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CAREER MANAGEMENT COMPLEXITIES IN A

DEVELOPING ECONOMY: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC

EXPOSITION OF ONE INXILE'S

BY

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of Doctor of Philosophy (Psychology)**

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PART 1

Supervisors

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DECLARATION

I, Thabile Gama-Chawana declare that:

(i)   The research reported in this thesis is my original work except where indicated

(ii)   This research has never been submitted to any other educational institution for a similar purpose

(iii)   All information contained herein has been appropriately referenced, including all identifying information which has been given the utmost ethical consideration

(iv)   This dissertation does not contain any work or writings by any other person;

    a) Where any words have been used: they have been properly referenced to indicate their origin, and

    b) Where verbatim quotations have been used: proper referencing has been adhered to, to indicate their source and has been placed in quotation marks to indicate this fact

(v)   All other works such as tables and figures which have been adapted for use in the study have been properly referenced to indicate their original source and authors

(vi)   To my best knowledge and of my conscience, I have done all I can to reference properly and correctly all sources I used to produce the research outcome as required

(vii)   I bear sole responsibility for errors of omission which may unintentionally occur and are due to human limitations although maximum accuracy was aspired for in all possible respects

Signed: *Thabile Gama-Chawana* **Date: June 2017**

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First and foremost, I would like to give thanks to my Father in Heaven for all gifts and talents He has endowed me with to be able to fulfil life-career requirements up to this level.

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Overall, this thesis is dedicated to the Class of 1976

My success is your success!

ABSTRACT – *MATCH STATISTICS*

This reflexive study was conceptualised from the lens of a South African whereby as a developing economy political, educational and socioeconomic strangleholds persistently impinge on individuals' career management processes. Eventual negative consequences impact on individuals' career successes and the country's economic success even after the demise of apartheid. The study benefited from a hindsight perspective that rationalised a perceived gap in dominant career theories that had limited capacity to model and explain lived-career experiences within a sociocultural environment like SA. The lived-career management experiences of the researcher as the subject and thus the *inxile* in the autoethnographic design within the qualitative research paradigm provided the framework to investigate the stated gap from a constructivist philosophical perspective. Four broad research questions guided the study from which it was derived 23 interview sub-questions and seven focus group sub-questions. A total of 13 participants were criterion sampled to engage in conversational interviews, 11 individually, and a combined five participants for one focus group session. They comprised three family members, three recent graduates, two peers, three self-proclaimed inxiles and two additional focus group members. All played a corroborative role on idiosyncratic yet persistent complexities that constrain career management imperatives, thus rendering the study as multi-voiced in its approach. It was rationalised in the study that: SA's current policy document does not emphasise the pivotal role of individuals in taking ownership of personal career imperatives against argued complexities, also that career education was consistently poor and perpetuated disadvantage for the majority of black learners. Through the objectives of the study it was investigated the perceived gap towards indigenous knowledge development and to evaluate changes in the country as contextual to the poor education system. All stated objectives embedded intentions to derive elements from combined lived-career experiences from which career knowledge could be enriched while also deriving insightful input to enhance career education policy reformulation. The Systems Theory Framework provided philosophical and theoretical alignment for analysis towards culturally embedded interpretations and discussions whereby the study's rationalisations were positively supported through fully achieved objectives.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION: *THE SERVE*

1. **Introduction**

In a different life[1], I would have chosen to pursue a career in competitive sport: in professional swimming or tennis playing because I love sport in general and the intricacies of playing tennis are explained by Gallwey (1997) and Martz (2015). My passion for soccer is often expressed in my support for the local soccer team: *Orlando Pirates* as well as *Manchester United* at a global level. I associate the former with my roots in Soweto and the latter on admirable display of team management skills by Sir Alex Ferguson (Bailey & Sondhi, 2012). However, my following of these teams belies my minimal orientation to team work as I function strongest from a loner paradigm which corresponds with the aloneness that confronts a tennis player in a court of play similarly to when one embarks on a lonesome journey (Bitzer & van den Bergh, 2014) in quest of a career goal as in this study. I admire most the players' evident will to win, disguised calm and humble acceptance of a loss displayed for all to see. I have lost count of occasions where I have tried to learn accepting loss and defeat gracefully in spite of my spiritually pacifying resolve to just believe, as in Psalm 46:10 "Be still and know that I am God" (Maxwell, 2007, p. 697). However, I still fail to understand my frustrations when Serena Williams loses because in so many ways, she plays for me as well, and I am afforded momentary escapes, believing that I too can be strong, courageous, show determination and resolve to do my best. Hopefully, emerge a winner as she often does and thus modelling how to accept all kinds of life-career knocks.

