluctant to educate their kids because they spend a lot of money on them and once they get married and go out into their own world with their own families then they never really compensate their parents for what they’ve spent.”

The participants also noted that there were women who ventured into the working world. However, these women were in the minority. It should be noted that most of the women who did work served an assistant role to their husbands in their businesses, or were involved in lay-work rather than pursuing a career. It was a given that the women would be caregivers and housewives, while those who pursued employment did so either out of a personal choice or out of sheer economic need. However, the women who carried out the dual-role of being both mothers and employed women were not exempted from their responsibilities in the home domain. The words of Wife 3 encapsulate this:

*“Most of them were caregivers. My mom was one of them. They were always cooking, looking after the children, and making sure everything is in place at home. That was their **main role**, and then obviously if they were working, it was still their main role to do.”*

The Indian culture was not the only influence, as religion was also found to be essential in understanding the participants’ pre-marital life. This will be discussed in the following section.

5.4 RELIGIOUS INJUNCTIONS REGARDING WOMEN'S CAREER ADVANCEMENT

I further my analysis of the second last layer of the individual's life contexts framework (refer to Figure 5.1) by examining the impact of religious prescriptions in shaping the participants' perceptions of women's career advancement. Religion played a big part in the lives of both the Hindu and Muslim participants. The participants made reference to religious leaders, religious teachers, learned family members, teachings at religious schools, as well as religious scriptures that shaped their religious understandings. Religion is a subjective topic, thus it was no surprise that mixed responses were obtained from both the male and female participants about the religious injunctions relating to women's career advancement. On a continuum ranging from being completely liberal to being completely staunch, most of the participants found themselves in the middle. The majority of participants regarded themselves as religious in terms of their values, as well as observing the required prayers. However, they regarded themselves as fairly liberal in terms of how they dressed, as well as their views on certain issues. Wife 9 describes the religious balance she attempts to strike, as do many of the other participants in the study:

*"I'm very, very conscious. I mean **ideally** I should be wearing a sari everyday and that kind of thing. I can't because we're living in a modern world and besides that it's just not practical for me on a daily basis. When it comes to anything like whether it's a prayer or whether it's a fast, whether it's the dress that you have to wear to a particular function, like if I go to a funeral or if I go to a wedding, I'm not going to dress western. So I follow **everything** in **that** way."*

5.4.1 Islamic injunctions relating to women's career advancement

The continuum from liberal to staunch interpretations can be seen in the responses given on the Islamic prescriptions in relation to women advancing in their careers. On the one hand, the participants were of the view that women are allowed to work in Islam and are seen as equally able to perform duties, just as men are. In addition, the female participants in particular noted that there were privileges associated with Muslim women

working, as they are not compelled to work. This is illustrated in the words of Wife 4:

“The role of the male is to provide and the role of the woman is to look after the children but she is allowed to work, she is allowed to have a career but it’s just for her self-gain. If she wants to contribute she can but she is not forced to contribute. In fact they say that if she needs a maid to help her, the husband should provide a maid as well.”

On the other end of the continuum, three participants were of the view that it is taboo for Muslim women to work. Husband 4 illustrates the message passed down by certain religious leaders:

“Just last year I attended a lecture where the Imams were totally **against** women working. Which after explaining himself made a lot of sense and it did kind of put **me** in a situation; it gave me some food for thought because obviously my wife is working.”*

**Imams=religious leaders*

However, majority of the participants were of the view that Islam allows women to work depending on their circumstances. Reference was also made to Saudi Arabia, where the Islamic interpretations are stricter than in South Africa, where a more liberal approach is followed to suit our circumstances. Societal factors therefore have an impact on the religious interpretations relating to women working and advancing in their careers, as the lifestyle led in South Africa is different to that in Saudi Arabia because of factors such as the rising cost of living, which requires both spouses to work. The view of the majority of participants was that Islam permits a woman to work if the need arises, as opposed to her merely wanting to work, as Wife 6 explained:

“I don’t think Islam is an unreasonable religion. I think all will depend on your circumstances. For example, if you were a woman who had no other means of support, if you had no family support whether it be from your parents, your brothers, your husband or whoever and you needed to support yourself or

*support your children I think your circumstances would dictate that you would **have to go out and work.***”

Other participants such as Husband 8 pointed out another situation in that women are allowed to work only if it does not affect their responsibilities to their families and homes, which remain the priority:

“It encourages you first to be a mother, to bring up your children in a proper way, to look after your husband, to ensure that your household is taken care of, and then after that you can follow a career.”

5.4.2 Hindu injunctions relating to women’s career advancement

The majority of Hindu participants indicated that their religion allows and encourages women to work and advance in their careers. However, women’s duties in the home domain still remained a primary concern, as they are allowed to work and advance provided that their duties to their families and homes are not disregarded. This concept is termed ‘Dharma’, as Wife 1 explained:

“There’s no limitations but they do mention that you have to fulfil your duties and they call it like ‘Dharma’ which means that you should fulfil your duties as a mother, as a daughter, as a sister, and as a wife but that doesn’t mean that you can’t work. As long as you fulfil your duties, like if I can work and come home and make sure that our home is warm, there’s food, there’s a meal whatever that meal is, the children are taken care of. You should put your family and your husband for example before a career.”

The participants used the conservative interpretations of Hinduism adopted in India as a reference point when describing that South African Hindus adopt modern or liberal beliefs. It should be noted that, even though South African Hindus adopt liberal interpretations they are still anchored in the core values of the religion. The participants indicated that mixed messages were being passed down by various religious leaders

and institutions which the participants did not believe held much weight. Wife 9 explained the male dominance practised in certain temples:

*“I think it’s very **pro** from what I’m seeing. I belong to a very liberal temple. In the southern hemisphere it’s like one of the best temples but also the **thinking** you know, it’s like my age group people, so it’s not like these **old** people like in other temples, where you’ll only find men on the committees and things. Here they’re very sensitive about equality of women and the woman is the strength of this group. You understand what I mean? Like we are really the strength of the group, the men play a minor role (laughs). Yeah and women are very vocal in the meetings and they’re very actively participating in everything.”*

Similarly, Husband 5 expressed his dismay at the teachings that promote the inequality of sexes among Hindus:

“I don’t think they promoted free thinking. If you go into the history there are a lot of women, powerful women, that you are exposed to but it didn’t filter down. In fact if you look at it, most men pray to the female idols. Most of the more popular goddesses. There are a lot of examples in the Bhagavad Gita of references to women and their role – the important roles of women. I never really found the teachings to be revolutionary in the sense of freedom or equality among the sexes. I think it’s just a matter of interpretation. I don’t think what the religion preaches is any kind of inequality between males and females. I don’t believe any kind of religion would preach that. It doesn’t make sense.”*

**Bhagavad Gita= Hindu religious scripture*

It should be noted that the discrepancies in interpretation of both Hindu and Muslim prescriptions can also be attributed to cultural norms being categorised erroneously as religious injunctions, as Husband 1 indicates:

“I still have a problem between tradition, culture, and religion. I’m not so sure what is tradition and what is culture. There’s a fine line between these things. This is not what my religion tells me, this is what my teachers taught me or people that profess to know my religion will tell me this. I haven’t explored my religion sufficiently to make up my own mind.”

5.5 FAMILIAL CONTEXT OF PARTICIPANTS

Family background forms part of the third layer of the individual’s life context framework (refer to Figure 5.1). This section outlines the family background of the participants in the study by taking a look at the family dynamics, treatment of women, education of women, career advancement of women, as well as the influence of parents in shaping the participants’ views.

5.5.1 Family dynamics

As it was not part of the scope of this study to look for families that led a specific lifestyle, the socio-economic status of the families that the participants came from ranged from extremely poor to those who were well off. The families’ views were also mixed, as many were liberal in their thinking while others were orthodox. This is discussed at length in Section 5.5.5. In this section I focus on the composition of the families, as I believe this had an impact on their outlook on life.

The majority of female participants came from nuclear families. In the past nuclear families were rare, as the Indian culture placed great emphasis on family togetherness. Thus, a typical home would consist of in-laws or other extended family members all living under one roof. They would eat together and make business-related as well as family decisions together. This was the case for two of the participants, as they lived with other families or took other family members under their wing if they could not support themselves. Such was the case of Husband 5:

“My mother basically looked after our whole family. My uncle had passed away when his children were still young so my mother took on the responsibility of looking after them as well. They were eight plus a parent, so

with the parent nine and then it was us. My mother was the gel that kept this whole family together.”

However, it can be seen that the dissolving of extended families into nuclear families was the norm among both the male and female participants. The participants' families therefore took on a more 'modern' family arrangement relative to traditional Indian culture, which emphasised collectivism in all aspects of life. A possible explanation for the disbanding of extended families was the conflict of interest experienced by families. The families' living arrangements were separated to ensure peace in their homes, as Husband 6 explained the advice given to him by his father:

“He said I wouldn't like you to stay with me. I only stayed one year with them and then I moved to this house. He made it clear to me that he doesn't want to have any animosity with my wife and my mom or my sister and my brother because they were still at home – my one sister and brother.”

However, although families were not living under the same roof, they lived nearby each other and thus the participants spent a considerable amount of time with extended family members, as Husband 9 explained:

“I went to my aunt's place because I became their child. So that closeness is still there up to now. Half my life I grew up there and half here. So I was shared. In fact three sets of parents. So there was like three families I was close with.”

5.5.2 Treatment of women in the family

Two of the eighteen participants interviewed indicated that their mothers had been verbally and/or physically abused. However, these cases were the exception, as the majority of both male and female participants indicated that the women in their families were treated well and with respect. When I probed further, the participants explained that, although women were treated well, they were not placed on an equal footing with

their male counterparts. This is illustrated in the words of Wife 7, which captures the women's subservience to their husbands:

“My mom, she was a housewife and she wasn't educated. I think her entire life was just surrounded by my dad. My mom would not eat until my dad has eaten. The men were always first. I think it was just a form of respect.”

Thus it is no surprise that male dominance was a predominant theme that emerged in the families, as the males were given greater control over important matters such as decision making. In the homes where males assumed authority, the participants made mention not only of fathers, but also of brothers and uncles who made the decisions in their homes. The situation of Wife 7 paints such a picture:

“I think coming from a very orthodox background, my brother actually ran the family not so much my dad. My brother made the decisions. My brother was very set in his ways where I suppose he always wanted the best for me and it was also pride, I think with males it's always the ego thing.”

However, the bone of contention was that the female participants viewed this as a disadvantage, as the women were allocated a greater amount of tasks, that were characterised as being menial and subservient, while the male participants viewed it as a privilege for women, as men have to bear the greater burden of making important decisions as well as being held accountable for bringing in an income. The contrasting views of Wife 3 and Husband 7 indicate the incongruity in the viewpoints of male and female participants:

Wife 3: “They had to do the housework and the cooking and even go to the shop. We had a shop, so she would go with my dad to the shop and make sure the food is done and cooked and everything. So the men had less to do and the women always had more; oversee the children and oversee everything.”

Husband 7: “Women obviously had more leeway. They were not treated equally like a man in the sense that what a man does a woman must do. Obviously a woman had her privileges and advantages. Look, ideally I’ve got to be the breadwinner. I can’t expect to sit at home and my wife goes out and works. A woman obviously has that advantage. It’ll be preferable if she can sit at home, she must sit at home. Otherwise if need be, go out and work.”

5.5.3 Education of women in the family

The majority of both male and female participants noted that their families placed great importance on the education of female family members. Both males and females were provided with equal opportunities to study, and hence the participants made mention of their mothers, sisters, aunts and/or female cousins who had pursued education in various fields, including psychology, law, medicine, teaching, and accounting, to name a few. The importance of studying was also driven by the participants’ parents or elder male relatives, who provided the opportunity for them to study. The words of Wife 8 echo the sentiments of the majority of participants’ families with regard to the importance placed on the education of women:

“With my father and mother it didn’t matter whether we were a son or daughter, all of us were allowed equal opportunities to study. It was all our choice. I knew I was never going to quit school. I knew I was never just going to finish school and not study. I did my first year full-time and I hated it. I just didn’t like it and I told my father I’m quitting university and he said no I’m not allowed to quit, I need to do something. So I said I’ll go study through UNISA. He said its fine as long as I study. Wherever I study from, how I do it, is fine as long as I’m studying. Education was very important. It’s always very important and my parents always strive towards all of us being educated, understanding the importance of education.”*

*UNISA= University of South Africa

The male and female participants identified independence as the main reason that families encouraged the education of women. Education served as a safety net that women could fall back on should they be faced with an unfortunate circumstance, such as divorce or the passing away of their husbands, as Husband 7 explained:

“In terms of women advancing in careers, it’s a good thing because for any person to be educated is important, especially a woman. Say for example I’m married, my wife she’s got a degree, she studied. Had she not studied, God forbid it never happens, I hit the ground tomorrow. What happens to her? So at least she’s educated. She’s got that background and the degree behind her. So education they did emphasise it.”

However, a contradictory situation arose in the homes, as fathers encouraged their daughters to study but expected their wives to be submissive and their work to be confined to within the four walls of their home. Thus, it is no surprise that specifically among the female participants whose mothers were not educated, the mothers encouraged them and/or their sisters to gain the independence that education brings in order to live a better life than the one they led. The words of Wife 5 describe this situation:

*“My parents both wanted me to be independent. From young they told us we **must** educate ourselves, you must go to University, study, and after I studied they both supported me to go and find a job, they wanted me to become independent. My mommy wanted me to have that independence that she never had. She always said that it’s important for a girl to be independent.”*

Affordability was identified as one of the greatest factors that had an impact on the education of women. The participants identified female family members who had aspirations but could not pursue their desired educational paths due to a lack of financial resources. Emerging from this scenario were two types of families: those who groomed their daughters for marriage because they could not afford to educate them, and those who tried every possible means to ensure their daughters’ education, even at

the expense of their own success. Wife 9 described the lengths she and her family members went to ensure that women were educated:

“My two elder sisters left school to go and start working to bring money home. So that’s why myself and my younger sister we are always very grateful because shame they left school to bring money home while we went and studied. It was a very big uphill. It was a bad situation. At some stage just to get to varsity, I went to our local GP and I said to him ‘I don’t have money to go to pay the bus fare to go to varsity, can I borrow forty rand a week from you and I will sign for it in a book and when I qualify as a doctor I will pay you back?’ Every week I would go there on a Friday, collect forty rand and sign it in the book. When I qualified I went back and I paid him back. Yeah, so it was bad. We were very poor, we were very poor. It wasn’t easy.”

While the majority of families were in favour of educating their women, there were those among the participants’ families who did not educate the women in their family. They were of the opinion that spending money on educating women would be a waste, as the women would eventually get married and become housewives. Thus, they believed that their responsibility was to groom the women for marriage and ensure they were trained to take care of their homes, while greater importance was placed on the education of males, as the role of the husband was to be the primary breadwinner of the family. Wife 9 expressed her dismay at families who opposed the education of women:

*“I heard a **horrific** story last night from a Muslim woman. She was one of the motivational speakers last night and she said that her father was so conservative and she’s forty-four and I said to her ‘No I can’t believe it, not in your day and age, like you’re younger than me’. She said her father was so conservative when she was in Standard Five he took her out of school, he never allowed her to go to school after Standard Five. I couldn’t understand it. She said that their family was just like that, the girls couldn’t go and she said the principal and everybody came and spoke and begged him and said ‘In this day and age you can’t afford for the girls not to go to school and*

*further their careers and study and all that'. He said 'Nobody's going to tell me that, that's **my** daughter' and he took her out of school. At seventeen years old he got her married and she said she married a man that was eleven years her elder. She was giving us her background because where she was and what she is today; she's a top person in this franchise. So it was **very** interesting for me because in our days we never heard of things like that, not in our family. The girls our level, girls and boys were pushed to study. I mean like you had to have a career, you had to study something."*

5.5.4 Families' viewpoints on women's career advancement

The majority of both males' and females' families strongly encouraged and motivated women to pursue their careers on completion of their studies. The families were described as being more liberal than other families in their communities, as the career options they encouraged women to follow were not limited in scope. Thus, many of the women in their families shifted away from the norm of being a housewife and were employed across a broad spectrum of jobs, ranging from being hairdressers to attorneys, administrators to owning factories, as well as teachers to medical doctors. Specifically, the younger generation of female participants in the study stated that their families would even be accepting had they chosen a career in a male-dominated field, such as in the case of Wife 1:

"I was never ever told that I can't do anything or that certain jobs are not for women. If I wanted to be a pilot, I could have done that."

However, a strong underlying trend that emerged was that women were allowed to pursue their career aspirations, but they were not emancipated from their responsibilities in the home domain. The roles of being good wives and mothers, and to ensure that their homes were taken care of, remained a priority. Thus, families encouraged women to pursue their careers only if a balance could be struck between these two domains, as Husband 8 explained:

*“They encourage women to advance in their careers, although over the generations women were in the household, they looked after the household, they saw to the needs of the husband, and made sure that the house was well organised and well run. They were encouraged and limited to an extent. When I say limited in the sense that it wasn’t that they **had** to go out and follow a career but if they could handle both like as explained in the Islamic way that it encourages you first to be a mother, to bring up your children in a proper way, to look after your husband, to ensure that your household is taken care of and then after that you can follow a career. So they followed much in the same path, if you can handle that aspect of your life then you could also go and do your career but not follow your career at the expense of not being a housewife and neglecting the children and leaving them to be brought up by nannies and what have you. They should impart the correct value systems into the children.”*

It must be noted that participants, although in the minority, made mention of female family members who remained housewives or merely supported their husbands in their businesses, as their families placed great value on men being the breadwinners, as Wife 7 explained:

“I think we were raised to believe that a woman’s place is in the home. Raise your kids, provide for your family – the man will provide for his family – he needs to go out there and make sure that there’s food on the table and your place was just in the home.”

However, the decision for other women who decided to stop working was made as per the dictate of the husband, as Wife 5 explained:

“I had aunts who were teachers and they stopped. Like they stopped teaching and I had an aunt who was a doctor and she stopped because her husband wanted her to stay at home.”

With the families' viewpoints regarding women's career advancement discussed, I now turn the attention specifically to the participants' parents and the influence they had in moulding the participants' views.

5.5.5 Influence of parents in shaping participants' views

In this section I zoom in on the family layer in the individual's life contexts framework (refer to Figure 5.1) to examine the role that parents played in moulding both the males' and females' views on women's career advancement. The subsequent sections depict the roles that the participants' parents played, the advice they passed down to the participants, as well as their relationship with their parents.

5.5.5.1 Parents' domains of responsibility

The roles played by the participants' parents, as well as the advice they passed down to the participants provide a picture of the roles men and women should perform. All of the male and female participants' fathers were the primary breadwinners in their homes, with the exception of two absent father figures as a result of death or divorce. The majority of fathers were businessmen, while a few assisted family members or friends in their businesses and others were involved in professions such as law or architecture. The participants also noted that their fathers were involved in multiple jobs to ensure that their families' financial needs were taken care of, as Wife 6 indicates:

"You often found that men, like my dad, did a few jobs. He worked during the day and he worked during the evenings as well. He obviously had to do that in order to support his family."