I am drawn to the sport of tennis by the seeming aloneness in the court of play because I believe that making it or breaking it is, to some extent, truly up to the individual especially in the career sphere. I thus took a lesson from Muncey's (2005) truth that a "metaphor can provide significant meaning and insight beyond the confines of isolated experiences by trying to capture the essence of the life it represents" (p. 8).

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[1] The life referred to is intertwined with career experiences and narrated as an autobiographical story attached as Appendix D (Part 2, pp. 343 – 430). I recommend that it be read first as orientation into the thesis considering that autoethnography was the design followed in completing the study.

Truth, because it represents reality, whereby mine is that I am not a sports woman: I am a South African [SA] *black* woman, trying to find my place in the prestigious yet daunting academic terrain. *Black*, because such apartheid representations continue to be paradoxical "markers of class and other social privilege" (Shefer & Ngabaza, 2015, p. 66) given the poignancy and pride they evoke particularly in spaces of self-representation, hence the coinage, *inxile* in the topic. Briefly, the concept *inxile* refers to me as an individual that never went into **exile** at the height of political unrests in SA and a broader explanation of the concept is covered in Section 2.4 of Chapter 2. Accordingly, I weave-in the sport of tennis due to the enticing wisdom often displayed, from which I draw a metaphorical parallel within qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b; Nieuwenhuis, 2010b). With the foregoing positioning of my place in this study, I briefly pointed out unrealised sporting ambitions as a career to begin this introductory chapter. In the next paragraphs, I provide snippets into the study's background, the rationale motivating for having undertaken it, what its objectives were as well as its significance. I also present mandatory ethical considerations that guided the study, followed by the entire thesis outline and the concluding chapter summary. Below I present the background to the study.

1.1. Background to the study

South Africans are constantly engaged in search for solutions to undo the damages of the past educational, socio-economic and political history. Increasing the quality of education is regarded as one of the overarching strategies as captured in the vision statement of SA's National Development Plan 2030 [NDP 2030] compiled by the National Planning Commission [NPC] (2012) as the latest SA policy framework. Thus, subsequent policy initiatives dovetail from the country's long term perspective as embodied in the NDP 2030 in its role to outline a desired destination for society as a whole, through the various government departments and in partnership with stakeholders. In that regard, the framework fundamentally encourages all South Africans to work together towards realising stated national goals. In response to this encouragement as a contextual imperative (Turok, 2016a, 2016b) that aligned with personal and professional goals of what eventually became my career path, I conceptualised this study which falls within the subfield of career psychology under the broad field of psychology as part of my contribution.

As a start, I scrutinised the policy framework and realised a lack of specific guidelines on how individuals can turn their lives around through career management strategies flowing from the aforementioned subfield in particular. Chapter 9 of the NDP 2030 (NPC 2012) focuses on "improving training, education and innovation" (pp. 261 – 294) and specifies what needs to be done by perceived key stakeholders, yet concluded without detailing what individuals need to do as part of self-development. Subsequently, the recently gazetted *National Policy for an Integrated Career Development System for South Africa* (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2017) shows the government's commendable awareness of the need for increased career guidance services at macro level. However, the policy document still outlines a purpose statement that excludes expectations on desirable individuals' self-development roles. Such inclusions would have created insight into individuals' obligation for self-development and towards the urgent task of developing the country from its inertia as was historically induced by colonisation and the subsequent apartheid regime. As such, the premise that the *government can but individuals can't,* induces national paralysis on individuals' need for agency and growth towards personhood in that we are made to believe that thinking for oneself on how to improve one's own quality of life, remains the government's prerogative.

From the field's perspective, I noted in Nicholas, Naidoo and Pretorius' (2006) explanation on historical developments of career psychology in SA which primarily, indicated its poor standing as a discipline due to historical politics, economic and race factors which have also crippled the country's career education, particularly for black people. Also, Laher and Cockcroft (2014) explain in a telling example how "psychological assessment played an instrumental role in support of separate development" (p. 305) during the apartheid years. Manganyi's (2013, 2016) agonising account is but one real-life example of typical struggles and hardships capturing how difficult it was to become a clinical psychologist under apartheid SA. Therefore and fundamentally, the overall impact on the country's economic, educational and social aspects is what post-apartheid policy frameworks have been grappling with in efforts to reverse the outcomes, including the latest NDP 2030 (NPC, 2012).

In view of our collective disadvantage as a country, along with the stated personal and professional goals as well as my chosen response to the NPC's (2012) encouragement, I realised that something can be learned from my own lived-career management experiences, particularly by the youth. In this thesis, I argued that such personal experiences probably exemplify unstated NDP 2030 expectations of individuals and may be discerned from employed strategies as part of personal lived-career management processes. Career management as a phenomenon basically entails a process of growth and development of individuals and thus, result in their career-life stories as well (Baruch, 2004). Hence, in the 21st century, the notion of career embodies a protean dimension that entails a subjective "focus on psychological measures of success" (Parker & Roan, 2015, p. 70). Briefly, it justifies the pivotal role of the individual to manage one's career in the continuously globalising world of work (Muchinsky, Kriek & Schreuder, 2006). Its a role that encapsulates the demand on individuals to devise intentional choices as agents of change (Vindhya, 2015) towards influencing decisions that affect one's own career outcomes.

Considering the brief background, I argued in the rest of the study *firstly* that: had Chapter 9 of the NDP 2030 (NPC, 2012) as an overarching policy framework set aside an explicit section on the role of career management as a vital individual's obligation towards the maximisation of one's potential (J. Maree, 2015a), the encouragement would have been unambiguous. As such, it became clear in the life-career processes of the researcher that related progression was my obligation even under apartheid political conditions. *Secondly,* I argued that our career education is still failing to empower individuals at least with career management knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies within a broadly failing education system; *thirdly,* Chinyamurindi (2016) states that "in South Africa, previously disadvantaged groups have been omitted from empirical studies, and little is known about their career development processes" (p. 391). As such, I believed that lessons can be learned from the lived-career experiences of many other SA individuals. Notably, that they still managed their careers successfully and their experiences may thus be drawn from especially towards enrichment of indigenous career knowledge. *Finally,* I further argued that: policy reformulation processes that are based on these experiences may contribute towards betterment of career education.

To substantiate the stated four underpinning arguments and because "it is not enough to speak about the crisis without seeking to explain and dissect its causes" (Mandaza, 2016, p. 18), I discuss the fourfold rationales and motivation for undertaking the study in the next section.

1.2.   **Rationale and motivation for the study**

It is clear from foregoing discussions that this study investigated the central phenomenon of career management through a retrospective lens of lived-career management experiences. It was a lens tainted by apartheid atrocities prior to my birth, into my schooling years and upon entering the world of work. As a known fact, apartheid denied me and millions others of stable home backgrounds, empowering educational experiences (Chinyamurindi, 2016) which clearly had no career education for black people (Gama, 1984; Nicholas et al., 2006). These factors underpinned the view that resulting career management experiences, especially for black South Africans, did not pattern-out to produce accurate representations of what the processes entailed in ways that could be theoretically explained and therefore, magnified the perceived gap in the field.

This view found resonance in Arthur and McMahon's (2005) explanation that the absence of such theoretical formulations also exacerbates the gap between career theory and practice in that the relationship between cultural influences at individual, environmental, and societal levels remain insufficiently explained. Many SA scholars such as Akhurst and Mkhize (2006), Crossland, (2006), Gama (1984), Stead and Watson (2006) to mention a few, have investigated parts of the gap in efforts to narrowing it as imperatives for explication and conceptualisation of indigenous career knowledge development. Fitzgerald and Betz (1994) support the foregoing views and highlight that in general, career theories are inadequate in that they lack conceptual relevance, overlook large sections of the population and neglect important cultural factors. Although the authors' findings did not necessarily explain SA experiences, their views are relevant and thus encouraged scholarly interest as the *first* rationale: to investigate the extent to which these explanations contributed to this study's efforts focusing on narrowing the gap. To motivate for the stated rationale, I observed from personal experiences and professional development processes that career management is a complex exercise for individuals in SA.