The minority of the male and female participants' mothers were housewives. Most of the female participants noted that their mothers initially assisted their fathers in their businesses, while a few were involved in professions such as teaching and nursing. However, a prominent move made by their mothers was the shift from assisting their husbands to becoming self-employed. Although they were involved in businesses that were run from home, such as dressmaking and catering, the main reason for this move was the financial empowerment that this source of income brought, as Wife 9 explained:

*“In my home, because my mother worked on the machine and brought money in, it was a bit different. We saw her playing a big role in managing the household as well whereas other women would not have **any** form of income.”*

The majority of responses from the male participants indicated that their mothers served as assistants to their fathers in their businesses. Similar to the responses from the female participants, the male participants noted that there had been a shift towards women being self-sufficient, as they were becoming involved in work outside of the home. This included being bank tellers, sales assistants, as well as running their own businesses. However, this move was necessitated as a result of them becoming the primary breadwinners due to divorce from or death of their husbands, rather than to fulfil a personal need as in the cases of the female participants’ mothers. Husband 3 explained the need for his mother to work as a result of separation from his father:

“She was a housewife initially. She had a nervous breakdown at a certain stage then they got divorced. She then got out of the nervous breakdown. From her side of the family they supported her and gave her all the encouragement and the trust. She had a job at a company and she used to work shifts: morning, afternoon, evenings that kind of stuff and I used to do part-time work on the weekends to support us as well. Then she became a bit more independent as she started working in a furniture store as well. It was a little more structured – the starting and finishing times.”

Regardless of the work the mothers were involved in, a common thread that was apparent with the mothers of both the male and female participants was that they were still held primarily responsible for tasks in the home domain. This entailed taking care of the children, ensuring that the food was prepared, as well as making certain that the house was clean. The words of Wife 8 mirror the viewpoints of many of the participants:

“Indian women are usually seen as the ‘housewife’. It’s your responsibility to do certain things. I suppose that perception, if I look at my parents, my mother still does everything.”

5.5.5.2 Relationship with parents

The participants described the relationship with their parents as good, easy going, and close. However, there were boundaries in the relationship, as the parents' authority over the children was clearly indicated in order to ensure that discipline was instilled. This is stated by Husband 8:

“It wasn’t like how you have today, where you have friends; your father is your friend. Those times your father was your father and your mother was your mother. You couldn’t interact as friends with them. There was always a barrier because of the respect. You showed a lot of respect, if your parents said you’ll do this, you’ll do that. If they tell you, you must be back by ten o’clock, ten o’clock was ten o’clock. You had to be back and you wouldn’t dare answer back to them and show disrespect because you will just get a smack.”

In most cases, the fathers were viewed as calm and reserved, while the mothers were viewed as strict. However, the participants generally had a closer relationship with their mothers, possibly because of the greater amount of time spent with them. Through their relationships, the parents informed the male participants that their role was to be the provider and protector and to ensure that their families were taken care of. This message was passed on through their advice as well as in their actions, as Husband 8 explains:

“Well, the man’s function was to earn a living and to go out and work and the woman was there to make sure that the children were properly educated, were taken well care of in terms of their education, in terms of their upbringing and in terms of the values imparted into them. So that was the message that we were brought up with it was strongly driven. They led by example, from my grandfather’s time we were taught that this is how things were and it came down from generations.”

Furthermore, the roles that their parents played were used as a benchmark for when the participants assessed the behaviour of their spouses. This is illustrated in the case of Wife 4, as she compared her father as a provider to her husband as a non-provider:

*“My dad was a provider – **sole provider** – and he provided **very well**. We were never short of anything and we always went on holidays. So it just came across that the man should be the provider. I never even had a second thought that a man won’t provide. That was in my mind, the man will always provide.”*

5.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I focused on the formative years of both the men and women in order to gain an understanding of the background of the participants. This included an analysis of the impact of apartheid, as well as of their familial, cultural, and religious background, which provided great insight into the lives of the participants when they were growing up. Although each participant had a unique situation, trends were visible and were discussed in this chapter.

It was revealed that most of the participants had grown up in the apartheid era, when Indian women were presented with limited educational as well as career opportunities. Surprisingly, it was discovered that the discrimination in the apartheid era actually motivated the women to craft cracks in the apartheid system by putting extra effort into their studies, as well as in the pursuance of careers. The Indian culture, which has been described as traditional and conservative, also placed limitations on the career advancement of women, as stereotyped gender roles were emphasised. Furthermore, religion played a crucial role in the participants’ lives. Mixed results were obtained in relation to the Hindu and Islamic religious injunctions on women’s career advancement. The responses ranged on a continuum from being completely accepting of women’s career advancement to it being prohibited by the religions.

Exploring these contexts aided in understanding the influences on and circumstances under which the participants were raised in order to provide a greater understanding of the perceptions they currently hold. Having dissected the three broader categories of the individual's life contexts framework (refer to Figure 5.1), I turn in Chapter 6 to the core layers by examining the dynamics surrounding the couples, as well as the participants' perceptions in their married lives.

CHAPTER 6: PARTICIPANTS' MARITAL LIFE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

A discussion of the participants' pre-marital life was presented in the previous chapter. In the current chapter I focus on the participants' marital life, which entails an exploration of:

- ❖ **Balancing of work and family life** – the challenges, coping mechanisms, as well as support for the wives' career advancement.
- ❖ **Inner-couple dynamics** – reasons for both spouses working, husbands' and wives' characteristics, as well as the relative career advancement and roles of the spouses.
- ❖ **Current viewpoints regarding women's career advancement** – perceptions as well as the reasons for the perceptions held.

To get a complete picture of the participants' lives, their pre-marital and marital lives were examined. This was done in order to understand the influence that their background and experiences have on their perceptions regarding women's career advancement.

6.2 BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

This section deals with an essential theme of this study, as it is important to understand how the women balance work and family life in order to comprehend how the dual-career arrangements operate. This was done by discovering the challenges faced by Indian professional women, the coping mechanisms they use, as well as the support available to them. These are detailed in the subsequent sections.

6.2.1 Challenges faced by Indian professional women

The women faced many challenges in their climb up the corporate ladder, while not being removed from their responsibilities in the home domain. The focus of this section is not on the challenges they experience in the work environment, as that is beyond the scope of this study. I focus specifically on the challenges Indian professional women experience as a result of having responsibilities in both their home and work domains. The predominant challenges identified by participants include: limited time, feelings of guilt, looking after extended family members, as well as the spill-over effects of stress in work and family domains. These challenges are discussed in turn in the subsequent sections.

6.2.1.1 Limited time

Time was identified by both the male and female participants as the biggest challenge facing the professional women. They indicated that there were simply not enough hours in the day to divide their time and attention equally between their work, their husbands and children, and having time for themselves for relaxation and/or recreational activities. Many of the women were studying as well, which required them to split their time in one more direction. With so many responsibilities being placed on their shoulders, many compromised on sleep in order to juggle their time. Late nights were not uncommon, as in the case of Wife 6:

“If you’re working and you’re a mother it’s also a challenge if you’re studying as well because there’s really no time. There’s no time to study, your studying you have to do after hours so once everybody goes to bed at night that becomes your studying time. That’s late, I mean you’re talking like ten or ten thirty.”

As a result of the long days, the women experience exhaustion, which was identified as a major challenge facing them. The words of Wife 6 capture the extent of their exhaustion as a result of the overload of tasks placed on their shoulders:

“You also reach that stage where you get up in the morning, you’re really tired and you’re thinking God I don’t want to get up, I don’t want to go to work, what excuse can I use today?”

Exhaustion results in frustration and anger, as they have to hide behind the mask of strong professional women in order to succeed in the work environment. The female participants felt that their true feelings had to be blocked off, as Wife 9 explains:

“Sometimes you just want to break down and say you know what I’m actually just this meek woman. I’m actually tired.”

In addition, the male participants noted that the limited time they get to spend with their wives, as well as the exhaustion experienced by their wives, puts a strain on the marital relationship, as Husband 8 indicates:

“When you come home she’s tired, she doesn’t want to talk, and you can’t share your day’s feelings with her. Those kinds of challenges put pressure on the marriage.”

As a result of the challenge of limited time faced by the women, feelings of guilt arise, which will be discussed in the next section.

6.2.1.2 Feelings of guilt

Feelings of guilt are another challenge faced by working mothers. Such feelings have arisen among many of the women due to them having to split their time in many directions as well as spending long hours away from home due to work obligations. Some of the women have to travel across the globe as per the requirements of their jobs, which entails more hours away from their families. It must be noted that the women felt greater guilt if they currently have young children or when their children were younger, as these children require more supervision and thus their dependence on their parents is greater. Wife 2 provides an example of the guilt predicaments many women are faced with as a result of them working:

“This whole little thing with my daughter crying because I couldn’t take her tomorrow and she’s always having to look for lifts and stuff like that, it upset me. I feel like if I was a normal mother and I was at home I could have just dropped her and picked her up every day. She wouldn’t have to ask anybody for a lift but because of my working hours I can’t do it. So there are certain limitations and that becomes a challenge.”

This guilt was enhanced as in certain instances the lack of supervision resulted in the children taking advantage of the situation by not pulling their weight, as Wife 2 explained:

“Especially with the homework part, I expected them to be a lot more independent. When they got home from school I’d find that they would just be watching TV and playing on the Playstation. So I just felt that not giving their best at school is probably a result of me working.”

Although guilt arose predominately when it affected their children, women also felt torn at times between work and their marital life. Neglecting their husbands due to work requirements also resulted in guilt, as Wife 4 explained:

“If my spouse and I were going out and we were ready to leave and a patient came then all the plans had to change and we had to see to the patient. He was upset and it spoilt the whole mood.”

Furthermore, guilt was felt as a result of certain family or community members who adopted the traditional Indian views of women working and advancing in their careers. They would criticise the women for leaving their children and pursuing careers, as in the case of Wife 5:

“A lot of my mother’s sisters think that I am doing something wrong by going out and working. I get a lot of comments from a lot of friends and family that I should actually be at home and look after him because he is more important and one day he’s going to get older.”

Feelings of guilt can thus be seen as a major challenge facing the women as such feelings arise for various reasons. The next section details how looking after extended family members serves as a challenge to professional Indian women.

6.2.1.3 *Looking after extended family*

The Indian culture places great importance on family, thus taking care of family, whether extended or immediate, is a core responsibility of Indian individuals. Five of the nine couples had an extended family member either living with them or for whom they were responsible. In most of the couples interviewed, the extended family member was either an elderly mother or mother-in-law. This posed a challenge, as these elderly women were dependent on the couples and they had to take care of them by ensuring their health and well-being. This included taking them for appointments, ensuring that their emotional needs were taken care of, worrying about their safety due to the high crime rates in South Africa, as well as dealing with conflicts of interest between them – all of which require greater planning and juggling of tasks and time. According to Wife 2, this scenario is a common occurrence among women who have the additional responsibility of looking after a member of their extended family:

“On Friday, my mother-in-law had an appointment with the optometrist and I knew she had to be picked up but I got home and there was nobody here so I phoned my husband, I said ‘Are you fetching your mother or must I? Where are you?’”

In addition, Indian women who work or advance in their careers are seen as having the financial means and/or knowledge and ability to take care of extended family members. Husband 4 notes that certain family members take advantage of career-orientated women, as looking after family is a core responsibility placed on individuals by the Indian culture:

“The challenge was when my wife started earning a lot more than she felt obliged to assist. They do a fair amount of dumping because they can’t handle it; it’s either the absent father or something like that.”

Similarly, the situation of Wife 9 explains the expectations on Indian women to take care of their extended family members due to them being career orientated:

*“It’s the demands like my mother is sick and she’s in Durban for example, but because I’ve got this responsibility of my work and the house, it’s a challenge, I mean I can’t just pack up and go to Durban. My sisters expect me to come because I’m in the profession. So it’s like those are also other things. Your family commitments in **that** way – the extended family.”*

From the discussion above it can be seen that taking care of extended family members is a common occurrence in Indian families and serves as a challenge to professionals. In the next section, the negative spill over between work and family domains is discussed.

6.2.1.4 Negative spill over between work and family domains

The participants noted that as far much as they tried to divorce work and family life, it was virtually impossible. The husbands noted that the challenges their wives experienced at work had an impact on their mood, and thus an emotional spill over from their work to their homes occurred. Husband 1 described a scenario in which emotional strain from the work domain had a negative impact on the marital relationship:

“There have been instances where, in her case, she’s good at what she does; I guess it necessitates the tension. In her case it’s both male and female, they want to either try and taint your reputation or something like that. She would then break down. So emotionally it has been a little difficult because I’ve been supportive of her but there are times when it becomes overwhelming, especially when she becomes the target.”

Women indicated that both work and family life can have negative impacts on each other, as the two cannot be isolated completely. The proof of the impact can be seen in the quality of the work they perform or the family relationships that exist. Thus, the women often find themselves in a catch-22 situation, as they are torn between their work and family commitments. Wife 8 encapsulates the spill over effects that these two domains have on each other:

“Although people say work stays at work and home stays at home, as humans it’s completely impossible to do that. You come home and you still thinking of this problem that you trying to sort out at work. As a mother you worry about your kids especially if they not well or they got something or they got an appointment, they got projects or something. As a wife you worry about your spouse. So that’s a challenge sometimes just concentrating on what you’re doing at hand.”

6.2.2 Coping mechanisms

Due to the many challenges facing Indian professional women, I was intrigued to discover how they managed to cope. The majority of women identified planning as a key coping mechanism to overcome the challenges they face. Time management is crucial in their planning, as it ensures that there is some degree of routine in their lives. Wife 3 describes the manner in which she uses planning to create routine in her life:

“I do a lot of planning because I know that Mondays and Tuesdays are very busy days at work. So then I will cook on Sunday, so when I come back I know I don’t have to cook a meal, the meal is already there it just needs to be warmed up. So I do plan a lot. I know certain days I finish early and that’s the days I go and do all my veggie shopping.”

In addition, due to the limited time available to spend with their families, the participants use the time they have on weekends wisely to compensate for time lost in the week due to work requirements. A participant described how she 'kills two birds with one stone' by attending religious classes with her husband on weekends so that she educates herself while spending time with her spouse. Such time management strategies are used by the women to ensure their families are not neglected as a result of them working.

Some female participants also made mention of the flexibility they have in their jobs. This serves as a coping mechanism as they are able to schedule their leave concurrent with that of their husbands and are thus able to plan family holidays. In certain instances this flexibility also allows the women to work from home to accommodate their children's needs, as in the case of Wife 2:

"When they were sick and they were little, I would stay home with them if they required medical attention. My youngest son had chicken pox as an example three years ago. As big as he was he said to me 'Mum, I need you' and I came home and I worked from home. So I have the flexibility to work from home as well. If I need to be home, I will be home."

Other female participants made mention of coping mechanisms such as the delegation of tasks, as well as their psychological persona, such as resilience in light of the challenges they face. An interesting coping strategy that Wife 6 mentioned was that she used technology to monitor her children:

"I think most people of our age are reluctant to sort of engage in things like BBMs and Facebook, but to be very honest it's the only way to keep track without invading your child's privacy, without making them feel like we don't trust them. Last year I decided, it was about October/November, I said let me get myself a BlackBerry and I got a BlackBerry and then I went and signed up on Facebook. Only my eldest daughter is on Facebook. She is nineteen. So I told her that I'm signing up but not to sort of act as a police but it's important, we need to know who you guys are mixing with, what you are doing. The best thing that I did was getting this because now with my girls if

there's a problem during the day and the status changes on BBM, if somebody is sick I know. It also helps me to keep in constant contact with them. It's the way I'm actually keeping track of their lives. I know what's going on; I know who's feeling what. So you've got to find ways of doing it."*

*BBM = BlackBerry Messenger

Support from various sources also served as a vital coping mechanism for the women. It is discussed at length in the subsequent section, as it is the focal point of this study.

6.2.3 Support for wives' career advancement

Due to the nature of the study, the support received from husbands is separated from other sources of support, as it is the main focus of the study. Thus, the following sections are divided into the support received from husbands and the extended support, which includes all other sources of support.

6.2.3.1 Extended support for wives' career advancement

Eight out of the nine women interviewed identified their domestic helpers as a crucial source of support. These women employ full-time maids who assist them in fulfilling their domestic responsibilities. In certain homes more than one domestic helper is employed to ensure that the domestic tasks are accomplished. The domestic helpers assist with the shopping, cooking, and taking care of the children, as well as ensure that the houses are kept neat and that other day-to-day domestic tasks are taken care of. Domestic helpers were viewed by the working women as an essential source of support, as Wife 9 echoes the sentiments of many of the women:

"From January, on top of everything, I don't have a maid. So that has become a nightmare but it's just like this last two weeks now it's been a bit better because I found somebody to come in three times a week during the week and I found somebody for the weekends – Saturdays and Sundays. So it has helped me and that does take a little bit of pressure away from me if I have a helper but I can't do without a full time."

It must be noted that, although the domestic helpers play a great role, they do not completely relieve the women from their domestic duties, as the women still have to supervise and ensure that the tasks are completed, as Wife 4 explained:

“I make sure that the cooking is done, even though I don’t do it myself. The domestic worker helps me, but I organise the home.”

Parents also serve as a vital source of support to the women. They provide emotional support in terms of encouragement and dealing with their problems, and provide physical support as they assist with the cooking and/or taking care of the children if the women cannot manage. Looking after in-laws was identified as a challenge in the previous section, although they also serve as a safety net to the women, as they assist by warming up food for the family if the wife is running late, or by taking care of the children if the need arises, as in the case of Wife 3:

“As for meetings and all that we have a back-up plan, my mother-in-law is here.”

It was also revealed that the women tap into other support systems, such as friends, neighbours, and other family members, who provide emotional support, assist by looking after their children if required, or serve as a back-up plan if the husband and wife are both unable to fulfil some task. Regardless of the source of support, an extended support system was described by the women as essential in balancing both their work and family demands.

6.2.3.2 The husband as a support system

In this section, the husbands support to the wives’ career advancement is presented by firstly looking at the women’s descriptions of support received. This is followed by the men’s descriptions of support offered. Lastly, the need for spousal support is discussed.

❖ Women's descriptions of support received

Seven of the female participants interviewed felt that their husbands were supportive of their career advancement. However, of these seven, two felt their husbands were not as supportive as they would like them to be. Their descriptions of their husbands' support could be divided into two categories, namely physical support and emotional support. Specifically, physical support entailed assistance with certain tasks that were regarded as the wives' responsibility. These tasks include cooking, taking care of the children and their needs, as well as ensuring that the domestic duties are taken care of in the absence of a maid. Examples of the physical support offered to wives can be seen in the descriptions of Wife 1 and Wife 3. The roles of husbands and wives in the study will be discussed at greater length in Section 6.3.

Wife 1: "He told me like once a week if I just need a break from work and from the house and everything then he'll come home early. Okay now early will be like five or half past five, it's not that early but then I can go if I want to yoga or just meet my friends for a cup of coffee. So I think it shows that he appreciates me you know and he is grateful."

Wife 3: "Look my husband does help me more now because he can see that I can't manage everything. Initially I was trying to still manage everything, it doesn't work. You can't cope. So they need to play a bigger role and also I'm sure you know that in today's times the kids have so many activities, so he helps me by dropping them, fetching them or helping them with their projects."

The participants also identified emotional support as a form of support offered by their husbands. This entailed that their husbands provided the required motivation, encouragement, understanding, as well as advice for many work-related issues the women are faced with. Many of the women made reference to their husbands being emotionally supportive when making career moves or when they embarked on furthering their education, as Wife 6 explained:

“I think he feels that I should always advance my studies because with each thing that you do it takes you onto a new level in terms of your job. Career wise, it opens up more doors for you. So in that sense he encourages me to go out. He says ‘Look it can only be good for you, go ahead and do it’.”

Many of the women noted the importance they place on the emotional support received from their husbands. The words of Wife 2 capture the value placed on such support:

“I rely on my husband emotionally a lot because you know I really just want him to say ‘It’s okay if you can’t do it all’.”