I then realised that it was imperative for SA's career field to develop sensitised and indigenous descriptions of such experiences that primarily take into account, underlying and constraining complexities. Moreover, assertions that other scholars such as those in America rarely acknowledge psychological developments from other countries and prefer advancing their own research (Stead & Watson, 2006), increased motivation for the study. Therefore, the aforementioned views and observations as rationale for undertaking this study were bolstered also in consideration of Watson, Bimrose and McMahon's (2015) overall contention that "there has been increasing concern that understanding individual career development needs to go beyond the scientific paradigms that have informed most career theories to date" (p. 79). The *second rationale* pertained to notable legislative changes especially during the first decade of SA's democratic government. These were promulgated in efforts to bury the apartheid past. Relevant to this study were: the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996; SA Constitution of 1996; the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997; the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 and the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998; which collectively aim to provide educational, social, economic and political redress for the majority of citizens that were marginalised under apartheid. Since career management builds on career development from home and school contexts, the Outcome Based Education [OBE] (Rulashe, 2004; Seroto, 2004; van Renen, 2005) was introduced as an urgent educational reform system.

The aim was for learners to acquire important knowledge and skills as desired outcomes for use in their post-school career behaviours and for immediate gainful impact on economic demands for the country. However, the OBE system has recurrently faltered and the 2011 diagnostic report (NPC, 2012) leading to the formulation of the NDP 2030 acknowledged that "the quality of education for black people is poor" (p. 25). Such an admission in a policy document posed an interesting angle to investigate this study and created perceptions that envisaged societal changes continue to perpetuate disadvantage similar to the one that I experienced under apartheid: with no emphasis on career development and management. Fuelling the stated perception were statements still in the diagnostic 2011 report (NPC, 2012) that "too few people work" (p. 25).

Again, such admissions validated resulting phenomena like that of unemployable graduates (Varsity SA, 2012; Urban & Richard, 2015): that tertiary students still register for any available course, that registration decisions are influenced by tuition costs and therefore according to the most affordable programme, instead of being driven by their needs, interests, skills and abilities (Council on Higher Education [CHE], 2010). Also, the general under-preparedness of first year university students resulting from multiple antecedent barriers (Singh, 2016) condemns the majority of them to leave university with incomplete qualifications to swell the ranks of the working class that is not working (Andrews & Osman, 2015). Further encouraging the study were reports on SA's persistently very poor standards of primary and higher education (World Economic Forum [WEF], 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015); the emergent "poo-protest" phenomenon (Cronin, 2014, p. 9) whereby human waste is thrown at targeted symbols of oppression; report on the unfortunate incident at the gates of the University of Johannesburg [UJ] on the 10th of January 2012 where a parent lost her life during a stampede while attempting to apply for admission for her child (Polgreen, 2012); media statements proclaiming that "our children's education stinks" (Ramphele, 2012, p. 14); along with utterances such as "SA education is rubbish" (J. Jansen, 2015, p. 1) also compounded by observations regarding the very high costs of higher education (Habib, 2015).

The seemingly recurrent (Cele, 2016; de Haas, 2016) and dramatic uprisings across SA universities (Cele, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c; Masondo, 2015a; Pillay, 2016) provide a temporary outlet for long-suffering students who cite extreme poverty levels, repressed racial tensions and general struggles they have to deal with while trying to carve out careers for themselves. Pillay (2016) challenges critical psychologists' and the psychology field's silence given the glaring regression in that the "Nelson Mandela's post-1994 government disabled radical activism by foregrounding narratives of peace, reconciliation, forgiveness, and unity. The current cadre of student activists are actively critiquing those narratives, foregrounding exclusion, poverty, broken political promises, and privilege" (p. 156). In a sense, all these challenges have "tested the capacities and capabilities of the state…and have affected the pace, nature and outcomes of change" (Badat, 2010, p. 5). As a result, Sibeko (2015) avers that the SA "education system has failed most of our children" (p.1).

Sibeko's (2015) single sentence echoes Singh's (2016) contention that there is no coherence in the entire education system, even up to the employment market levels. As such, all citations conspire to fuel a sense of crisis in the state of SA's education and collectively provided another currently newsworthy rationale for this study and a scholarly incentive to investigate the extent of change especially on career development and management imperatives in the country. As argued, the NDP 2030 (NPC, 2012) has not clearly articulated scaffolding career management and individual-based strategies towards the desired educational transformative goals of the country. Therefore, there is a need for different, affirmative and enabling paradigms underpinning a redesigned career education system, as summed up in Andrews and Osman's (2015) findings that:

> Failing students are not failing as a result of a lack of aptitude, but rather as a result of systemic failure of the education system to equip learners with the implicit rules of enquiry and knowledge construction. This situation is exacerbated amongst students who come from disadvantaged circumstances (p. 357).