On the other end of the continuum, two participants felt that their husbands were not supportive at all. This meant that their husbands did not support them financially, physically, or emotionally, and they thus had to bear all the domestic responsibilities in addition to their work pressures. This resulted in the women having to deal with an overload of tasks, with Wife 4 comparing her situation to that of being a single parent:

*“It’s very difficult to play **all** the roles, you know, come from work and sort this out. I don’t really cook, the maid cooks but I have to help out with the children’s homework, their emotional needs, and whatever they need I have to sort it out. Then my own personal things after they go to bed at night, then I sort out my work issues. So it’s **very** difficult. It’s almost like being a single parent.”*

Wife 9 describes the burden of responsibility placed on her as a result of the non-support from her husband, likening him to a parasite:

*“He hasn’t bought a single loaf of bread since I married him, I mean like going personally or taking responsibility for it. If there’s no bread he will sit and wait. If I’m late there’s no bread. He won’t take the initiative to change a globe. Nothing, nothing, nothing. He is just like a parasite, he’s **worse** than a child. It’s really bad, bad, bad. Anything breaks it’s my responsibility. Anything, **anything** goes wrong, if the kids are sick, if I’m sick, even if he’s*

sick it's my responsibility. He's an absolute parasite; he's nothing, nothing to me."

❖ **Men's descriptions of support offered**

All of the husbands stated that they were supportive of their wives' career advancement. However, there was one husband who acknowledged that he did not support his wife as much as he should. Similar to the wives' accounts of the support received from their husbands, the husbands noted that they offered both physical and emotional support to their wives. However, the husbands mentioned the sacrifices they made and the lengths they went to, to accommodate their wives' careers. Husband 2 notes how he supports his wife by not demanding a home-cooked meal every day:

"I don't expect meals to be cooked every day. I do my own thing. Like if I come home now and my wife is tired, I'll say let's have a pizza or whatever. I can have peanut butter and toast and I'll be happy. I'm just like that. I'm easy. I don't need a meal every day."

Husband 6 describes the personal sacrifices he makes so that his wife's work-related tasks can be completed:

"She can sit till two or three in the morning with the lights on and do her work. Sometimes I will give her the room and I'll sleep with my son in his room. It's a couple of times that it happens."

From the above it is clear that there are discrepancies in the accounts of support from husbands and wives. Possible explanations for the discrepancies will be delineated in Chapter 7 by making reference to the available research on the subject.

Furthermore, when describing the support or non-support received from their husbands, many women made reference to their friends or other family members who had either received more or less support from their husbands. These couples were thus used as a

benchmark against which the women judged the level of support or non-support they received from their husbands. Wife 9 provides an example of this:

“In my mind a normal relationship would have so much. I see my younger sister and her husband. Anyway it’s totally different, like a perfect marriage kind of thing and I see friends of mine as well that have good marriages and you sit back and you just cry and you think why are you doing this to yourself, get out of here, there’s no support.”

❖ **Need for spousal support**

All the female participants felt that spousal support was crucial for women’s career advancement, as husbands ultimately play a critical role in striking the work-life balance. Husbands who supported their wives were reported to have a positive impact on their personal as well as their career lives. In terms of their personal lives it was found that spousal support assists by improving the emotional well-being of the professional women, as well as by improving the marital relationship by enhancing mutual respect among the spouses. Wife 1 notes the impact that her husband’s support has on her personal life:

“You know the fact that it’s there actually makes me want to be a better mother and a wife.”

In terms of their careers, spousal support permitted the women to advance, as their husbands provided the necessary motivation required for advancement. In addition, husbands who assisted their wives with domestic duties allowed their wives to concentrate on completing their work-related tasks, and to undertake the necessary travel for them to advance. Wife 2 highlighted the crucial role husbands play in the career advancement of their wives:

“They could derail the entire process by being difficult.”

Similarly, Wife 8 noted how her husband's support assisted in her career advancement:

"I don't think I would have advanced without his support. Especially if I had a husband who didn't help me with the kids or whatever, it would have been very difficult. So I don't think I would have advanced or had the guts to try things or apply for courses and do things differently."

The participants who indicated that their husbands did not support them stated that this had negative effects on both their career and personal lives. In terms of their personal lives, their marital relationships suffered, as they experienced feelings of anger and resentment towards their husbands as a result of their non-support. It also had detrimental effects on their emotional health, as Wife 9 described:

"There are days that I can go into a major depression kind of thing. I can become so depressed that everything can lie. I can just come home from work and I don't even want to see his face, I just lie on the bed. Lifeless and wanting to give up, wanting to run away and just get him out of my life. I'm at that stage now where the only way out is if he dies. I'm feeling like I'm imprisoned in this jail and I just want to run away."

Their husbands' non-support was also seen as a career-limiting factor, as they felt that they could have advanced much further had their husbands been supportive, as Wife 9 explains:

*"I think I would have been further in my career life. I had to limit it because of my home situation, **definitely** in my case. I would've been further in my career because I was a very career-orientated, academic type of person; I think I would have been a professor."*

6.3 INNER COUPLE DYNAMICS

This section details the intricacies of the couple by taking a look at the husbands' and wives' characteristics, their levels of education and career progression, their allocated roles, the reasons for both spouses working, their financial situation, as well as spousal dominance in the relationships. Each of these will be discussed in turn in the following sections in order to understand the inner workings of the couple.

6.3.1 Husbands' and wives' characteristics

The majority of wives in the study could be described as independent, liberal, and disciplined individuals. Most of the husbands' personalities took on more of a supportive, empathic, and encouraging stance. The couples also differed in aspects such as religious stringency, confidence levels, as well as their methodological approaches to completing tasks. Although such personalities may be seen as conflicting, the majority of participants described their personalities as complementing each other in the marital relationship, as in the case of Husband 3:

"I'm more of a technical person, a practical person and she's more of an intellectual person. She thinks things through where I like to get it done by hand. So we sort of complement each other, we balance each other out. If there's a project that I find a little bit difficult putting it down on paper or getting into a studying routine as I'm not that kind of person, I just cannot settle down to a routine, she will help me structure myself and force me to get into that habit. So we complement each other no matter what."

This has resulted in most couples describing their marital relationships as healthy due to the respect, understanding, and open relationships they have with each other. However, two female participants viewed their marital relationships in a negative light, as they saw their husbands as being jealous, unsupportive, as well as having inferiority complexes. These participants therefore viewed their husband's personality as a crucial factor in determining the support offered, which ultimately had an impact on their career advancement.

6.3.2 Level of education of spouses

All the husbands had completed their schooling up to matric level, with most husbands having pursued tertiary education. In addition, most of the husbands have graduated with diplomas, while some had obtained degrees in their respective fields. Similar to the husbands, the wives in this study had completed their schooling up to matric and had pursued tertiary education. However, the majority of women have obtained degrees rather than certifications or diplomas. Furthermore, most of the women had pursued or were pursuing postgraduate studies, such as master's degrees, PhDs, or specialising in their respective fields. Therefore, in most of the couples, the wives had a higher level of education than their spouses.

In certain instances the educational aspirations and achievements of the wives had a positive impact on their marital relationships, as it served as a motivation for their husbands to advance as well, as Husband 2 explained:

“I want more, you know. I can’t imagine being with someone who’s not studying, not inspiring because I think I’d just fall back into a slumber as well and just do what needs to be done.”

However, the educational levels of the spouses also had a negative impact on the way the spouses viewed each other. Wife 9 described her husband as a “nothing” because he had not pursued tertiary education:

“He never studied and he never achieved anything. The fact that he’s nothing and I mean he’s not studied. Sort of put it in inverted commas.”

It thus can be seen that the level of education of the spouses relative to each other had an effect on the marital relationships, as it influenced the way the spouses viewed each other. With the level of education between the spouses discussed, I now turn to the level of career progression between the spouses to determine how it impacts on their marital relationships.

6.3.3 Level of career progression of spouses

The male participants had been working for most of their lives, with many having been involved in other fields such as business and academia before settling into their respective careers. Among the female participants, the majority were career orientated from a young age and had been involved in their careers since the completion of their studies. A few of the women had previously been housewives, but were driven to the working world due to factors such as a personal need for intellectual stimulation or a situational need, such as the primary breadwinner in the family passing away or a negative circumstance that they were faced with. Furthermore, it must be noted that the women had not only pursued careers, but had excelled in their respective fields, as they received awards for their achievements and had been nominated as top employees in their companies. Thus, in most of the couples, the wives were in a higher career position when compared to their husbands, as was the case of Wife 4:

“I think I moved up faster than him. Now eventually he’s in sort of a managerial position but I’m there for the past ten years.”

The majority of husbands viewed their wives’ career advancement in a positive light, as they felt excited, happy, and proud of their wives’ achievements. However, Husband 1 noted that he had initially felt threatened by his wife’s career advancement:

“Initially I felt like, wait a minute, do I need to compete? Initially that was a concern but no it was not a competition.”

The positive feelings were confirmed by most of the wives, with the exception of the two who experienced negative repercussions from their husbands as a result of their career advancement. These women noted that a power struggle had ensued in their marriages due to their career advancement and, as a result, they are verbally and/or physically abused by their husbands. Wife 9 indicated the verbal abuse she experienced as her husband’s dismay with her career advancement was disclosed in an argument:

*“The things he does, he’s definitely got an inferiority complex and I think that is why he tries to use violence as the only mechanism to show his power. When he’s abusive, he’ll scream and say ‘Go and bring your f***ing organisation for me, I’m not frightened of them. Don’t think you’re this big person in the organisation’. In that way it comes out. So I suppose he keeps it in his mind and then shows me that because he says these things.”*

The level of career progression of the spouses therefore had an effect on the marital relationship, as it had an impact on the way the spouses viewed each other.

6.3.4 Roles of the husband and wife in the home

The majority of both male and female participants noted that a division of labour existed in their homes and thus described their roles in the marital relationship as being shared. Many of the participants noted that stereotypical roles existed in that the wife was still held predominantly responsible for the domestic tasks, such as taking care of the children’s needs, cooking, as well as ensuring the cleanliness and neatness of their homes. The husbands, on the other hand, were held predominantly responsible for the maintenance work in their homes, including technical aspects such as renovations, gardening and the maintenance of their vehicles. These roles are starkly described by Husband 4 as:

“I take care of the house and she takes care of the home.”

Wife 6 explained the stereotypical role divisions in her relationship which she ascribed to the inherent differences between the sexes:

“I think a woman now shares an equal role to a man in the working world but at the same time I still believe that women and men are inherently different. I’m fortunate I have a husband that can cook and he can do anything else. He can scrub the floors if he wants to scrub the floor so he’s not your traditional Indian thing – male from the Indian community. We have friends who have husbands that are totally the opposite of him; they won’t do a

thing. But I still maintain at the end of the day that no matter what you do, no matter what your level is in the workplace, there are certain responsibilities at home that are primarily yours. What might be a priority for a woman might not be a priority for a man. So I would rush home and cook but I can promise you with my husband if somebody had to come and they were chatting he would be so busy chatting, the last thing on his mind would be getting the food on because the girls must eat by a certain time. So I don't rely on him to that extent. I believe that there are certain duties and responsibilities as a woman. Even though you are in the working world you've got to come home and you've got to sort those things out."

Many couples noted that, although these were their domains of responsibility, their roles were not strictly defined, as they adopted a flexible approach. This meant that husbands would assist their wives with their tasks and vice versa if the need arose, as in the case of Wife 2:

"He'll phone me and say 'I know I have to take him for Maths at five o'clock but I'm in Brooklyn'. But he'll phone me at about four, giving me enough time to kind of just lock up and come. As long I can come home and do it if he's not able to, fine. By the same token if I have a commitment to take my youngest son somewhere and I'm not home, I'll phone and say 'Look I'm not going to be able to make it, can you?'"

Although all the male participants noted that they played a vital role in their homes, there were three female participants who noted that there was an overload of tasks being placed on their shoulders, with the husband playing either a minimal or non-existent role in their homes. The reasons identified for this were either the husband being involved in a very demanding job, or him viewing domestic tasks as solely the wife's responsibility. Another possible reason could be the importance participants placed on various life roles, as the husbands noted that they played a big role while the wives viewed the husbands' contribution as minimal. Furthermore, Wife 9 describes the load placed on her shoulders, as she believes that her husband views domestic tasks as menial and degrading:

*“Well mine is everything. I mean I look after the house, the car, the children, the finances, the food, the careers of my children, you know what I’m trying to say? I do everything, he does nothing. So his role...I don’t know if there is a role, he’s just like a parasite living in my house at this stage. He still thinks like I’m the **man** of the house, no other f***ing man does this, who hangs clothes and he looks at it as menial, he looks at it as woman’s job. So it’s difficult at my house. You have to force him but when he drinks or he drugs or whatever then he’s screaming and swearing like ‘who the f**k do you think I am to bloody help you to mop your f***ing floors’. Like that kind of thing. So he’s really bad so that’s why in a sense you don’t even ask him, you do it yourself because he takes it out on you.”*

From the above it therefore can be seen that, although the majority of couples divide the domestic labour, there are men who believe domestic chores are solely a woman’s responsibility.

6.3.5 Reasons for both spouses working

Two reasons were evident for both spouses being involved in careers, namely: to satisfy a personal need as well as to satisfy a financial need. These two will be explored in greater detail in the following sections.

6.3.5.1 Working to satisfy a personal need

One of the main driving factors identified by the women causing them to advocate women’s career advancement was the independence afforded by the earning power of a career. Wife 8 echoed the sentiments of many of the women when she noted that self-sufficiency is necessary, as it serves as a safety net in light of the high divorce rates or should the husband die:

“I know I have the ability to be independent. It’s just the comfort of knowing that should anything ever happen to my husband or should anything happen to the marriage; I will be able to support myself and my kids. It’s a comfort and also a very driving factor that allows you to be independent.”

Secondly, many of the participants described themselves as high achievers; therefore work satisfied their need for personal growth, as they described their work as intellectually stimulating and challenging. Wife 1 explained that her decision to continue working was made as her need for personal growth could not be satisfied by being a housewife:

*“I can’t see myself being at home. I can’t see myself just doing **nothing**. I feel like if you stay at home you kind of caught up in your own little cocoon. It’s just your family and it’s the same mundane routine every day. Like I remember when I was on maternity leave, I used to wait for my husband to come home because it becomes very monotonous. The whole day you don’t interact with adults, you don’t get dressed up and go to work. So even though it’s a challenge, I **prefer** the challenge, I prefer working.”*

The participants also mentioned the respect Indian women are given as a result of them pursuing careers. Wife 3 noted how she earned respect from her spouse and family members, as well as gained confidence by being involved in her career:

*“It’s a typical Indian thing where once a woman starts working then there’s more respect. The whole family respects you more. They look at you differently than when you were at home. Like when I was at home I started feeling like I’m not part of the outside world and then they’d all be talking and I don’t contribute because I don’t know. Then I started to work again, my confidence rose and definitely respect came in. **Definitely** that came in. Respect from him and from the entire family and now when anyone comes I can have a conversation with them and they don’t look at me like ‘what am I saying?’ It’s like I can talk, like you know what’s happening out there. I don’t know, maybe it’s just me or something. I just think I was a ‘domkop’* when I was at home.”*

*Domkop= Afrikaans slang for a stupid person

Wife 9 indicated the value she placed on her career, as it provided her with an opportunity to interact with other adults and substitutes for the lack of communication with her husband:

*“I’d **die** if I don’t work. I’m just thinking maybe there’s an underlying need because there’s no stimulation from like a partner at home that you can talk to or discuss. So there’s that kind of communication that I have with the other adults there at work and the type of work that I do that really stimulates me and maybe I’m that type of person that must have that.”*

6.3.5.2 Working due to financial need

Both the male and female participants noted that the rising cost of living was a major factor driving couples to the work environment. Thus, one of the main reasons the wives worked was to assist their husbands by alleviating the financial responsibility placed on him. Three of the participants noted that they were the primary breadwinners in their homes and therefore they were involved in careers to provide financial support for their families. However, the majority of participants noted that the reason both spouses worked was not to simply survive, but to ‘push the envelope’, as the lifestyle they led was not possible with a single income. Thus, dual incomes afford families a more comfortable life, as it provides them with benefits such as holidays, driving good cars, as well as providing better education for their children, to name a few. Husband 2 explained the benefits provided by two incomes, as was the case with most of the couples:

*“If I worked at the time that we got married and she never worked we could have made it by, we could have had a **decent** house, and we could have had a **decent** life. Just on average. We would have driven simple cars and we would have managed. But now when I think about it the life that we wanted for ourselves could never have been done on one salary.”*

Husband 3 noted that this situation was unique to the Indian culture, as other cultures had different priorities and thus led different lifestyles:

“Our normal living is in a different class to everybody else. If you look at different cultures a black guy would live properly on pap and cereal for a month, we wouldn’t. We like our meat and our steaks and our different variety of meals. We like to dress up nicely where he wouldn’t mind being in a position where he’d bath with cold water every day, we wouldn’t. Different as a white person would, they have a different structure where they prepare for the future, we want to live for now. They watch their food, they exercise, and they have a tolerance for pets. All the different cultures they have their different ways. We live and we enjoy what we have every day. I think our lifestyle is why I think both of us should work.”

6.3.6 Couples’ financial situation

It can be seen from the preceding that understanding the financial situation of the couple is crucial to understanding the inner-couple dynamics. In order to provide a background to the financial situation of the couples, the wives’ earnings relative to that of their spouses were as follows: in three couples the wives earned approximately the same as their spouse, in two couples the wives earned less than their husbands, in three couples the wives earned more than their husbands, and in one couple there was uncertainty about what the other spouse earned. The majority of couples shared the financial responsibility in their homes. However, in three couples the wives were the primary breadwinners. This was a permanent arrangement in two cases, with the wife being the main financial provider. This situation arose either as a result of the wife earning more or the husband supporting his extended family while the wife supports their immediate family. The third case in which the wife was the primary breadwinner was a temporary arrangement, as the husband was involved in full-time studies and therefore the wife was the primary breadwinner due to their situation.

Although the majority of wives and some of the husbands who shared the expenses with their spouses noted that it did not matter who sorted out the expenses. The other husbands had a different view, as a common theme that emerged from their responses was that the financial situation of the couple tied in strongly with their masculinity. Thus, they associated the responsibility of providing financially for their families with their manhood. Husband 2 epitomised the opinions of the like-minded male participants:

*“When I go to Pick n Pay, she’s busy so I go. Now groceries and things is my wife’s bill, but for me if we need stuff for the house I will go and get it and I will never say ‘You need to give me the money for that’. I will **never ever**. So for me, I will rather not save money than ask my wife for money for stuff because I feel like to buy bread and milk or anything for my daughter or anything for my wife, I don’t feel comfortable asking for money. I don’t think it’s the male/female thing, it makes you feel like a man when you come with the groceries, it makes you feel like you’re taking care of your family.”*

Similarly, it was found that the husbands’ earnings relative to that of their wives also impacted on their masculinity, as the feelings of Husband 1 mirrored that of many of the husbands in the study:

“I had a problem initially. She’s earning more than I do. Does it mean it’s going to affect me mentally, physically, or however? My manhood was at stake, you know. Initially that was something that I’d created.”

Earnings also tied in with support offered, as some wives felt that their husbands supported them less because of their earnings. However in other instances, there were issues of inferiority, as husbands considered that their offerings of support to their wives may be a result of their feelings of inferiority. Husband 2 provides an example of this:

“I’ve got friends who are earning much more than their wives and are supporting them. A part of me feels like I wish I was earning more, like a lot more. There’s this guy at work and he was saying ‘You know, my wife earns much more than me’. He was saying ‘I do everything, my wife’s here, my

wife's there, she's in a conference or she's busy'. I was just listening to this conversation and I was thinking to myself, like am I as supportive of my wife and do I do – I was just thinking about that – do I do a lot of running around and do I do a lot of things for her because I feel she's better than me? I was thinking about it the other day and I wonder like for me to get up in the morning and run around the kitchen to get stuff for my daughter like a lot of guys don't do that. So why am I doing it? Is it something inside of me that I'm trying to make up for?"

As a result of such feelings, many husbands noted that in an ideal situation they would like to earn more than their wives, as explained by Husband 2:

"I think if you were in a relationship where for example I was earning much lower than her and I couldn't contribute as much as I do, I don't think I would be happy with it. As much as I like her progressing, I don't think it'll make me happy. You won't feel like a provider. I think it's a big thing for a man to feel like you contribute."

6.3.7 Continuation with work if not needed financially

As explained earlier, the female participants revealed that they would continue to work even if it was not for financial reasons, as it fulfilled a personal need. However, the majority of female participants indicated that they would scale down on their careers, with many of the women noting that their ideal job would be to work half a day. This would allow them to spend more time with their families as well as provide leisure time for them to take care of themselves. The words of Wife 4 reflect other wives' views:

"Not a full day and not do the overtime but just half the day. Just to keep in touch because I've studied so much. But I wouldn't do overtime and work weekends. I would love to spend time with my children and also have time for myself – go to the gym and take care of my own appearance and needs."

Among the husbands, the majority indicated that they would allow their wives to continue working, as they believed it allowed personal growth to occur, which in turn enhanced their marital relationships. This is explained by Husband 2:

*“It makes our conversations so much richer and I think the people we meet at work and the stories we come home with and the things you talk about, I **love** that. I wouldn’t want to take that away from my wife, it’s learning about the world and also another thing I feel is that being a housewife is like you don’t learn about the world, you’re in the house but you’re never really living in this world.”*

However, there were two husbands who felt that the ideal situation would entail their wives not working at all. Their reasons were the safety of having their wives at home, as they did not approve of them travelling, and ensuring that their domestic roles were fulfilled with pre-eminence, as Husband 8 explained:

*“I would **definitely** rather have my wife at home; she can help the children and see to the household because there’s a lot of demands on myself personally in terms of the sacrifices and the shortcomings that I have to live with on a day-to-day basis. I would totally encourage her to stay at home and I would rather be the one who goes out to work, but like I stated in terms of practicality, in terms of economics, it’s just not possible. But say you take out the economics out of the equation, **definitely**. Her function is to be at home, to look after the children, and to run the household. Then she can educate herself as well if she wants to.”*

6.3.8 Spousal dominance in the relationship

Spousal dominance in relation to decision making and seizing career opportunities were identified by the participants and are discussed in the subsequent sections.

6.3.8.1 *Spousal dominance in decision making*

Mixed results were obtained regarding the manner in which decisions were made by the couples. The majority of participants noted that their decisions were made jointly through consultation with their spouses. However, female participants noted that even though this was the case, their husbands had the final say in terms of the decision making, as in the case of Wife 2:

“I said to him listen I think this is what I think we should be doing but it was really up to him in the end to say yes. If he said no, he doesn’t think it’s going to work then I would have just left it.”

With other couples, who were in the minority, an autocratic rule existed in their homes, where the husband was responsible for the decision making on important matters, as Wife 3 explained:

Wife 3: “I still fall in the old generation where they make the main decisions.”

Sumaiyah: “You mean your husband?”

Wife 3: “Yeah. I’m still in that. I wish I wasn’t. Yeah, but it’s still that way.”

In other instances the wife was responsible for the decision making, as indicated by Wife 4:

“Usually I make them on my own but I do consult him occasionally and he’s very difficult to approach. He’s like an ostrich; he doesn’t want to commit himself so most of the times I make the decisions on my own.”

6.3.8.2 *Spousal dominance in seizing career opportunities*

When questioned about a time when the spouses' careers conflicted, the results from the female participants revealed that their husbands' careers took preference most of the time, as Wife 5 explained:

“His business always comes first. Like now he went away and I’m starting a new job. I’m starting it tomorrow and he just went to another province yesterday. So his things always come first. I just have to manage.”

Contrastingly, the majority of men noted a time when their wives' careers took preference, as Husband 2 explained:

“When we just got married I was working for a company for nine years and I was just making my way up. I just got into a management position and things were working out quite well and my wife got a job overseas and she wanted to travel a bit. We never grew up in a home where you wanted to travel, we never had those opportunities so we never wanted it and she really wanted the job abroad. So I said to her, ‘You go, I’m fine I’ll work’, but she didn’t want to go without me and I had to make a difficult decision to leave a company where I knew everybody in the company, I was making my way up and I was pretty comfortable in the position I was in. I just wanted to make her happy and I knew she wouldn’t be happy if I wasn’t there so I resigned and I went with her.”

It must be noted that, although in most cases, such as in the situation of Husband 2, who was happy to relocate due to his wife's career opportunities, there were men who were unhappy that their wives' careers took preference, as in the case of Husband 8:

“I’ve always had to sacrifice and make provision. For example, when I had a job opportunity in Johannesburg and we were living in Pretoria, I didn’t want to uproot the family and take the children out of school to move to Johannesburg and set them up in a new environment and expect her to move. I would rather travel myself to Johannesburg on a daily basis through

the traffic, spending two hours either way and spending long hours, leaving early in the morning, coming home late, spending a whole day at work, than expecting her to move to accommodate me. My wife's career takes preference all the time."

Other couples noted that there was no spousal dominance, as there were instances when their career took preference and others when their spouse's career took precedence. Thus they were accommodating and accepting when faced with such situations, as in the case of Husband 4:

*"We both enjoy what we're doing so if she needs to do something and it would maybe interfere with my career, it's fine, it's not a problem because we know that everything we do is just temporarily. For example, at one stage she wanted to go to overseas, she had an opportunity to work overseas, there's a company there that approached her to actually work there and I was quite happy to pack up and move. It was no issue. I had a contract and I wanted to move to **another province**, she was quite happy leaving her job for us to move there. There was never a case where we had to step back, but I think if push comes to shove we wouldn't mind doing that."*

Comparing the responses received from the couples it was noted that, in most cases, different instances of career conflict were stated, with most noting the case that impacted negatively on them. Thus, husbands remembered the sacrifices they had to make for their wives' careers and vice versa.

6.4 HUSBANDS' AND WIVES' PERCEPTIONS REGARDING WOMEN'S CAREER ADVANCEMENT

This section details both the husbands' and wives' perceptions regarding women's career advancement, as well as the reasons for such perceptions. Secondly, the general perceptions of the current Indian society are explained determine if they have changed from what was indicated in the pre-marital life of the participants.

6.4.1 Wives' perceptions regarding women's career advancement

Regardless of the many challenges discussed in the previous sections, all of the women interviewed noted that they were in favour of women's career advancement. They promoted the equality of women and indicated that their perceptions entailed a transformation from their traditional roles of being involved solely in domestic tasks to entering the work environment and advancing in their careers, as Wife 7 explained:

"I think women can pursue a career unlike if you look at the generations dating back from our parents to us and our children, I think we've come a long way. There are more opportunities, women have a different outlook, they are more career orientated, they are more exposed to people. I think those days are gone where you find a typical woman, that's a housewife. I don't believe if you're a woman – irrespective of your culture, your upbringing – that a woman's place is in a home, in the kitchen, raising a family and kids. I don't believe in that. I believe women need to have equal opportunities, freedom of speech, also equal respect."

The women noted that spousal support was crucial for the success of their career aspirations. The majority of them felt that equality of responsibility in the home domain was required for the success of dual-career marriages. Wife 4 explained that this need was heightened due to the dissolution of extended families:

*"The fact that now we've broken away from extended families and we have more nuclear families. In extended families the men worked and the women stayed at home but **now** with nuclear families each family has to look after themselves and I think that's why both husband and wife have to work. People have realised that and they realised that you cannot carry on that the women should do all the chores. It's just not possible. Women today are also having quite high positions – managerial positions. So they have to spend longer hours at work and give their best and if the husband wants a better life for his family he'll encourage her to go to work and then he has to help out."*

Thus, the women in this study concurred that the choice of spouse was crucial for the career success of women, as Wife 9 explained:

“My advice would be that if women want to pursue careers, you must think twice about who you marry and that maybe if you are career orientated or you are a professional that you should marry somebody that’s also a professional that can also understand your work and stuff like that because I think those marriages work out easier.”

6.4.2 Reasons for perceptions held by the wives

Many of the perceptions held by the women were moulded in their childhood by role models they could emulate. These role models were female family members, friends, or strong women they had come across in their lives who had influenced them to become independent, further their education, and advance in their careers, as explained by Wife 3:

“I look at my friend for instance and she’s such a good role model. I only met her now and I think why didn’t I meet her ten years back? I’ll tell you why she’s such a role model to me, it’s like if I met her ten years ago I would have been at home with my kids but I would have been studying as well and improving myself so I can be more marketable, like how she’s done it. I didn’t know her, so in retrospect I had friends that were all housewives. I can’t be like that because the only thing for them is the cooking, the children, the mother-in-law and that was it. That was all their lives revolved around and I became very dull with all of that. So, I’m definitely for careers and to go out there and improve yourself, improve your knowledge and everything. I’m definitely for that.”

The majority of female participants had grown up in homes where their mothers worked and thus looked up to their mothers as ‘superwomen’ who managed to work as well as take care of their homes. The majority of participants had seen the balancing of work and family life first-hand and thus were of the opinion that they could do so themselves.

They also believed that their children would manage if they pursued their careers, as Wife 3 explained:

“Look when we grew up, my parents both worked. So we were at home with the maid, they were at the business, when they come home then we were there. So we grew up like that and we were fine. So they’ll be fine too.”

However, other participants’ perceptions were shaped by negative circumstances, such as violence, divorce, submissiveness of wives, and so forth. These situations changed their perceptions towards being in favour of women working and advancing in their careers. Wife 7 explained how the divorce from her previous husband altered her perception of women’s roles:

“I think my life just changed, my outlook, my perception on life changed after I got married, after I went through a divorce, after I became a parent. That’s when I realised that there’s more to life. We were raised to believe a woman’s place is in the home and raise your kids. The man will provide for his family – he needs to go out there and make sure that there’s food on the table and your place was just in the home. I think when I got married as well Sumaiyah that’s what my husband wanted me to do – be a typical housewife and look after the kids. I did that for a while because I felt that was the right thing to do because we were brought up that way until I felt that I needed change in my life, there’s more to life than just raising kids and I think my outlook changed because then I felt that this was just not me, sitting at home and getting up in the morning, making breakfast, cleaning and cooking the whole day, picking your kids up. I also believe that I didn’t get the opportunity of having a good education, so I wanted a good education for my kids and that’s why I think my perception of life changed a lot because I found myself, I became a different person.”

Their experiences and perceptions had a snowball effect in that all the female participants who had daughters concurred that they would encourage them to pursue and advance in their desired careers. Thus, as Wife 3 explained, the women serve as role models for their children:

“I have realised that if I study and if I work, my children are also going to follow in my footsteps. If I sit at home they’re going to think it’s fine for them to also sit at home, which is not true. You see lots of examples of that, where the parents are at home or they may be financially fine that they don’t need to work, their children also don’t study and then I think if they can see that I’m studying then they can also study.”

Thus it can be seen that the women in this study encouraged and promoted the career advancement of women. A clear chain is apparent in that daughters look up to their mothers as role models, and the fact that they manage to take care of both the family and work domains serves as a form of encouragement for the daughters to pursue their career aspirations.

6.4.3 Husbands’ perceptions regarding women’s career advancement

The majority of male participants supported the notion of women’s career advancement. In addition, these men acknowledged that they had to play a role in the home domain in order for the dual-career arrangement to be a success. Although many men viewed women as playing a major role in the home domain due to their natural inclinations, these men believed in the fairness and equality of sexes, such as in the case of Husband 5:

“Women have had and still do I suppose to a large extent within our community, suffer injustices and it’s sad but it’s also a reality. I think people need to understand that there is no difference. A woman is not lesser. In fact I think they’re capable and in fact much more capable than most men in our society. I think our Indian people must now begin to understand and realise the value and the potential of women. It makes it easier for you when there

are no differences, when you do not differentiate between the sexes. It makes life easier because you know, this business of the whole male chauvinistic idea or view is pre-historic and it's gone. It doesn't have a place in our society anymore."

The men who had daughters also indicated that they would encourage them to pursue their desired careers. Husband 3 explained the equal treatment his daughters had grown up with:

"I have four girls so I expect them to be able to do anything and everything. Nothing must limit them. When I'm working on the car they become my spanner girls as such or they'll help me wash the cars. I brought it up from small so there is an understanding they can do everything and they shouldn't limit you."

A common trend that emerged from the men's responses was that bigger issues arise if women are feeling stifled and bored at home, as this will have an impact on their marital and family lives. This is indicated by Husband 2:

"I don't want to come home and my wife's spent the whole day in the house and I just feel like it's going to add on. I feel if she's happy, the home is happy and we're happy."

However, there were two husbands who held the viewpoint that women should be housewives. They placed greater emphasis on the wife taking care of the home rather than pursuing a career, as Husband 8 explained:

*"I believe the role of a woman is that her first priority would be to look after the household, to be a housewife, then if she can cope with that situation then she's also encouraged at all times to learn. It doesn't mean that if you're a housewife you cannot study and learn and educate yourself. The role of women, even today, my belief is that she should be firstly running the household and **then** following her career. If the situation was different where*

I had the funds and I had the income, I wouldn't encourage her to go out and work. I would rather say you look after the household."

6.4.4 Reasons for perceptions held by the husbands

Similar to the wives' responses, role models influenced many of the male participants' perceptions. Family values, such as the treatment of women, were strongly encouraged by the men in the family. However, there were a lack of male role models who depicted assistance to their wives with domestic tasks, even though some of the wives were employed. However, the fact that many of the male participants' mothers worked had a great influence on their views regarding women's career advancement, their roles in the home, as well as the support they offered to their wives. It also resulted in greater empathy being shown towards their wives. The situation of Husband 5 is a typical example of how mothers as role models influenced the male participants' views regarding the treatment and career advancement of their wives:

*"Well the women in my family have always been strong, more a maternal influence. My paternal grandparents were more like the male hierarchy kind of thing but we had a lot of maternal grandparents' influence. My mother's mother was a very strong woman. When she came from India she started a business and although she came with my grandfather, my mother's father, she was the stronger person because she saw to everything. She was a strong person and my mother was a strong person as well. Then my sister is a strong person as well. So we grew up basically with women **not** being subservient. So she was very strong that's why the family values I've developed, the values that I have at the moment are purely because of what I was exposed to and that is that you regard each other as equals and you share your responsibilities. You have to balance it."*

In addition, the participants' life experiences influenced their views. It made them realise what they wanted to achieve as well as what they did not want, such as in the case of Husband 3:

“I’ve seen men behaving badly and I don’t want my girls and any woman for that matter to be living under the conditions my mom lived under. They must be self-reliant, be able to handle their own weight, and do whatever they want to do. At the end of the day they have the same capabilities.”

The husbands who were not in favour of women's career advancement made reference to the impact of religion on their perceptions. They made mention of religion that had allocated specific roles – for men to be providers and women to be housewives. These participants also noted that their financial situation had an impact on their perceptions, as Husband 8 explained:

“The personal benefits is that I’d come home to a cooked meal, it would be ready on time, I wouldn’t have to wait, the kids would be seen to, I’d know that the household is well run, I’d know that everything has been taken care of. Whereas now if things are not taken care of I can’t be demanding and say well ‘Why wasn’t my shirt ironed?’ or ‘Why wasn’t my meal on time?’ or ‘Why is this thing not cooked properly?’ or whatever the case may be. So there are sacrifices but at the same time one has got to be practical. One has got to look at what suits you, what is going to make your life work and then you adapt your life to the circumstances. The situation has changed to such an extent that it now overrides your beliefs and perceptions.”

I entered this study with the preconceived idea that the younger generation of men supported their wives to a greater extent than those of the older generation. Similar sentiments were echoed by the participants in this study, as Wife 4 explained:

“I feel that the younger generation, the men are more supportive than the older generation and they are more understanding. I think the time of my parents, my mum didn’t work and she looked after the children. I think my

generation has had it the most difficult where the husband didn't change in his perception, he expected or enjoyed the income but at the same time he expected me to play a domestic role – the way my mother played a role. But I see with your generation that the men do realise that they have to chip in and help and I'm glad that it's happening.”

However, the results of this study revealed that there are men of a younger generation who are not providing adequate support to their wives and who believe that a woman's place is at home, as well as those of the older generation who fully support their wives and their career advancement. Family background therefore has a greater impact on the men's perceptions in relation to women progressing in their careers, rather than their age grouping.

6.4.5 Perceptions of women's career advancement in the current Indian society

Both the men and the women agreed that the Indian society has changed over the years in that it has become more respectful, encouraging and accepting of career women. A transformation has occurred, to such an extent that many of the women's lives are planned around their careers, which would have been a rare occurrence in previous generations. Wife 1 provided an example of how careers are becoming a priority among Indian women in current times:

*“There's a definitely a trend **more** towards the independent woman and the career woman. You can see it in the media; I see it among my friends and older friends. Women are even getting married later these days because they are establishing their careers, they settling in. You find that women nowadays are getting married in their late twenties and even more so into their thirties.”*

Many ascribed this transformation to the high cost of living, as well as the increase in divorce rates, which heightened the need for independence. However, South Africa is unique as the participants highlighted that apartheid and the Constitution of South Africa had a major effect on the transformation process. Wife 9 explained how apartheid

motivated Indian women to advance:

*“Because of apartheid and because of the freedom and that women saw themselves as suppressed and abused and all that kinds of things, they became **stronger** to **want to** succeed, to **want to** be professionals. I think there’s some underlying thing and I think a lot is also done with the kind of advocacy and the Constitution of South Africa where women have become very aware about the fact that you should **not** be discriminated against because you’re a woman. So a lot of women have stood up for their rights and I see it on a daily basis even in the work environment because you’ll hear women sometimes say ‘these men, it’s still this old boys club’ but they’ll stand up against it if they feel that way.”*

Furthermore, the participants noted that Black Economic empowerment had placed Indian women at an advantage, as the law provides greater opportunities for them to advance than previously. Thus many women are grabbing these opportunities with both hands. However, as Husband 5 noted, the Indian cultural values are unique and, despite the opportunities provided, these values place certain limitations on Indian women:

“Today’s society has opened up. I mean the young people are now educating themselves so it allows them that freedom. Although I think the Indian people have this very strong sense of family and also of protectiveness. So somehow with all these freedoms there are limitations in the sense that we don’t allow the freedoms as you would see among white people, even black people allow the freedoms that white people have. It’s because family is so important, and I think the day we lose that value then we’re going to be totally lost because it’s an important value to have – that sense of family that you stay together because life is like that, you never know when you’re going to need support and we are like that, we would support.”

As stated earlier, despite the changes taking place in current society, Indian women are not emancipated from their domestic responsibilities, as both male and female

participants noted that women were still held primarily responsible for the home domain. However, as Husband 8 explained, domestic responsibilities are easier today than in previous years because a great deal can be outsourced:

*“They’re still expected to run the household but it’s a much more liberal approach. They’re encouraged to study, they’re encouraged to go to university, they’re encouraged to follow careers, and they’re encouraged to be career-orientated women. They’re expected to run the house, but now it’s much **easier**, it’s a more liberal approach and they now can expect somebody to cook for them, instead of expecting the women to cook for them. The maid will cook, for example, she will bring up the children, she’ll see to the cleaning and the washing. Basically performing the function of a wife and letting the wife now go out and work.”*

Although in the minority, some participants also mentioned friends, family, or community members who had stopped working. Many participants mentioned the vital role husbands play in such a decision, as Wife 5 explained:

*“There is a big improvement like a lot of women and young women are all starting to work but I think that a lot of my friends once they have kids they just leave their career. I think a lot of the husbands also, from what I hear about them, a lot of their husbands are actually forcing them to sit at home even though they **want to** go out and work their husbands are forcing them to sit at home.”*

6.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I focused on the couples’ current lives by examining the inner-couple dynamics, the balancing of work and family life, as well the individual’s perceptions regarding women’s career advancement. Although each couple presented a unique situation when exploring the inner-couple dynamics, trends were noticeable.