Evidently, without a purposefully renewed focus, there's a huge wastage of human capital that ends up saddled at the margins of society without adequate personal insights or educational scaffolds to stimulate career path renegotiation which are important for achieving career aspirations and the inherent need for self-actualisation (Brennan & Piechowski, 1987; C. Patterson, 2003). DesJardins (2009) regards self-actualisation as overarching for individuals' needs to become what they wish to become through maximisation of their potential. Furthermore and in response to Sitas' (2016) inquisition on whether we are supposed to not even try to incapacitate our ahistorical saunter into our future against perceptions of our ancestors as mere "repository of yearning for a bible to be saved through and a ship to be traded in" (p. 65): contrarily, their past and ours, matters! Hence, the *third rationale* aligned with the view that there is a wealth of knowledge buried in undocumented lived-career management experiences among a vast number of South Africans. They managed to navigate impoverished educational and socio-economic terrains under severe political constraints. Similar to the Apartheid Archive Project ([AAP], 2009, 2011), I rationalised that it was possible and important for career scholarship to draw from the career archive as a culturally embedded knowledge resource for infusion in theoretical knowledge development.

Given that the career field is also grappling with how to develop indigenous knowledge, I noted emphasis to also establish universal theoretical explanations based on examinations of the phenomenon in different cultures in society (Stead & Watson, 2006). This study therefore evoked a reflexive investigation on the phenomenon, extracting discernible career strategies from others' stories to shape indigenous knowledge development. Essentially, evocative reflexivity became an underpinning strategy that could not be overlooked in a study of this nature, especially towards a better understanding of our present (AAP, 2011; J. Brown, 2008; Mda, 2008; Sitas, 2016). The Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection [MISTRA] (2016) argues that "when political freedom is attained and social transformation begins, the intellectuals play a key role in envisioning the transformation, in policy transformation…" (p. 10).

The foregoing insight aligned with the *fourth* and *final rationale* due to SA government's reported approach to the national transformation agenda that is continentally and globally noted as consistently transparent, especially with regards to policy matters (Dalton-Greyling & Baur; 2012; WEF, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015). Related to career guidance provision services and at the macro level, the DHET's mandate is based on the rationale that such services can assist individuals to develop career management skills (DHET, 2017; McMahon et al., 2015). Also noteworthy is the government's sense of urgency that is evident in the *Competency Framework for Career Development Practitioners in South Africa* (DHET, 2015a, 2016) towards enriched career provision initiatives. Thus, drawing from the CHE's (2010) report on the kind of education required to enrich policy propositions that align with the NDP 2030 vision statements (NPC, 2012), I rationalised that the outcome of this study had potential to yield insightful elements from the lived career management experiences of the researcher and the participant others, to also shape progressive career education transformation imperatives through policy redesign. The benefit of hindsight always offers vital lessons for the future and seemingly, the nation expects no less as implored by Netshitenzhe (2015, 2016b) in arguing that the role of intellectual activity is to salvage not only the country, but the African continent. He enquires evocatively as follows:

What are the corrective impulses that will drive a turnaround? Must it come from the senior leadership of the governing party and/or the middle-level cadres driven by idealism, but also by self-interest as electoral prospects diminish? Or will it come from other political forces, as negative tendencies in the governing party congeal and become too stubborn to erase? Intellectuals have an important role to play in ensuring such a turnaround. If the country proves unable, in the medium term, to choose and pursue a positive development trajectory, South Africa's intellectual community should accept a large part of the blame (Netshitenzhe, 2016b, p. 48).

These clearly stated expectations provided further motivation and a reason for one to step up as an obligation to the country and to the self as already argued. In addition to the motivational perspectives, clear goals captured as objectives of the study were formulated and presented in the next section.

1.3.   Objectives of the study

The foregoing rationales of the study were captured in *four* parts which then aligned with *four* guiding objectives. The *first* one was to investigate the extent to which career theories represent SA career experiences, argued in this study as constrained by atypical historical, educational and socioeconomic complexities. The pivotal goal was to explore career theories through strategies that privileged the self as the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) and employed subjective means of knowing personal experiences to yield representations of indigenous knowledge. Briefly, the notion of theory primarily refers to representations of knowledge dimensions formulated for exploration towards beneficial explanations of a given knowledge dimension (Krumboltz, 1994). Thus, the question was whether such indigenous formulations existed in SA but as already explained: the field is also grappling with such inquisitions in view of the plethora of career theories which cannot be comprehensively explored given this study's delineated focus areas.