It was apparent that the couples face many challenges as a result of both spouses being involved in careers. Thus, they draw on many resources in their attempts to strike a balance between work and family life. Although external support was valued, of which domestic helpers served as a crucial source of support, the female participants concurred that they place great importance on the husband as a source of support. The position of spouses relative to each other in terms of their education level, their level of career progression, as well as their earnings are crucial avenues to explore, as these aspects have an impact on the way couples view one another, as well as on the well-being of the marital relationship. It also was apparent that these factors had a greater impact on the husbands than the wives. Furthermore, role models played a crucial role by encouraging the women to be independent and advance in their careers, as well as influencing the men's views regarding women's career advancement.

The life contexts explored in both the pre-marital and post-marital lives of the participants formed the basis for understanding their current perceptions on women's career advancement. The current perceptions show that all women in the study are advocates of women's career advancement, with the majority of men mirroring their wives' perceptions. Similarly, it was discovered that although there is a move towards greater acceptance of women's career advancement in the broader Indian society, this is not the case among all Indians, as some are still anchored in the traditional views of women and their roles.

The next chapter presents a discussion of the main findings of this study in relation to the available literature on the topic.

CHAPTER 7:

DISCUSSION – CHANGING PERCEPTIONS REGARDING WOMEN’S CAREER ADVANCEMENT

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I aim to answer the research questions highlighted in Chapter 1 by comparing the current and established literature on the subject with the main findings from this study, as revealed in Chapters 5 and 6. During the interviews it was revealed that the perceptions regarding women’s career advancement had transformed, in that Indians have become more accepting and encouraging of women pursuing and advancing in their careers than in earlier years. This will be discussed at greater length in the subsequent sections, along with other essential themes that emerged from the study that tie in closely with the topic under study and have yielded interesting results. These include the dynamics surrounding Indian dual-career couples, as well as the manner in which professional Indian women attempt to strike a work-life balance, which will be discussed in the sections to follow.

7.2 PREVIOUS PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN’S CAREER ADVANCEMENT

As can be seen from the preceding chapters, the results of this study reveal that the perceptions of women’s career advancement were shaped by various contextual factors, including apartheid, the Indian culture, religious prescriptions, as well as family background. In this study, apartheid was identified as one of the main factors that limited the career advancement of Indian women in South Africa. Maharaj (1995) and Carrim (2012) have noted that, during the apartheid era, different rights and privileges were afforded to individuals from the various race groups, with the white race grouping being afforded superiority. The participants in this study confirmed this when they noted the separation of educational institutions along racial lines. Although majority of the participants had studied at predominantly Indian higher education institutions, they highlighted the motivation of lecturers to ensure that the level of education received by black people (Indians, coloureds, and Africans) was on par with that of white students. In addition, the participants noted that the Job Reservation Act of 1926 provided limited

career advancement opportunities for women and they concurred with Naidoo and Kongolo (2004) that Indian women who did venture into the working world were employed mainly at lower levels in organisations, performing basic work. It was interesting to note that the inequality of apartheid, which was aimed at limiting the career advancement of Indian women, actually served as a motivating factor for many of the women interviewed, as they put greater effort into their studies and their work in order to triumph over the apartheid system. However, these women were regarded as the exception rather than the rule when compared to women in the broader Indian society.

This discrepancy can be explained by the impact of traditional Indian cultural values on women and their roles. The participants in this study confirmed the notions of Patel et al. (2006) as well as Salway et al. (2005) that the traditional Indian culture places great emphasis on the wife shouldering the domestic responsibilities, while the husband adopts the role of being the financial provider for the family. Thus, the predominant role of Indian women at the time when the participants were growing up was that of being a housewife. The participants also confirmed that women were beginning to break free from the monotony of household tasks by getting involved in the informal sector by assisting their husbands in their businesses or venturing into home industries (Carrim, 2012; Vangarajaloo, 2011). Furthermore, the participants noted the commencement of a revolution, as the younger generation of Indian women were educating themselves beyond school level and were pursuing various careers. However, their career aspirations did not exempt them from their domestic responsibilities, which were still viewed as their primary role. Thus, the women's career aspirations contradict the traditional expectations set by the Indian society according to the conformance to social expectations theory, which determines the degree to which individuals fit the norms set by society (Freudenthaler & Mikula, 1998).

Religion played a big part in the participants' lives and had an impact on their behaviour and attitudes, the demarcation of roles, and to influence issues related to personal independence (Andrade et al., 1999). As religion is a subjective topic, mixed results were obtained from the participants with regard to the religious views relating to women's career advancement. In this study it was found that religion was used as a

justification for many of the participants' perceptions and behaviours regarding women's career advancement. It should also be noted that the Hindu and Muslim participants pointed out that there was a fine line between culture and religion, as cultural injunctions are often wrongfully labelled as religious prescriptions. This is in line with the study conducted among Hindu women in South Africa by Singh and Harisunker (2010), which showed that the term 'culture' is used synonymously with religious values. In addition, the study by Desai and Goodall (1995) revealed that social norms discriminate against women, rather than the injunctions of Hinduism as a religion. In this study the same was found not only in Hinduism, but also in Islam.

Many of the Muslim participants were of the view that Islam permits a woman to work depending on her circumstances. However, among those following the Islamic religion it was found that the responses ranged on a continuum from allowing women to working and viewing them as equal to men, to others who indicated that Islam has forbidden women from working. According to Jamali et al. (2005), this discrepancy can be attributed to the fact that Islamic scholars can be placed into two broad categories: traditional and modern. These authors further explain that the traditional scholars advocate women to stay at home and take care of their families, while modern scholars recognise the need for women to work and advance in their careers. They also found that more men adopt the views of the traditional scholars, while women tended to adopt the modern view. This ties in with the results of the present study, which revealed that all of the female participants supported women's career advancement, while there were some husbands who were not in favour of it. Furthermore, specifically the Muslim women in this study highlighted that they were not compelled to work. This is in line with the views of Vidyasagar and Rea (2004), who explain that, work is a right and not an obligation for Muslim women, as they are required to be involved in work when the need arises, as long as their femininity and dignity are not compromised.

With regard to Hinduism, the participants explained the duties of women females by referring to the concept of 'Dharma'. Rambachan (2000, p. 65) explains that Dharma is a multidimensional concept that requires individuals to be attentive to the welfare of others even as they seek to achieve their individual needs, and that they constantly meet their obligations to God, the ancestors, teachers, fellow human beings and nature.

Thus the majority of participants were of the belief that women are permitted in Hinduism to work, as long as their duties in the home domain are still recognised as a priority. Similar to Islam, the Hindu participants noted that mixed messages were being passed down, as some religious leaders are liberal in their thinking and support the equality of women, while others are traditional and promote male dominance. The shift towards liberal thinking with regard to the career advancement of women can be used to justify the beliefs of the majority of Hindu participants that the religion allows and encourages women to work and progress in their careers. It can also be used as a possible explanation for the assertion by Prag (2007), who states that in recent years Hindu women have progressively been in search of higher education and that many women seek employment outside of their homes.

Furthermore, the study revealed that the participants' family background could be regarded as one of the greatest factors influencing the perceptions and behaviours of the spouses in relation to women's career advancement. In terms of family structure, most participants had grown up in nuclear family units. The participants' families thus took on 'modern' family arrangements. Although the participants' families could be categorised as 'modern' in terms of family structure, male dominance was a major theme that emerged, as men were granted greater power over essential matters such as decision making. This ties in with Wassenaar et al. (1998) and Banerjee (2008), who state that Indian families are traditionally patriarchal in nature. Many studies (including Reddi, 2007; Sedumedi, 2009; Wassenaar et al., 1998), as well as the female participants of this study, view patriarchy in a negative light, stating that it entails women occupying submissive positions and men having control and power over women. However, it should be noted that certain men in this study viewed it as a privilege for women, as the men had to take responsibility and were held accountable for making important decisions as well as bringing in an income for the family.

However, women were beginning to educate themselves and the education of women was encouraged by the families of most of the participants. It must be noted that a contradictory situation arose in the homes, as fathers were encouraging their daughters to study, although they expected their wives to be submissive. Unsurprisingly, it was the uneducated mothers of the female participants in particular who encouraged their

daughters to gain the independence that education brings in order to gain the liberty that they were not afforded. This contradicts the findings of Carrim (2012), whose study revealed that Indian fathers were the main ones motivating their daughters to seek education.

Similarly, the participants' families were also encouraging women to pursue and advance in their careers. The families were described as being more liberal than other families in their community, as the career choices they allowed women to pursue were not limited in scope. They even would have accepted the women's choice of a career in a male-dominated field. Their families' views contradict the findings in the research conducted by Maharaj and Maharaj (2004), which showed that South African Indian women's endeavours to pursue careers in male-dominated fields were not supported by their families due to cultural and traditional prejudices. A strong underlying thread that emerged from the participants was that women were allowed to pursue their career aspirations, but were not liberated from their responsibilities in the home domain. Thus, the women were encouraged to pursue their careers only if a balance could be struck between their home and work domains.

These were the main factors mentioned by the participants that had an impact on the perceptions regarding the career advancement of women in the era in which they were raised. In the subsequent section, I focus on the existing dynamics surrounding Indian dual-career couples.

7.3 CURRENT DYNAMICS SURROUNDING INDIAN DUAL-CAREER COUPLES

The analysis revealed that the dynamics mentioned in the preceding section have changed from the era in which the participants were raised to their current marital lives. In most of the couples, the wives obtained a higher level of education and were in a higher career position than their husbands. Although many of the men view their wives' success in a positive light, there were husbands who felt threatened by their wives' advancement. These negative feelings can be attributed to the patriarchal attitudes embedded in the husbands. According to Hochschild (1989) and Kehler (2001), husbands who have patriarchal attitudes experience strain, as they may be displeased if

their wives are self-confident and may feel threatened by the career success of their wives.

This study also revealed that most couples shared the financial responsibility in their homes. However, in three couples the wives were the primary breadwinners and earned more than their husbands. Although the majority of wives found this arrangement to be acceptable, a common theme that emerged, specifically among the husbands, was that they associated the responsibility of providing financially for their families with their manhood. Thus, the fact that they earned less than their wives had an impact on their masculinity. This supports the findings of Menaghan (1991) and Augustine (2002), who claim that such relationships diminish the husband's self-esteem, as a man's ability to support his family financially serves as an assertion of his masculinity and builds his self-confidence, sense of self-worth, and dignity. The results of this study also confirm the assertion of Steil and Weltman (1991) that women who earn more than their husbands have a greater fear of brewing competitive feelings in their husbands than any other group. Thus, the findings of the study conducted by Brennan et al. (2001) among white couples do not hold true among Indian couples. These authors pointed out that times have changed, as men no longer feel threatened by the loss of their status as sole providers because variations in women's earnings over time relative to their husbands' does not have a considerable effect on their evaluations of the quality of their marital relationships.

Furthermore, research has indicated that gender norms are not transformed when women bring in an income – even when they provide a greater income than their husbands (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008; Ruddick, 2007). A worse situation was found to be occurring in some of the couples in this study, as the wives felt that their husbands supported them less due to their earnings. In certain couples the wives noted that a power struggle had ensued in their marriages, leading to them being physically and/or verbally abused by their husbands as a result of their career progression. This ties in with the findings of the study by Panda (2010), which revealed an increase in the rate of spousal violence resulting from the empowerment of Indian women coupled with traditional expectations and values. Similar results were obtained in the study conducted by Sedumedi (2009), which revealed that the changing socio-economic status of black

(African, Indian, and coloured) women made them more vulnerable to abuse as it posed a threat to the masculinity of their partners and left certain men feeling intimidated, emasculated, and insecure.

The participants also made mention of the advantages that their earnings and career status brought. The majority of participants noted that decisions were made jointly through consultation with their spouses. This confirms the findings of Ruddick (2007) and Studer (2007), namely that greater earnings and resources provide wives with an alternate source of power in negotiations. However, the joint decision-making strategy adopted by the majority of couples in this study contradicts the findings of Bhattacharyya and Korinek (2007), namely that Indian women do not have much of a say in decision making. In a few instances the wives noted that they were responsible for the decision making in their homes, although these wives were the ones who indicated that they earned more than their husbands. The participants mentioned that this was because the husbands did not take any initiative in decision making. Earlier research conducted by Blood and Wolfe (1960) provides a possible explanation for the women taking control of the decision making. These authors found that the act of balancing power in the relationship was based on the comparative resources provided by each of the spouses, thus the one who supplied the greater resources had greater control in the decision-making process. Furthermore, there were women, although in the minority, who noted that, regardless of their income or career status, there was an autocratic rule in their homes that the husband was responsible for decision making on important matters. This is in line with Bartley et al. (2005), who found that even in marriages where the wife earned more than the husband, or marriages perceived as egalitarian, men still had the final say in important decisions. From the above discussion it is evident that Indian dual-career couples utilise various strategies for decision making.

In the majority of couples in this study there was a division of labour that exists, with their roles being described as shared. The majority of participants therefore described themselves as being in egalitarian marital relationships. This contrasts with the findings of the study carried out by Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009), namely that individuals who hold egalitarian beliefs in the Indian context are the exception rather than the rule.

However, the findings of the present study tie in with the assertions of Kaufman (2005) and Schreuder and Theron (2004), who have noted the gradual fading away of traditional gender roles as more men are involved in domestic tasks, which were traditionally considered exclusively the wife's domain of responsibility.

However, the participants in this study also noted that stereotypical gender roles still exist, as wives are held predominately responsible for domestic tasks (such as cooking and ensuring the cleanliness of their homes), while the husbands take care of the more technical tasks (such as renovations, gardening, and the maintenance of their vehicles). This can be explained by the gender socialisation theory, in which society discloses its gender expectations through the social roles it allocates to each sex (Sebayang, 2011). Although these were the predominant domains of responsibility, the majority of couples noted that they adopted a flexible approach in that husbands assisted their wives with their tasks and vice versa if the need arose. This is in stark contrast to the traditional gender roles set by the Indian culture, as discussed in the previous section.

Resocialisation theory can be used to explain the phenomenon of abandoning former behaviour patterns and impulses by accepting new ones as part of the transformation of an individual's life (Schaefer & Lamm, 1992). Furthermore, Crespi (2003) notes that resocialisation, especially in Western culture, is occurring towards a non-sexist environment in which individuals are being raised to believe that gender should not pose a barrier to any kind of activity or lifestyle. The same can be seen to be occurring in the Indian culture, as revealed in this study, as well as by Narayan and Bhardwaj (2005) and Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009), who state that traditionally classified gender roles in the Indian society are undergoing change by seeking new meanings. Similarly, Panda (2010, p. 56) revealed that the reservation of domestic tasks exclusively for wives is regarded as 'traditional norms' and that times are changing at a fast pace, as there is a rapid move towards gender equality in dual-career families in India.

Although a shift is occurring towards equality between the sexes, this study revealed that this level of parity has not yet been reached. The findings thus contradict the declaration of Giddens (2004) that women are being absolved from their domestic responsibilities due to them entering the work domain. This was not the case in this

study, or in other studies that have focused on collectivist cultures. Examples of such studies include the research conducted by Wafula (2010) which revealed that even though times are changing, with women being encouraged to seek higher education and pursue careers, they still are required to uphold their domestic and professional roles concurrently. Carrim (2012) and Shaik (2003) echo the same sentiments in their studies conducted in South African Indian society, which revealed that women are still required to preserve traditional Indian cultural principles and standards. Furthermore, Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009) noted the same to be true in India as they found that the gender-role attitudes of families are changing at a much slower pace than those of employed women, as the families hold on to the conventional expectations of women. Ruddick (2007, p. 3) explains that this is due to a “traditional undercurrent” below the surface of the couples’ relationships, which views women as having a natural inclination to domestic duties even in couples who describe their relationships as egalitarian.

It must also be noted that there were female participants who noted that their husbands played a minimal or even a non-existent role in household tasks. This can be explained by the conformance to social expectations theory, which demarcates the extent of women’s work of and validates the uneven split of domestic activities (Bartley et al., 2005). The reasons identified for this was either the husband being involved in a very demanding job or him viewing domestic tasks as solely the wife’s responsibility. This view ties in with the traditional gender-role expectations in the Indian culture, which stipulate that the husband’s role is to be the provider for the family while the wife’s role is to take care of the home domain (Patel et al., 2006).

On the continuum of the types of women identified by Hakim (2006), ranging from ‘work-centred women’ – those who are solely devoted to their jobs – to ‘home-centred women’ – those who are typical housewives, the wives in this study can be seen as falling in the category of ‘adaptive women’, as they choose to combine work and family life as they deem both as important. This study reveals two main reasons for both spouses being involved in careers: the couples work to satisfy financial needs as well as a personal need. This is aligned with the findings of the study conducted by Olarte (2000), which revealed that women work predominantly due to economic pressures, personal fulfilment, or both. Taking a look firstly at working due to a financial need, the

participants noted that the rising cost of living was a major factor driving women to the work environment. Researchers have clarified that this need is stimulated by the heightened economic pressures of, amongst others, inflation and poverty, which has changed from the past, when women who worked complemented their husbands' income, to modern times, when their financial contribution is a crucial, if not the only, source of income in a number of households in South Africa (Franks et al., 2006; Patel et al., 2006; Tengimfene, 2009; Theunissen et al., 2003). Although the wives' income was not the sole source of income for the households among the couples interviewed, three of the participants noted that they were the primary breadwinners in their homes and therefore were involved in careers to provide financial support to their families.

Among the wives in general, one of the main reasons for working was to assist their husbands by alleviating their financial responsibilities. This was also found in a study carried out by Bartley et al. (2005), which revealed that the wives' income alleviated the husbands from bearing sole economic responsibility for the family. The present study also revealed that both spouses worked not simply to survive, but to satisfy their desires, as the lifestyle they led was not possible on a single income. The dual income therefore affords them a more comfortable life, as it provides them with benefits including holidays, good cars, and better education for their children. Although the participants noted this as being unique to the Indian culture, as other cultures have different priorities, Tengimfene (2009) found the same to be true in other cultural contexts. Her study, which included black people (African, Indian, and coloured), revealed that a dual income is required to live a desired lifestyle in order to provide good care for children, good education as well as better medical care.

Secondly, focusing on work as satisfying a personal need, Betz (2006) and Valk and Srinivasan (2011) found that women obtain independence and security through work, as it provides them with an avenue for success beyond accomplishment exclusively in the domestic arena. Similarly, the women in this study indicated that work provides them with independence, which serves as a safety net should they be required to fend for themselves. Research has also shown that work provides women with feelings of accomplishment (Klungness & Donovan, 1987), and provides a challenge for women who have a need for achievement (Mujumdar, 2008). This is confirmed in the present

study, as many of the women described themselves as high achievers and noted that work satisfied their need for personal growth, as their work was intellectually stimulating and challenging. Research has also shown that a career offers women a domain for personal fulfilment, as it endows them with a feeling that they matter and affords them a place in society (Levinson, 1996; Schieman & Taylor, 2001). On the same note, the participants made mention of the respect that Indian women are afforded by their spouses and family members as a result of pursuing careers. Furthermore, research has shown that careers provide women with alternative social networks (Greenhaus et al., 2000), which is confirmed by the women in this study. In this study, an interesting finding was that, work provided an opportunity to interact with other adults, which served as a substitute for the lack of spousal communication in certain marriages.

With the current dynamics surrounding Indian dual-career couples discussed, I now turn to the endeavours of Indian women to attain a work-life balance.

7.4 INDIAN WOMEN'S CURRENT ATTEMPTS TO STRIKE A WORK-LIFE BALANCE

In an attempt by women to juggle their work and family roles, three main types of conflict are said to transpire: time-based conflict, strain-based conflict and behaviour-based conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Time-based conflict was identified by the male and female participants in this study as the greatest challenge facing professional Indian women, as they had to divide their time between their families, their work and religious activities, and find time to relax and/or for recreational activities. Many of these women also were studying further, which required them to devote their limited time to their studies as well. Women adopting a 'second shift' after work hours, as identified by Studer (2007) and Tengimfene (2009), also occurs among Indian professional women. The long days give rise to strain-based conflict, as the participants identified exhaustion as a major challenge that results in feelings of frustration and anger. This ties in with the study by Koekemoer and Mostert (2010), which revealed that energy depletion, which results in overall exhaustion and fatigue, was identified as a challenge facing South African professionals. Behaviour-based conflict, which surfaces when particular patterns of behaviour that are suitable in one role arise in another, where it is not suitable

(Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), was not identified as a challenge facing the women in this study.

Research has shown that the emotional cost of feeling guilty is the most severe repercussion of women having to deal with multiple roles and being unable to accomplish more in each of the roles (Ruderman et al., 2002; Ruth, 2009; Sedumedi, 2009; Thanacoody et al., 2006). Although it was not identified as the greatest challenge facing the women in this study, feelings of guilt were experienced by the women as a result of both time-based and strain-based conflict and was identified as a major challenge. Greenhaus et al. (2000) found that guilt arises when professional women do not spend sufficient time with their children and their husbands, and do not have enough time for themselves. Similarly, the current study found that guilt was experienced when work impacted on the women's marital lives, as well as on their relationships with their children. The women also experienced greater guilt if they currently had young children or at a time when their children were younger, due to the children's dependence on them and the greater supervision that they require. Mujumdar (2008) and Tengimfene (2009) found the same to be true, as their studies revealed that children who are younger require greater supervision and care, which makes the achievement of a work-life balance even more complex. The current study also found that, in certain instances, the lack of supervision due to the mothers being employed resulted in children taking advantage of the situation by not pulling their weight and not completing tasks they were required to. This was found to enhance the women's guilt, as they felt that their children would be better disciplined if they spent more time at home.

As mentioned in the discussion above, Greenhaus et al. (2000) found that women also experience guilt for not having enough time for themselves. Although the female participants in this study did mention this as a challenge, they did not indicate that it resulted in them feeling guilty. A possible explanation can be the Indian cultural values identified by Salway et al. (2005), which require women to place the needs of their families before their own. Furthermore, guilt was felt as a result of criticism from certain family or community members who adopted the traditional Indian views, as they disapproved of the women 'leaving' their children and pursuing careers. Similarly, Thanacoody et al. (2006) have noted that these feelings of guilt can to a great extent be

ascribed to societal expectations, and the expectations of the women's parents. However, in this study it was found that the parents encouraged the women to pursue their careers; it was the criticism from extended family and community members that heightened the women's feelings of guilt. Thus, it can be seen that the views of the extended family and society still carry a great deal of weight in the Indian culture. This ties in with the finding of Shivani et al. (2006) that experts agree that there is a distinct socio-cultural influence on the personality and overall behaviour of Indian individuals.

The majority of couples had an extended family member (in most cases an elderly mother or mother-in-law) living with them or whom they were responsible for. This posed a challenge to the professional women, as these elderly relatives were dependent on them and this required greater planning and co-ordination of tasks and time. This concurs with the assertions of Rajadhyaksha and Bhatnagar (2000) and Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009), namely that specifically in the Indian culture, the women's devotion to family roles is regarded as being core to their very existence and thus women are required to take care of elderly family members in addition to their childcare responsibilities. Furthermore, the participants in this study noted that the dependence of extended family members on the women is heightened if they are professionals, as they are viewed as having the financial means and/or ability to take care of their relatives.

Akin to the claims of O'Neil and Bilimoria (2005) and Lau (2010) that women's careers and personal lives are inextricably intertwined, the participants in this study noted that it was virtually impossible to separate these two domains. The husbands specifically mentioned the negative impact that their wives' time constraints, exhaustion, and negative emotions carried over from their work demands had on the marital relationship. This is in line with the notions of Koekemoer and Mostert (2010) and Kim and Ling (2001), that the inability to attend to the spouse's needs due to work obligations or stressors at work being carried over to the home domain, places a strain on the marital relationship, and conflict is likely to be experienced in such marriages. In addition, the women noted that both their work and family lives had negative effects on each other, which can be confirmed by the family relationships that exist or the quality of work that they present. This ties in with previous research that has shown that WFC and FWC are bi-directional in nature (Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Hill et al., 2004; Kinnunen & Mauno,

1998), and women are placed in a tough situation as they are torn between these domains of responsibility. This is in line with the assertion of Pittman (1994), who states that conflict inevitably results, as work and family are 'greedy' institutions that demand the limited resources of time and energy from an individual.

Koekemoer and Mostert (2010) and Ruth (2009) identified being organised as well as the prioritising of work and family tasks as strategies that professional women adopt to cope with their multiple roles and avoid conflict. Similarly, the present study revealed that time management was fundamental in women's planning, also to ensure that some degree of routine existed in their lives, which was crucial in their attempts to juggle work and family demands. Research also has revealed that either scaling back on their careers or putting their careers on hold were among the key strategies adopted by employed women in their attempts to strike a work-life balance (Rusconi & Solga, 2008; Ruth, 2009). Although the participants in this study did not mention having actually done so, the majority of female participants indicated that they ideally would like to scale down on their careers, with many of the women noting that their ideal job would entail working half a day. An interesting finding, which was not present in the reviewed literature, was the use of social media (including Facebook and BlackBerry Messenger) to monitor their children to ensure they did not go off track and to ensure that their needs were taken care of by keeping an eye on the statuses they displayed on these social media. This indicates that professional women have been creative in finding ways to compensate for not being physically present to monitor their children and to ensure that their needs are met.

Previous research revealed that social support aids in minimising the severity of work-family conflict and is thus crucial, as role demands are less likely to transform into such conflict for individuals who receive support (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2005; Namayandeh et al., 2010; Tengimfene, 2009). In this study, support from various sources was found to be vital in the balancing of work and family domains, with the main source of external support acquired by the women being domestic helpers. They were identified as an essential source of support, as they assist the professional women by ensuring that their childcare responsibilities and day-to-day domestic tasks were to a large extent taken care of. This ties in with the study

conducted by Carrim (2012), which revealed that South African Indian female managers would not be able to cope with the demands of work and family life if they could not outsource certain tasks to domestic helpers or au pairs. Research has also revealed that the outsourcing of household and childcare responsibilities by using paid help was more likely to occur in households where women are engaged in work due to the considerable demands placed on them (Hertz, 1999). Nelson and Burke (2000) and Tengimfene (2009) explain that the income generated by these women allows them to benefit from higher purchasing power, which permits them to acquire particular types of support to assist with domestic and childcare tasks.

Research has also shown that, particularly in relation to childcare support, women seek support beyond their nuclear family by resorting to their mothers, sisters, and extended family members (Tengimfene, 2009). Similarly, in this study it was revealed that parents served as a vital source of support to the women. It was found that parents not only assisted by taking care of the children, but also provided emotional support in terms of encouragement and dealing with the problems faced by professional women, and physical support as they assisted with the cooking if the women could not manage. Other support systems included friends, neighbours and other family members who could provide emotional support to the women and/or serve as a back-up plan for other tasks if the husband and wife could not manage. The women also turned to their in-laws, particularly if they were living together, to provide assistance with childcare and cooking if the need arose. Thus even though the in-laws are regarded as a challenge because they are dependent on the couple, they also serve as a safety net by assisting the couple should they require help. This ties in with the finding of Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009, p. 9) that, in Indian societies, social support tends to be “informal, ad hoc, contingent and bound in a web of reciprocal relationships of dependence and counter-dependence”.

Although these sources of support are viewed as important in striking a balance between work and family demands, the focus is now placed on the husband as he forms the other half of the ‘dual-career couple’ and is the one who is directly involved and affected by the dynamics of this relationship. In the current study, support from the husband was found to be extremely vital, even though the women had access to other

avenues of support. This ties in with previous research that found that the husband is viewed as an instrumental, if not the most crucial, source of support for married professional women (Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Janning, 2006; Xu & Burleson, 2001). Previous research has also revealed that there are men who have given up their careers by staying at home and taking on childcare responsibilities in order for their wives to succeed in their careers (Bhagat, 1999). This was not found to be the case in the couples in this study, as most of the husbands supported their wives while still being involved in their careers.

The women's descriptions of support can be categorised into two main types. Firstly, emotional support, which includes the necessary motivation, encouragement, understanding and advice with regard to many of the work-related issues the women face. Secondly, physical support, which involves assistance with certain tasks that are largely regarded as the wife's responsibility, such as cooking, taking care of the children, as well as ensuring that domestic duties are taken care of in the absence of a maid. Although earlier research conducted by House (1981) highlighted that support may transpire in the form of emotional, instrumental, appraisal and/or informational support, researchers have noted that, in line with the current study, the two main types of spousal support are emotional and instrumental support (Adams et al., 1996; Valk & Srinivasan, 2011; Xu & Burleson, 2001). The women in this study also placed great value on emotional support. This can be explained by Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2008) as well as Rosenbaum and Cohen (1999) who assert that greater importance is placed on emotional support as instrumental support can be purchased.

In addition, the findings of this study are in line with research conducted by Ruth (2009) which revealed that, for the most part, husbands are supportive of their wives' career advancement while some are not in favour of it and are viewed as unsupportive. The present study revealed that support was not always received from the husbands, as some wives stated that their husbands did not provide financial, physical or emotional support. Literature that focuses on the husband as a source of support is limited, and there is even a greater deficiency of research on the unsupportive behaviours of husbands in dual-career relationships. However, in the present study, women's descriptions of their unsupportive husbands can be likened to the concept put forth by

Välimäki et al. (2009, p. 609) of the 'counterproductive spouse' – one who has an unconstructive attitude towards the wife's career and is disinclined to support or value it. Research carried out by Rao et al. (2003) has revealed that Indian women would withdraw from the working arena if their husbands were not supportive of their career endeavours. This was not found to be true in this study, as the women who noted that their husbands were not supportive continued on their career paths.

It should further be noted that the reviewed literature on spousal support focused predominately on women's accounts of support received. This study also took into account the men's descriptions of support offered, with all of them considering themselves as supportive of their wives' career advancement. The men's descriptions of support were similar to those of the wives, namely physical and emotional support. However, the men made specific mention of the sacrifices they had to make to accommodate their wives' careers. The inconsistencies in the accounts of support as described by the husbands and the wives could be explained by their different definitions of support, as well as the importance of the support to the wife, as support can be both "invisible" (not perceived when provided) and "illusory" (perceived even when not provided) (Bolger, Zuckerman, & Kessler, as cited in Xu & Burleson, 2001, p. 538).

Previous research has used the concept of role salience to explain the different types of women according to the importance they place on their career and family roles (Hakim, 2006), as support salience can also be used to explain the discrepancy between the husbands' and wives' accounts of support. The husband thereby might provide support that he deems as important but which may not be regarded by the wife as significant. The descriptions of support could also have been tainted by an egocentric or credit-taking bias, which occurs when individuals tend to assign greater credit to their contributions in relationships (Bradbury & Fincham, 1992). Furthermore, this study revealed that the women in particular used the marital relationships of their friends or other family members as a point of reference when evaluating the degree of support or non-support received from their husbands. Thus their evaluation of the support offered to them may have been distorted by their views of other couples.

As mentioned earlier, support received from husbands was found to be crucial for the women's career advancement, as the husbands play a vital role in the wives' attempts to strike a work-life balance. This study thus confirms the view of Rao et al. (2003) that spousal support alleviates the experience of work-life conflict. Support received from the spouse is particularly essential for women who belong to cultures in which low levels of gender equality are present (Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999), as in these cultures it is women more so than men who assume conventional gender roles and cling to the belief that marital as well as parental relationships suffer as a result of women pursuing work external to the home domain (Emmons et al., 1990). Although traditional Indian culture has low levels of gender egalitarianism, the women in this study did not revert to traditional gender roles, even when they described their husbands as unsupportive, because their financial situation did not permit them.

This study has revealed that the husband's support has a positive impact on the wife's personal life by improving not only her emotional wellbeing, but also the marital relationship by enhancing the couple's mutual respect. This finding is in line with previous research that has revealed that all types of support received from husbands have positive effects on women's life satisfaction (Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Edwards, 2008; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005). In terms of their career life, support from husbands was found to have a positive impact on the career advancement of women, as physical assistance with domestic duties permits the wives to pay more attention to completing their work-related tasks and embarking on the necessary travel to advance in their careers, while the emotional support provides the necessary motivation required for advancement. The findings of this study tie in with the notion of the 'supporting spouse' – the one who provides the psychosocial and practical support that aids and makes women's career advancement possible (Välimäki et al., 2009, p. 609). Other researchers also have noted the substantial impact the husband has on a female manager's career options and decisions (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005; Ruddick, 2007; Tengimfene, 2009; Tharenou, 2001).

At the other end of the continuum, wives who described their husbands as unsupportive indicated the negative effects this had on their career life, as they viewed the non-support as a career-limiting factor. These wives also made mention of instances in which they had to set aside their career aspirations because of non-support from their husbands. This links to the concept of the ‘counterproductive spouse’ – one who is obstructive and negative and thus can be viewed as a barrier to the wife’s career success (Välimäki et al. 2009, p. 609). This finding also confirms the view of Rastogi and Bansal (2012), who state that the lack of spousal support is one of the main factors that obstructs the career advancement of Indian women, and ties in with the spousal support theory (Kanter, 1977). This theory states that marriage has more of an adverse effect on the career success of women than of men, as women will not be able to be as dedicated to their careers as single women and therefore not advance to the same extent as single women (Tharenou, 1999; Whiting & Van Vugt, 2006). The female participants also noted the impact of this non-support on their personal lives, as it gave rise to anger and resentment that impacted negatively on their marital relationships as well as on their emotional wellbeing. This ties in with the findings of the research conducted by Coltrane (2000), which revealed that marital conflict is higher when husbands contribute relatively less than their wives to responsibilities in the home domain and where there is a perception of inequality.

Although there are various typologies of spousal support, which were discussed in Chapter 2, they have limited relevance to the present study. Firstly, they were not conducted in the South African context and thus fail to take into account the cultural and societal differences that exist. Secondly, the reviewed research focuses solely on women’s constructions of support, and thus the accuracy of the data cannot be verified as the husband’s perspective has been excluded. Table 7.1 uses the typology of ‘Types of spouses constructed by women managers’, created by Välimäki et al. (2009, p. 609), as a structure to summarise the results from both the husbands and the wives in this study (as discussed above) in order to understand the types of Indian husbands that are found in the South African context, as well as the influence they have on their wives’ personal as well as career life.

Table 7.1: Types of husbands as construed by male and female Indian professionals

Type of husband	Description of husband's main characteristics	Impact on wife's personal life	Impact on wife's career life
The motivating husband (the dove)	One who offers emotional support to his wife. He provides motivation, encouragement, understanding, and professional advice.	Improves the wife's emotional wellbeing and the marital relationship by enhancing mutual respect among spouses.	Gives confidence to the wife to pursue her career aspirations
The domesticated husband (the elephant)	One who assists with the physical tasks in the home domain. These include cooking and cleaning, as well as assistance with childcare and care for elderly family members.	Avoids an overload of tasks being placed on the wife's shoulders and thus alleviates the experience of work-family conflict	Allows the wife to pay greater attention to completing work-related tasks and embark on the necessary travel in order for her to advance.
The dynamic husband (the bear)	He is a combination of the motivating and the domesticated husband. He supports his wife by providing both physical and emotional support	Alleviates work-family conflict, improves the wife's emotional wellbeing and the marital relationship through enhanced mutual respect.	Gives confidence to the wife to pursue her career aspirations, allows for greater attention to be paid to completing work-related tasks, and permits the wife to embark on the necessary travel required for her career advancement.
The accommodating husband (the kangaroo)	One who makes career as well as personal sacrifices for the benefit of his wife.	Alleviates work-family conflict.	Ensures the wife's work-related tasks are completed.
The obstructive husband (the parasite)	One who does not support his wife financially, physically and/or emotionally.	Results in an overload of responsibility being placed on the wife's shoulders. Has detrimental effects on the wife's mental health and impacts negatively on the marital relationship, as feelings of anger and resentment develop towards the husband.	Husband is a career-limiting factor as the wife is compelled to set aside her career aspirations due to non-support from the husband.

The characteristics of these husbands have been compared to the characteristics of animals that mirror them. The motivating husband who offers emotional support to his wife is compared to a dove, which is viewed as a gentle bird. The domesticated husband who offers physical support to his wife is likened to an elephant, which is recognised for its physical strength. The dynamic husband who provides physical and emotional support to his wife is compared a bear, which is known for its physical strength, while at the same time being covered with fur, which indicates the soft side of this beast. The accommodating husband who makes personal sacrifices for his wife is likened to a kangaroo, which sacrifices by allowing the joey (baby kangaroo) to live in its pouch in order to protect it. Lastly, the obstructive husband who is unsupportive of his wife's career advancement is likened to a parasite, which benefits from the affiliation with the host while the host deteriorates by association with the parasite.

With the delineation of Indian husbands and the impact they have on their wives' career and personal lives discussed, I now turn to the contemporary viewpoints regarding women's career advancement in the Indian society.

7.5 CURRENT PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN'S CAREER ADVANCEMENT

The participants in this study felt that the Indian society in general had transformed over the years to become more respectful, encouraging and accepting of women's career advancement. The participants attributed the possible reasons for this to the women's need for independence because of the rising cost of living, as well as an increase in divorce rates. This concurs with the views of Betz (2006) and Valk and Srinivasan (2011), who state that, through work, women gain independence and security. It also was revealed that South Africa provides a unique context, since the demise of apartheid, the country's Constitution and the enforcement of Black Economic Empowerment have led to more opportunities for Indian women to advance than in the past. This is confirmed by previous research, which has shown that the apartheid legislation operated in opposition to women advancing to top management positions, while non-legislative discrimination barred them from reaching their optimal productive potential (James et al., 2006; White et al., 1992).

All the women in this study were in support of women's career advancement and encouraged the equality of women, not only in terms of status but also of responsibility, which was advocated by them for the success of dual-career marriages. Similarly, most men were in favour of women's career advancement, believed in fairness and the equality of the sexes, and acknowledged that they have a part to play in the home domain in order for the dual-career arrangement to be successful. The Indian context therefore also appears to have seen the construction of the "new man" (Morrell, 2001, p. 4) – one who deviates from patriarchal norms, breaking away from the perception of a "real man" – one who is self-confident, a dominator and the sole decision maker in the domestic realm. The results of this study therefore point to a transformation to the 'new Indian man' – one who supports equality and fairness between the spouses, and one who is willing to assist with domestic tasks, which previously were viewed solely as a woman's responsibility. The results of this study thus contradict the findings of Velgach and Rajadhyaksha (2009), who asserted that, in the Indian context, individuals who hold egalitarian beliefs are considered the exception rather than the norm. In this study, men who held the view that a woman's place was in the home and taking care of domestic tasks were in the minority. An interesting trend that emerged was that the husbands perceived greater issues arising from women feeling stifled and bored at home, which would have negative impacts on the marriage and family life. This ties in with the responses of the wives, as well as previous research that has shown that work provides women with feelings of accomplishment (Klungness & Donovan, 1987), provides women who have a need for achievement with a challenge (Mujumdar, 2008), and affords them a place in society and provides them with a sense that they matter (Levinson, 1996; Schieman & Taylor, 2001).