As such, studies like this one provide an opportunity to bolster ongoing efforts especially in view of consensus that many individuals' career experiences are not covered in existing career theories (Alexander, 2008; Fitzgerald & Betz, 1994; Holland, 1994; Krumboltz, 1994; Stead & Watson, 2006). The *second objective* was to investigate the extent of change within SA's peculiar complexities that were rationalised as persistently constraining individuals' career management processes.

The goal intended to establish credence to the *minimal change* observation on career management processes particularly in post-apartheid SA. Thus, it was of interest to theoretically and empirically establish embedded complexities as they seemed to continue impinging on education and lives of the younger generation resulting in concerns already cited in the second/corresponding rationalisation. *The third objective* was to extract discerned elements from lived-career management experiences of the researcher as well as from others for infusion into career theories towards localising theoretical explanations in accordance with indigenous knowledge development imperatives as already argued. *The fourth and last objective* of the study was to also extract discerned career management strategies employed by the researcher as well as by the others for enrichment of career education policy redesign and reformulation. The reported impressive transparency rankings of SA government approaches to policy reformulation imperatives provided scope for aiming for such enrichment which was important, given the already mentioned national expectations from scholarly endeavours. The rationales and the objectives primarily pointed to the broad twofold significance of the study as discussed in the following section.

1.4. Significance of the study

The NDP 2030 (NPC, 2012) pointed to an uncontested need for SA citizens' involvement in the development of the country and its human capital. As a socio-economic developmental plan, it supported other government initiatives such as the Schooling 2025 document of the Department of Basic Education [DBE] (2012) and the Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education (Department of Education [DoE], 1997). These documents fundamentally capture the government's desire to speed-up the urgent transformation agenda to curb glaring educational and socio-economic inequities in the country. However, the cardinal role of career management knowledge, skills and approaches as career education instruments for change were not proposed as strategies. Therefore, the overarching significance of the study was *firstly* that the perceived gap in the career field would be narrowed from the study's findings. The resulting culturally underpinned exemplification of how career management was navigated, offers empirically established modelling of career processes from personal and familial systems, through all educational levels and in the world of work.

The outcome will eventually become a tangible resource for the field, the government and other SA individuals who might gain better perspectives from the psychologically enacted processes (Patton & McMahon, 2014). In that way, it ties in perfectly with the DHET's (2015a) view that for a breakthrough in policy initiatives: "there is a need thus to ensure that stakeholder consultation includes *individuals* whose functions are closer to the implementation level of career development services" (p. 17, italics added for emphasis). In this regard, I view the career story as sufficiently articulate considering my retrospective lived-career management processes that are also recounted with foresight. In this way, my role in the field intertwines and becomes *personally and professionally closer* to the stated implementation levels. Additionally, it may be disseminated to infiltrate and hopefully influence policy discourse from an individual's perspective as a stakeholder at all government levels as related to the next second significance.

Accordingly, the *second significance* of the study pertained to recognition of the acknowledged and widely reported difficulty of transforming education in SA (Archer, 2011; CHE, 2010, 2014; DBE, 2012; DoE, 1997; Fin Week Survey, 2009; Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2006; NPC, 2012) as well as the relationship between career education and socioeconomic transformation in the country as also examined and argued by cited scholars. The reviewed literature in Chapter 2 presented a multifaceted thought-leadership that contextualised the field of careers. The descriptive and exploratory research design that was preferred for this study (as explained in Chapter 3) enabled exposition of the researcher's lived-career management experiences that were corroborated by family, peers and fellow inxiles. These experiences were narrated from a professional point of view as examined within scholarly guidelines that also incorporated the views of recent graduates from which resonance with other voices could be ascertained to point out the extent of any change in the country's career education provision. Findings from a study conducted 22 years after democratic political changes in the country have current relevance for the career field, the government, the education sector, tertiary training institutions and other individuals especially the youth who are compelled to still navigate personal careers under different but equally constraining conditions.

Moreover, it responds to the explained societal expectation from the country's scholarship (Netshitenzhe, 2015, 2016b) in that "new knowledge generated via doctoral education is widely acknowledged as an important strategic and economic resource" (Teferra, 2015, p. 9) and thus also contributes to the vision statement of the NDP 2030 (NPC, 2012).