Role models were shown to have had a great impact on the perceptions of both the men and women in the study. Although there were other role models as well, mothers were shown to have a great influence on both the men's and the women's perceptions. This links to the work of Papalia and Olds (1988), who found that adult behaviour and interaction with others emanates from the parents' behaviours that were observed in the individual's formative years. Researchers have also drawn attention to the importance of considering the work experience of the mothers in explaining the daughter's decision to work, as there is a greater likelihood that if the mother has worked, the daughters will do

the same (Redelinghuys et al., 1999; Sedumedi, 2009; Tengimfene, 2009). Similarly, in this study it was found that the female participants witnessed the balancing of work and family life first-hand, as the most of their mothers worked while shouldering the majority of household responsibilities. This served as a form of encouragement, as it demonstrated that the balancing of the two domains was possible. It also resulted in them looking up to their mothers as ‘superwomen’, as they managed to work as well as take care of their homes. This ties in with the concepts of “super mom” (Yoder, 2007, p. 180) and “superwoman” (Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004, p. 261), as the employed mother adopts multiple roles in relation to job, self and family. Furthermore, based on their experiences and perceptions, the participants concurred that they would continue the tradition of professional Indian women by encouraging their daughters to pursue careers and thus serve as role models to them. This ties in with Bharat's (1994, p. 56) view that career women will train their daughters to balance their work and family lives effectively and will serve as models of “super women” to their sons by managing both the work and home domains.

Research conducted by Redelinghuys et al. (1999) has established that, if the parents’ roles and responsibilities are divided across the gender line, their children will be less likely to stereotype domestic roles and probably will institute similar arrangements. Bhagat (1999) and Etaugh and Bridges (2004) note that if an individual’s father participates in childcare tasks and household activities to a large extent and on a habitual basis, and if the mother is involved in traditionally masculine work, it is likely that the children will follow suit. However, in this study, many of the men’s mothers worked and were responsible for the tasks in the home domain. The challenge faced by these women having to bear most of the domestic responsibilities in addition to their work responsibilities was witnessed first-hand by male children. This had a positive influence on the male’s views regarding the treatment of women and on women’s career advancement, as well as the support offered to their wives

Previous research has also indicated that there is a transformation in gender-role attitudes. As the more conservative older cohorts age and pass on, their mind-set and conventional approach to life is replaced by younger, more liberal generations who have a tendency to be more egalitarian in their gender-role outlook (Brewster & Padavic,

2000; Ciabattari, 2001; Elamin & Omair, 2010; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Ichou, 2008). The present study contradicts these findings, as it was revealed that age was not a factor that impacted on the men's perceptions of women's career advancement, as there were younger men who were not providing adequate support to their wives and who held the belief that a woman's place was in the home, as well as older men who fully supported their wives and advocated women's career advancement. The findings of this study are therefore aligned with the research conducted by Abdalla (1996) and Bryant (2003), who found that no relationship exists between age and gender-role beliefs, and that other factors can be used to explain the variation in gender-role attitudes. In this study it was revealed that family background rather than age had a greater impact on the men's perceptions regarding women's career advancement.

7.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided interesting findings that contribute to the growing research on dual-career couples, as well as areas of overlap that confirmed other research done on the subject. It is apparent that the perceptions of women's career advancement have changed from the time when the participants were raised to current times, in which there is greater acceptance and encouragement of women's career advancement. It also is evident that the combination of the Indian culture and South Africa's history has placed the individuals in a unique situation. This, combined with their religious and family backgrounds, has resulted in the manifestation of interesting dynamics surrounding the couples and required the women to be creative and tactful in crafting strategies to effectively balance work and family life.

The next chapter documents the conclusion, along with the limitations, of the present study, and makes recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this study was to explore the dual perceptions of Indian couples towards the wives' career advancement. In-depth information on these perceptions was obtained through qualitative interviews in which the life stories of the dual-career couples were examined. A process of rigorous thematic analysis allowed for interesting themes to emerge that were used to identify and understand the perceptions that the couples hold.

The previous chapters addressed the various dynamics of and influences on Indian dual-career couples in great depth. This chapter is aimed at providing an overview of the research by revisiting the research questions, along with a discussion of how the main findings of the study respond to the research questions. Subsequently, the contributions and limitations of the study are presented. Concluding this chapter are the recommendations for future research.

8.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study focused on five main research questions in order to explore the perceptions of Indian dual-career couples in relation to women's career advancement. In this section these research questions are presented in turn, along with a discussion of how the main findings of this study respond to these questions.

8.2.1 What are Indian couples' cultural, religious, and family values in relation to women's career advancement?

The study revealed that the couples' cultural, religious and family values have changed from the era in which the participants were raised to current times. Firstly, in terms of culture, Indians have become more accepting and encouraging of women advancing in their careers. In earlier times, women were groomed to become only housewives. Secondly, religion (both Hinduism and Islam) was found for the most part to be in favour

of women's career advancement. However, the findings indicated that there were discrepancies in the religious views regarding the career progression of females, ranging from it being acknowledged to being regarded as taboo. This can be explained by the discovery that there is confusion surrounding religious prescriptions and cultural injunctions in the Indian community. Thirdly, in terms of family values, it was found that most of the families were moving towards a more liberal view of women's career advancement. The earlier generations of women in the families were expected to be submissive, while the parents of the participants had encouraged their daughters to study and pursue careers. It must be noted that even though religious and family values were found largely to be in favour of women's career advancement, it was apparent that the individuals' and their families' views were still anchored in cultural role prescriptions. Thus, it emerged that a woman's duty in the home domain still takes preference.

Although not stated specifically in the research question, it was revealed that the socio-historic context of apartheid was found to have a great influence on the career advancement of women. The impact was two-fold, in that apartheid aimed at limiting the career advancement of Indian women by restricting their opportunities. However, these limitations also backfired, as they motivated Indian women to work harder and to progress in order to overcome such discrimination.

8.2.2 How do Indian husbands react to their wives' career advancement?

Indian husbands responded to their wives' career successes in a positive light, as they expressed themselves as being 'happy', 'excited', 'supportive', and 'proud' of their wives. They also acknowledged the benefits of their wives being involved in careers, as they helped to lessen the financial burden placed on the husband, live the desired lifestyle, and satisfied a personal need of the wife, which in turn enhanced their marital relationship. However, it was found that when it came to the dynamics surrounding earnings and financial responsibility, Indian men concurred that there was a relationship between their earnings relative to that of their wives and their masculinity. Thus, feelings of jealousy and intimidation arose as a result of the wife's earnings. In addition, the husbands highlighted the negative impact that the spill over of the wife's exhaustion,

limited time, and negative emotions from the work domain had on their marital relationships.

The study also revealed the dawn of the 'new Indian man', one who has gone against the tide of conventionalism. Specifically, it was found that the majority of Indian husbands believed in fairness and equality across gender lines, made personal and career sacrifices for the career progression of their wives, acknowledged their role in the home domain in order for the success of the dual-career arrangement, and provided both emotional and physical support in order for the wives to advance in their careers. Thus, from the males' perspectives, husbands can be seen as reacting to their wives' career advancement in a constructive way.

8.2.3 What are the wives' conceptions of how husbands perceive their career advancement?

For the most part, the wives' conceptions of how their husbands perceive their career advancement coincided with the actual perceptions held by their husbands. Indian husbands were described by their wives as being supportive. The wives' descriptions of spousal support were akin to that of the husbands, as they included emotional as well as physical support. However, the wives noted that emotional support was of greater value to them than physical support, which was not acknowledged by the husbands. The wives also noted greater respect being given to them by their husbands as a result of them pursuing careers.

However, some of the wives stated that their husbands were jealous and that a power struggle had ensued in their marriages as a result of their career advancement. As a result they described their husbands as being unsupportive (financially, physically, and emotionally), to the extent that one husband was compared to a 'parasite'. This contrasts with the husbands' perceptions, as all of them regarded themselves as supportive. These wives also indicated that they were physically and/or emotionally abused as a result of their career advancement, and felt that their husbands supported them less due to their career progression.

Regardless of whether the women described their husbands as supportive or non-supportive, the women noted that the lion's share of domestic and childcare responsibilities was shouldered by them. They also noted that that gender roles were divided stereotypically, even though many of them described their relationships as egalitarian. Thus it can be seen that even though the husband's contribution to the household had increased over time, household and childcare responsibilities were not shared equally between the spouses. Therefore egalitarianism appears to be more of a perception than a reality in Indian dual-career couples in South Africa.

8.2.4 Do Indian men of different age groups have different perceptions of the career advancement of their wives?

Contrary to my initial beliefs, the thoughts of some of the female participants in the study, as well as certain researchers (Brewster & Padavic, 2000; Ciabattari, 2001; Elamin & Omair, 2010; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Ichou, 2008), the study revealed that age was not a factor that impacted on Indian men's perceptions, as husbands of the same age cohorts had varying perceptions of women's career advancement. In the study it was found that family background had a greater impact, as the messages passed down by family members as well as the role models, specifically the parents of the participants, had a major influence in shaping the husbands' perceptions of women's career advancement and subsequently the support offered to them.

8.2.5 What is the impact of husbands' support or non-support on their wives' career advancement?

On the one hand, it was shown that husbands who were described as being supportive had positive effects on their wives' career progression. Support in terms of physical assistance with household and childcare tasks provided the professional women with more time which allowed more focus to be placed on the completion of work-related tasks. It was also found that support from husbands allowed the women to embark on the travel required for them to advance in their careers. Furthermore, emotional support was found to provide the women with the necessary motivation, boost their confidence levels, and assist with the necessary decision making in order for them to progress in their careers.

On the other hand, husbands who were described as unsupportive were had negative effects on their wives' career progression. The wives viewed the husbands' non-support as a career-restricting factor as it resulted in the women having to set aside their career aspirations and prevented them from excelling to their full potential due to the overload of responsibilities in the home domain. Thus, it can be seen that the husband's support was instrumental for the women to balance their work and family demands successfully in order for them to ultimately progress in their careers to their maximum potential.

8.3 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

A limitation of the existing literature, that focuses on gender and management in South Africa, is that it focuses predominately on the experience of white female managers, with a few studies conducted on black female managers (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Carrim, 2012; Mathur-Helm, 2005). Research has also been carried out in India that focuses on the experiences of work-life conflict among Indian women (Baral & Bhargava, 2011; Buddhapriya, 2009; Narayan & Bhardwaj, 2005; Rastogi & Bansal, 2012). However, there is a dearth of research on married Indian professional women residing outside India. Thus, this study aimed to fill a gap in knowledge, as it is one of the first studies focusing on Indian dual-career couples in the South African context.

Furthermore, research that focuses specifically on the support offered by spouses is limited (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2008; Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Rosenbaum & Cohen, 1999; Schwarzer & Gutierrez-Dona, 2005; Välimäki et al., 2009), as spousal support has been studied mainly as a division of work and family studies. A limitation of these studies is that most of them were conducted quantitatively and thus lack the rich information that qualitative research provides. In addition, most of the studies only took into account the wife's perspective and thus the data's accuracy could not be verified. This study therefore aimed to counter these limitations by following a qualitative approach that yielded in-depth information. This was done by investigating the life stories of the individuals, as well as by taking into account both the husbands' and the wives' perspectives.

In terms of the practical implications, many researchers (including Mostert, 2009; Povah & Thorton III, 2011; Valerio, 2006) have noted the importance of understanding and adequately accommodating the mix of diverse individuals' needs in order for diversity to be utilised to gain a competitive advantage. This study, as well as previous research (including Elloy & Smith, 2003; Hill et al., 2004; O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005; Wafula, 2010), has shown that the work and home realms are intertwined, with the two domains impacting on each other in a bi-directional manner. Thus, this study makes a worthy contribution by providing an understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented to married Indian professional women that result from the perceptions that are held regarding the career advancement of Indian women, along with the dynamics of the home domain encountered by this minority group. This was done with the ultimate aim of understanding the impact these dynamics have on the career progression of married Indian women. This will assist in sensitising supervisors, managers, corporate leaders, and management consultants to the dynamics of married Indian women in their climb up the career ladder when developing policies to accommodate and ultimately attract and retain the valuable talent that this ethnic minority group has to offer.

Furthermore, this study will provide Indian couples with an understanding of the perceptions men and women hold with regard to the career advancement of women. It will allow the couples to examine their own perceptions in order to determine their rationality relative to the perceptions of other dual-career couples in the South African Indian community. The typology of Indian husbands presented in Chapter 7 (Table 7.1) clearly indicates the categories of husbands that exist. This is aimed at assisting husbands in dual-career marriages to classify themselves and shed some light on the impact they have on their wife's personal and career life. The intention is to indicate to the husbands whether they can improve the support they offer and ensure the continuance thereof. This study will also provide greater insight to men and women who aim to enter into dual-career marriages by providing a realistic picture of the dynamics that transpire, as well as coping strategies that they can adopt.

8.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

As no study exists without limitations, the following were identified for the present study:

- ❖ Extended family members were not interviewed. They could have shed light on the degree and types of support wives receive from their husbands.
- ❖ Children could also have been interviewed to provide rich data to substantiate their parents' statements.
- ❖ The study was limited to once-off interviews, whereas different results could be obtained at different stages in the couples' lives.
- ❖ I focused on couples that were in dual-career marriages at the time when the study was undertaken, and different results could be obtained from individuals not in such marriages.

8.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The following recommendations are made for future research:

- ❖ A longitudinal study, which would entail multiple interviews conducted at different time periods, should be undertaken in order to examine the changes in perceptions at various points in time.
- ❖ Studies focusing on the views of couples entering into dual-career marriages, and the retrospective views of couples in such marriages who have divorced, may yield interesting results.
- ❖ Future studies focusing on dual-career couples of which the wife is a professional, regardless of her career level, is suggested as the results may vary due to less work demands on her than on women in management positions.
- ❖ Lastly, a cross-cultural study focusing on the perceptions of dual-career couples across racial and cultural lines should be conducted in order to compare the views and experiences of various racial and cultural groups.

8.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a bird's-eye view of the study, which aimed at understanding the dual perceptions of Indian couples with regard to women's career advancement. As highlighted in the discussions presented in the preceding sections, Indian women in dual-career marriages simultaneously adopt the roles of parent, partner and professional. This has resulted in the emergence of various challenges and dynamics through which the couples have to navigate. Although the seeds of breakaway from the traditional Indian culture have been planted, in that the perceptions of Indian couples are changing to become more accepting of women's career advancement, a level of parity in terms of domestic responsibilities has not been reached. Also, spousal support was found to be a crucial factor in the career success of Indian women in dual-career marriages. Although the study could not determine whether the career advancement of Indian women in dual-career marriages is in actual fact 'for better or worse', it can rightfully be concluded that success in their careers is greatly influenced by their choice of spouse.

In the final chapter I present my personal reflections on the voyage I embarked on to complete this study.

CHAPTER 9:

REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH VOYAGE

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In this concluding chapter I reflect on both the highlights and challenges experienced throughout my research journey. These paved the way for a great amount of learning to occur. This is known as reflexivity which has been explained in Chapter 4 as a part of the qualitative research process where the researcher identifies and understands the various elements that have had an impact on the research process (Nadin & Cassell, 2006). The reflections are presented in three stages: prior to the commencement of the study, during data collection, and during the data analysis phase.

9.2 REFLECTIONS PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE STUDY

The perceptions of Indian dual-career couples in relation to women's career advancement has been a topic that has plagued my mind for many years. Coming from an Indian family, with both my parents being involved in careers, there were many challenges and dynamics that were presented to us. I grew up in Laudium, which is a predominantly Indian town that came about due to the segregation introduced in the apartheid era. Thus, I was raised in a place where Indian cultural values were strongly upheld. Individuals residing in Laudium have diverse levels of religious conviction (ranging from orthodox to liberal), affluence, and various viewpoints regarding women and their roles in society. Such differences were apparent among my friends and family, as there were many homes that comprised of dual-career couples, while in other instances my friends' mothers and certain female family members had not completed their schooling and were submissive to their husbands. My observations of families in which both spouses were involved in careers vary regarding the spousal support offered to the wives in order for them to advance in their careers. I have noticed that friends of mine, who had recently married, had husbands who assisted in various tasks in the home, while their parents and the older generation of men held their wives responsible for tasks in the home domain in addition to their careers. This observation served as the

driver for this study, as I wanted to discover what holds true among dual-career Indian couples.

Being a Muslim, there are various religious factors that have had an impact on my life, including the message passed down by Allah (God) in the Quran (our Holy Book) and the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be upon Him). Living in a non-Islamic state also presented unique challenges, as our views were seen as different to others and many of my non-Muslim friends regarded the religion to be 'backward', especially because of the misunderstandings relating to its views on women and their roles. As a result, mixed messages were conveyed by religious leaders in our community regarding women working and advancing in their careers. In order to gain some clarity on the matter, I was keen to find out the Hindu and Muslim views on individuals in dual-career arrangements in order to draw comparisons.

Furthermore, I regard my family as being 'liberal' compared to other families in our community, as the younger generation of women have studied at least up to matric, and some have even obtained PhDs, which is uncommon in Indian families in my community. My parents are strong advocates of education and did not try to influence my decision on which tertiary path to pursue, but made it clear that pursuing higher education was required. My parents have always encouraged me to study and progress in my career, providing constant reminders of the benefits should I find myself in a situation where I have to fend for myself. It should be noted that although my parents are liberal in terms of education and pursuing careers, our values are still strictly in line with Indian and Islamic precepts. Limitations have been placed on how I dress, as well as mingling with the opposite sex, as upholding our family's reputation is crucial.

I have also witnessed first-hand the need for women to be independent, as two of my aunts have had to support themselves and their families after separating from their husbands. The variation between the two outcomes could clearly be seen as the one who had a degree and was involved in a career at the time, was able to adapt quickly and successfully to the changing circumstances, while the other, who was not educated and was a housewife, struggled to find work and ended up having a nervous breakdown. Although it had never been a question of whether to study or not, viewing

the differences between these two women's lives, as well as the increased divorce rate in our community, definitely motivated me to study and gain the independence that a career affords. Furthermore, marriage is held in high esteem in our family, but education is given preference. This contrasts with the beliefs of some of my friends' families, as they have not encouraged their daughters to complete their schooling, as they consider marriage as more important. Others have allowed their daughters to obtain degrees but not to continue to post-graduate level due to the fear they may not find husbands because of holding such high qualifications.

Furthermore, being engaged to a professional person and planning to enter into a dual-career marriage in the near future, I was interested in finding out the success strategies adopted by women in order to gain some insight on how to effectively balance work and family life. In addition, I wanted to identify the common mistakes made by these professional women in their lives in order to avoid making the same errors. I was also interested in finding out about the men's perceptions to gain a better understanding of how to approach this relationship.

Through this self-reflection, I acknowledge myself as being immersed in the study and having certain preconceived ideas about the research. However, prior to the commencement of the study I was aware of the possible bias that I may have brought with me and took extra caution not to let it interfere throughout the various stages in the research process. I was determined to embark on this study with the aim of providing a true reflection of the participants' views, and have done my best to be objective at all times.

It should be noted that, although this topic was one that has interested me for many years, I was sceptical about the success of this study prior to its commencement. My initial perusal of the available literature on the subject de-motivated me, as I did not find sufficient literature to formulate arguments as well as to draw comparisons. At this point I even considered abandoning the topic and starting afresh. I acknowledge my study leader's patience and belief in the importance of the topic, as her words of motivation inspired me to continue. As I started telling others (both Indian and non-Indian individuals) about my study, they highlighted the need for such a study to be conducted

and expressed immense excitement about reading my thesis upon completion. I then felt optimistic about the success of the study and embarked on this research journey.

9.3 REFLECTIONS DURING DATA COLLECTION

Initially I did not see the need for a pilot study to be conducted and viewed it as unnecessary work due to the difficulty of finding participants that met the criteria. In retrospect, being a novice interviewer I am glad that I did carry out the pilot study, as it helped in developing my interviewing skills in preparation for the main study. Through the pilot study I learnt how to gain rapport with participants and became familiar with the interview questions. I was also able to make changes to the interview schedule, as questions were rephrased and others were added to the initial interview schedule as they were deemed important.

In the main study, it was difficult getting participants to agree to be interviewed due to their busy schedules. Possible candidates were contacted and often only one spouse would be willing to be interviewed, which eliminated that couple from the study. Frustration also resulted, as certain couples initially agreed to be interviewed but cancelled very close to the scheduled interview times. Regardless of these setbacks, I persevered and managed to reach data saturation after securing eighteen interviews. Many of the participants had to re-schedule the initial times set for the interviews due to unforeseen circumstances. Although this left me having to juggle my time and other responsibilities, I always remembered that they were doing me a favour and thus I was grateful that they re-scheduled instead of declining to be interviewed.

Spouses were interviewed separately, and many of them stated that it allowed them to be more open and honest in their responses. Many of the interviews were conducted at the participants' homes, which allowed me to validate certain responses. For example, I was able to observe a maid taking care of the children while the interview was being conducted, and in another instance the husband called the wife being interviewed to find out if he needed to buy bread and milk. I also was able to observe a husband who demanded that his wife warm up the food while his wife was being interviewed. This

allowed me to view first-hand the support offered to the professional women and the challenges faced by them.

The responses obtained from participants were very interesting, as they revealed their life stories to me in great depth. However, I did note that the women generally were more open and gave lengthy accounts of their experiences, while I had to probe more amongst the men, especially relating to issues surrounding their marital lives. The interviewing process was one that filled my heart with warmth, as I came to know of the great lengths husbands go to support their wives. It was also self-rewarding, as many of the participants thanked me for providing them with an opportunity to express their views, as many had thought about it but had never expressed their true feelings, not even to their spouses. However, it was also an emotionally taxing process, especially with the women who described their husbands as unsupportive. One participant broke down in tears as she spoke of the non-support and the violence experienced in her home.

I also had to remind myself constantly during the interviewing process that I needed to remain detached from the participants. In many instances I felt the urge to provide advice or to tell them about my own experiences in relation to certain issues they were facing. I abstained from such urges by allowing the participants to speak more and by using facial gestures to indicate that I was listening to them, rather than providing my own opinion. A further challenge was due to the interviews of husbands and that of wives being conducted separately. In many instances the participants were intrigued to know what their spouses' responses to the questions were. I had to keep reminding them of the confidentiality that I had promised all participants prior to conducting the interviews.

Regardless of the challenges experienced, I thoroughly enjoyed the data collection process. It allowed me to grow as a researcher, as I was able to obtain in-depth information through the various interviewing techniques that I learnt, including probing, rephrasing, and establishing rapport. It also was insightful, as I understood the dynamics surrounding these couples, while the participants mentioned the insight they gained through the introspection that occurred in this process. The information obtained,

coupled with the enthusiasm of the participants to read the findings of the study upon completion, heightened my excitement for the analysis phase.

9.4 REFLECTIONS DURING THE ANALYSIS OF THE COUPLES' LIFE STORIES

My excitement about the analysis phase faded away and was replaced by confusion as I found myself faced with 519 pages of interview transcriptions, not knowing where to start. I drew on the many resources at my disposal, including discussions with my study leader, reviewing of course notes on the Atlas.ti program, and reading books on qualitative analysis. These resources provided guidance and assurance for the way forward. In addition, many of the codes were intertwined, thus feelings of uncertainty were felt in the initial coding phase. Once the codes had been clarified I felt that I was in a better position to carry out the analysis. The Atlas.ti program assisted greatly, as it allowed for structured coding to be carried out. However, in order for the themes to be generated, I emptied out an entire room in my home where I manually categorised the initial codes into themes.

Many of the ideas came to me in the middle of the night and I kept a book by my bedside where I jotted down these concepts. I spent many days debating the categorisation of the initial codes and re-working the themes until I was satisfied with the outcome. Atlas.ti was used in this process, as it allowed for the themes and their contents to be stored electronically and permitted modifications to be made while maintaining the structure of the information. I became so engrossed in the analysis process that I worked throughout the festive season and even excused myself from family activities while on holiday.

I was pleased with the themes that emerged, and that comparisons and contributions to the existing literature could be made. Although the start of the analysis process was surrounded by confusion and panic, I thoroughly enjoyed the subsequent stages, as I could see the pieces of the puzzle fitting together and the big picture became apparent. On completion of the analysis phase, I was elated and grateful that the many nights of broken sleep had finally paid off.

9.5 CONCLUDING NOTE

The research voyage that I embarked on was not smooth sailing, as many tears were shed, feelings of despair were experienced and at times the thought of giving up was very tempting. There were also many highlights, as laughter was shared, excitement was experienced, and the study was self-rewarding, as the participants expressed their gratitude for being given the opportunity to voice their opinions. In addition, I am very grateful to Allah (God), my study leader, as well as my friends and family who were instrumental in the completion of this study.

Tremendous growth and learning took place during this journey. As a researcher I have gained insight into the manner of conducting research using the life story approach and thematic analysis. As a scholar, I have learnt about the various factors that have an impact on the perceptions of individuals, the dynamics surrounding dual-career couples, as well as the importance of taking into account an individual's background in order to understand their current life. I have also developed as an individual, as I aim to implement what I have learnt from the couples in my personal life and I believe that I am in a better position to enter into a dual-career marriage. Although this study has made a contribution to the research on dual-career couples, in my future research endeavours I aim to focus on some of the unattended issues that transpired from this study in order to contribute further to this growing field of research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW FEEDBACK FORM

Name of participant:	
Date and time of interview:	
Venue of interview:	
Summary of interview highlights:	
Nonverbal behaviour of participant:	
Additional notes:	

APPENDIX B: EXAMPLE OF A DISCUSSION ON THE ACMF FACEBOOK GROUP



Ask Chaachi Ma fans
Friday

Anon Please
Girls should have a degree and work after marriage VS Girls should get married and depend on their husband?
What are your opinions and thoughts?

Like · Comment · Share

👍 8 people like this.



Surma Begum Depend on benefits lol
Friday at 10:54pm via mobile · Like



Rubina Ali Up to the couples what ever works for them and both have a mutual decision together
Friday at 10:56pm via mobile · Like



Sadiano Ronaldo Work b4 and after she gets married
Friday at 10:57pm via mobile · Like · 🔄 1



Shamim Mitha Work n b independent cos we never kno wats instore for us
Friday at 10:57pm via mobile · Like · 🔄 8



Haraam Polise Girls should do what they want,, it's optional,, they don't need to be forced.
Friday at 10:58pm via mobile · Like · 🔄 1



Rahil Moosa Insha'Allah, When I get married, I'd prefer my wife to be safe at home and have fun with the kids.
Friday at 10:59pm via mobile · Edited · Like · 🔄 6



Nadia Mia Nothing says its either/or. Some girls want to study but don't want to work, some would like to do both and some know studying and/or work would not be suitable to them. All depends on the individuals and their partners.
Friday at 10:59pm via mobile · Like · 🔄 1



Muhammed Ahmed have a degree and work
Friday at 10:59pm · Like · 🔄 3



Sameera Muhammad I think a woman should still work after she gets married the only time she shouldn't work is when she has children but that also would be based on the financial stability of the husband.
Friday at 11:00pm via mobile · Like · 🔄 1



Shy Nah Bee Get educated first. In today's time it takes two salaries to cope with expenses. If u aren't raising kids or have nothing else to do why not assist your hubby with the bills. It also helps in keeping you sane and adds to self worth. Personal choice I guess
Friday at 11:00pm via mobile · Like · 🔄 2



Zaheer Mangerah Should do what Allah wants let their taqdeer work 4 them and dr sustenance reach them through their husband without stress
Friday at 11:00pm via mobile · Like · 🔄 1

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Farzana Yacob I blv in a women being independent n have sunthing attached to her name, coz if later on her husband has to divorce her or throw her out from the house, she will be able to provide for herself and also if she's married she won't be dependent on her husband.. Soo I strongly blv a woman shud be independent, have a diploma or degree n work, whether she's married or not..@ ayesha not all men want to provide for their women, they prefer their women working n being independent..

Friday at 11:23pm via mobile · Edited · Like · 🔄 1



Mf Moosa The problem is we have become extravagant and therefore the husbands income is not sufficient for our way of life.

Friday at 11:22pm · Like



Muhammad Siraj Manuel Have a degree and stay or work from home lol. Work flexi time whatever. Be your hubbys PA or secretary. Guys love secretaries (hot ones) so he would be the lucky guy who is married to her lol. The last part of my comment is a joke hey.

Friday at 11:24pm via mobile · Like · 🔄 1



Wasif Hoosen Sisters, If the relations with the man you marry were completely halaal all the way until marriage, then you don't need any back up plans such as degrees. Allah will bless your marriage with plenty of barkat and there will always be love between you'll. This is why arranged marriages tend to have a much lower divorce rate. Allah knows best.

Friday at 11:25pm via mobile · Like · 🔄 2



Sameera Rasool Most girls would luv to further enhance themselves and go out to the working environment just to stimulate themselves instead of staying at home which is great. The Prophet (SAW) met Khadija (RA) as a trader. The reality is a girl can be very ambitious when she is young but once she gets married and have kids, her priorities change and she will soon realise all her dreams are difficult to be fulfilled and family bcums more important. Thus the wife staying at home is the easiest way for a household to function smoothly if financially possible. Women generally instinctively have a maternal instinct to put others b4 them. The worst thing is when mums have kids only to dump their kids at daycare or with family members when they don't really need the money.

Yesterday at 12:54am via mobile · Like · 🔄 2



Daa'ee Ilalhaq my opinion is that women should not leave the home unnecessarily. if the need is there, it is different. but even when the woman has no source of income, she should 1st exhaust all work opportunities from WITHIN HER HOME. if there is no such avenue, then working beyond the home WITHIN SHAR'I CONFINES, will be permissible. please bear in mind this is MY OPINION. if it conflicts with the fatwaa of a qualified renowned authentic mufti, IT SHOULD BE IGNORED. as for facebook, i believe there is more harm in it than good. whether or not there are muftis here, it is best to abstain. with regards to this discussion in specific, there is permissibility within a public forum when the laws of hijaab are observed. but once the talk transgresses necessity, it becomes fitnah. i do not condone facebook even for myself. it is a weakness i admit to and ask Allah to assist me in overcoming. have an awesome day 😊

Yesterday at 4:05am via mobile · Like · 🔄 4



Shayna Ally Realistically, its happening all over, when a woman is widowed, her brothers r too busy in their own lives n times r tough financially, her father may b too old n doesn't have enough money to suport n living off pension, what does the woman do, she needs to work, but if she hasn't wrked b4, its Really difficult to find a job that supports her n her kids.. She can't wait till she is old to educate herself n get a job... In this time we live in, its really difficult to live on 1 persons salary n the wife needs to work too. Take all the cost involved, if u don't own a home, what's the min rental, lights n water, basic necessities cost so much, not to mention medical expenses, car expenses, school fees, uniforms for kids with their stationery, food.. Many friends would love to stay at home n see to their kids, they have no option but to work cause they just don't make ends meet on 1 persons income.

Yesterday at 5:23am via mobile · Like · 🔄 1




Nazmira Karrim Be Independent !

Yesterday at 7:50am via mobile · Like




Sumaiya Moodeen In todays day & age.. A woman has to be stable enough that if her partner decides to walk out or passes away she's strong enough to stand on her own and able to look after herself & her kids & not beg 4m ppl.. Yes Allah provides..BUT Allah helps those who help themselves #my opinion.

Yesterday at 11:35am · Like ·  2



Late ForaDate In todays day and age - our imaan is very weak, nonetheless - a womans place is @ home. But hey if you wanna work and transgress while working and we all know how some of you women dress up just to impress colleagues @ work.., sure - its you who will have to answer.

That's will be all. Thx.

21 hours ago via mobile · Like ·  1

Write a comment...

APPENDIX C: CODE OF ETHICS FOR RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY GUIDELINES FOR RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH:

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. GENERAL

1.1 The University of Pretoria has a research duty that has to be performed for the benefit of science and for the community the University is serving.

1.2 The University of Pretoria and researchers employed by the University acknowledge that research has to take place within a particular academic value system. Part of the mentioned academic value system is that the University and researchers within the University

1.2.1 should always be true to the ethic principles of justice and credibility;

1.2.2 have an increased research responsibility and duty when research is done involving humans, animals or the environment as subjects of the research.

1.3 To ensure that research takes place within the mentioned value system throughout the University, the University decided to lay down certain policy guidelines and procedures.

1.4 From the above it necessarily follows that the University condemns and discourages research taking place outside the mentioned academic value system.

1.5 To determine whether research takes place within or outside the mentioned academic value system, the University provides for a system of disclosure, preapproval, recordkeeping, accountability and evaluation.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH PRACTICES

2.1 General

The following Code of Conduct is applicable to all researchers at the University.

2.1.1 Academic and research staff, students and research collaborators of the University

2.1.1.1 are compelled to be intellectually honest at all times and always conduct themselves professionally;

2.1.1.2 should at all times meet the legal requirements of a specific research project or which may be affected by it;

2.1.1.3 should comply with the research ethical rules applicable within the University, Faculty and/or discipline;

2.1.1.4 should comply with the research ethical rules laid down by a particular professional body within the field supervised by that body;

2.1.1.5 should at all times refrain from any action that may be considered as research misconduct.

2.1.2 The above implies that researchers should not dishonour the confidence put in them by colleagues, research colleagues, the University or the broad community.

A single researcher's misconduct has a negative impact on the good name of the University and as such has an indirect effect on the credibility of the community of researchers within the University.

2.2 Discipline-driven requirements

2.2.1 The University recognises and endorses some discipline-driven ethical codes with international acknowledgement and it accepts these codes and standards as guidelines and rules for research at the University. The particular codes are available for perusal at relevant faculties/schools.

2.2.2 In addition to the international codes, the Ethics Committees in Faculties may prescribe requirements applicable to researchers and research projects within the Faculties.

2.3 Pre-approval

2.3.1 Research may not be done without the prior written approval by an Ethics Committee or other constituted Committee.

2.3.2 Each Faculty has its own particular procedures to be followed in order to obtain the approval as mentioned above.

2.3.3 Each Faculty has a framework document that researchers could use to obtain the approval as mentioned above.

2.3.4 If the approval of any person involved in research is required in order to do the research, the approval needs to be obtained prior to the research. The person providing the approval should be given sufficient information to be in a position to make an informed decision.

2.3.5 No undue pressure may be put on a person to persuade him/her to participate in the research programme.

2.4 Recordkeeping

Each Faculty needs to keep proper records of all approved and rejected protocols as well as of the status of the approved project.

2.5 Conclusion of projects

After completion of a project researchers need to inform the relevant Ethics Committee and need to certify that the research has been completed in accordance with the approved research protocol.

2.6 Confidentiality

2.6.1 All research results should generally be open to evaluation by colleagues within the University, other researchers, interested parties and the public.

2.6.2 If confidentiality is required, researchers are required to honour it. An Ethics Committee should however, provide approval prior to the start of confidential research.

2.6.3 Research information should not be used for any other purpose than it was required for or for which approval was given.

2.6.4 The University may require that research results are kept confidential for a limited period of time to enable the University to protect its intellectual property.

Researchers should protect the interests of the University when it concerns intellectual property.

2.7 Consultation

Should researchers doubt their authority or responsibilities or have any doubts about the ethical implications of their work, they should look for guidance from their colleagues, co-researchers, the applicable Ethics Committee, the Dean of the Faculty or Executive Management of the University.

2.8 Safety

Researchers have a duty to comply with the prescribed safety procedures.

3. PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN RESEARCH MISCONDUCT IS ALLEGED

3.1 Definitions of Research Misconduct

3.1.1 “Research misconduct” has the following meaning: The non-compliance with the prescribed rules, procedures and prescriptions of an applicable ethics committee; research outside the stipulations of an approved research protocol; failure to obtain approval prior to the start of the research (where approval is a requirement); fabrication and falsifying of research data and results; plagiarism; failing to honour confidentiality; abuse of research funds; illegal or unauthorized use of University property when doing research; raising research funds in an improper way; transgressing the University’s rules on intellectual goods and guidelines; practices that substantively deviate from generally accepted practices within the academic research community. The latter includes failure to acknowledge work done primarily by a research student/co-researcher.

3.1.2 An honest difference in interpretation or judgment on data does not constitute research misconduct.

3.2 Procedures

3.2.1 All cases of research misconduct are referred to the Chairpersons of the relevant Ethics Committee of the particular Faculty.

3.2.2 The Chairpersons of the relevant Ethics Committee, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee for Research Ethics and Integrity appoints a Committee of three members to investigate the misconduct in accordance with a procedure as approved by the Committee with consideration to the rules of good administrative processes. The mentioned committee reports to the Faculty Committee as well as the Chairman of the Committee for Research Ethics and Integrity.

3.2.3 The Faculty will take corrective action as they consider appropriate. This includes the authority to instruct the researcher to immediately cease all research.

3.2.4 If the Chairman of the Committee for Research Ethics and Integrity is of the opinion that the research misconduct is of such severity that it warrants disciplinary action, he/she should refer the matter to the Vice-Chancellor and Principal.

3.2.5 The Vice-Chancellor and Principal will take the corrective action he/she deems appropriate. This includes the authority to order that disciplinary action should be taken in accordance with the University's disciplinary code and procedures against the person who, according to the Committee mentioned above, has acted unlawfully.

3.2.6 Nothing in the above procedures will prevent the Vice-Chancellor and Principal to use another procedure to investigate an allegation of research misconduct if he/she is of the opinion that it is desirable.

3.3 Reporting

3.3.1 The Chairperson of the Faculty Ethics Committee reports twice annually on the activities of the particular Ethics Committee to the Faculty Council.

3.3.2 The Chairperson of the Committee for Research Ethics and Integrity report twice annually to the Committee on complaints of research misconduct within the University as well as the subsequent steps taken.

APPENDIX D: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

Informed consent for participation in an academic research study

Dept. of Human Resource Management

'FOR BETTER OF WORSE': DUAL PERCEPTIONS OF INDIAN COUPLES TOWARDS WIVES' CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Research conducted by:
Miss. S.F. Ahmed (27068235)
Cell: 079 341 5974

Dear Respondent

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Sumaiyah Fuad Ahmed, a Master's student from the Department of Human Resource Management at the University of Pretoria.

The purpose of the study is to determine the perceptions held by Indian couples towards wives' career advancement in South Africa.

Please note the following:

- This study involves an anonymous in-depth interview. Your name will not appear on any published documentation and the information you give will be treated as strictly confidential. You cannot be identified in person based on the information you give.
- Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.
- Please answer the questions posed within the interview as completely and honestly as possible. This should not take more than 90 minutes of your time. In addition, a follow-up interview and/or member-checking questionnaire may be required for clarification and/or rigour.
- Should you agree to participate in the study, the researcher will contact you to arrange a suitable date and time for the in-depth interview.
- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. We will provide you with a summary of our findings on request.
- The data will be stored in the formats of hand-written notes, audiotapes, and CD ROM.
- Please contact my supervisor, Miss N. Carrim (012) 420-2466 if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

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

Respondent's signature

Date