1.5. Ethical considerations

Literature on research usually dedicates considerable amounts of information on ethical considerations. As an example, in SA, the Department of Health (2005) safeguards ethical practices through Research Ethics Committees [REC] which must be accredited by the National Health Research Ethics Council [NHREC] towards ensuring that research participants are protected in accordance with international standards and guidelines. Devlin (2006) details ethical guidelines according to the Institutional Research Board [IRB] which serves in the United States of America to protect the researcher and the others involved in research processes. Several authors who have also undertaken autoethnography detailing personal stories provide guidelines on how best to represent self and others. Among these, Muncey (2006) highlights the proliferation of stories in research in equal measure with the imperative to present sanitised personal narratives accompanied by the need to uphold great anonymity as an ethical obligation. Ellis (2007) concurs in that there seems to be a myriad of hindrances when examining a vulnerable self, while also revealing the broader context of that experience that inherently and unavoidably involves others.

Still, Muncey (2010) argues that better than most research approaches, autoethnography empowers all parties in that it evens out the skewed power distribution common among other forms of traditional research. Therefore, as a lifelong learner, I took the proverbial leaf from cited autoethnographers who concur with Speedy (2008) on how to manage the ethical tension, from which I gained courage. Also, B. Brown's (2010, 2012) lessons on the power of vulnerability were encouraging and empowering in view of Down's (2011) observations that: thinking through one's life experiences provides an opportunity for intellectually healing processes for the self and identification by others who may have gone through similar experiences which thus articulated this study's longings.

Overall, the *School of Applied Human Sciences – Discipline of Psychology (Howard College)* at the University of KwaZulu Natal [UKZN] (2007) Ethics Committee's research guidelines which corresponded with Health Professions Council of South Arica (n.d.), Republic of South Africa – *SA Constitution* (1996) and *Appendix G – Personal Credo* (2009) formed the overarching sources of ethical reference for this study. Accordingly, and as part of UKZN's institutional requirement, I submitted a summary of the proposed study which included four broad research questions that guided the study and are presented in their original format in Chapter 2. Furthermore, the submitted summary included two important documents, the first being *Appendix A,* derived from the four broad research questions and comprised the interview schedule for data collection from the sampled participants; the second being *Appendix B – Letter of Consent to the Ethics Committee* wherein I customised ethical guidelines derived from aforementioned sources. These customised guidelines were approved in a letter coded as *Protocol reference number HSS/1260/104D* entitled *Expedited Approval* from the UKZN's Ethics Committee, attached as *Appendix C,* and from which I did not deviate in the process of this study. Below is the thesis outline that resulted in six chapters that also incorporated several appendices.

1.6.   Outline of the thesis

Consistent with the tennis metaphor, the thesis outline is as follows:

First Part

Declaration – *blood sample*

Acknowledgements – *the rankings*

Abstract – *match statistics*

Table of contents – *the distance run*

List of Figures – *the volleys*

List of Tables – *the aces*

Body of the thesis

Chapter 1 covered the **introduction** and was dubbed as *the serve.* In it I briefly positioned myself as the researcher before highlighting that the study was located in South Africa, undertaken by a black middle-aged woman who was born under the repressive laws of apartheid. These laws had an effect on me and many others of earlier generations as well as my peers, with adverse effects on our collective familial, educational, cultural, social and political lives which to a large extent have shaped the kind of a person I am, as well as the career path that eventually surfaced by default. Also, I presented the background to the entire study to offer a glimpse into what led to its conceptualisation, briefly from an observation of constraining SA complexities which persistently impact on career experiences of individuals even under the new democratic order in the country. The limiting career experiences from my past seemed to still prevail, with only the legislative environment having changed. The present NDP 2030 (NPC, 2012) policy formulation was examined and found not to have captured and/or emphasised precise individuals' roles in their obligatory tasks to extricate themselves from the complexities. This was followed by four rationalisations that underpinned the motivation for the study whereby the *first* resulted from dominating existing career theories which were argued as explaining parts of individuals' career experiences. Such an argument magnified the perceived gap, pointing to a need for indigenous career knowledge development which supported the first motivation for the study.

The *second* rationale argued on the observed minimal change since the democratic government instituted legislations that have not translated into tangible changes to result in an effective career education within SA's education system. The lack of effectiveness was argued as having persistent negative impact on career development and management processes of SA individuals. Thus, establishing the extent of change was the second motivation of the study. The *third* rationale was based on the view that there is wealth of knowledge in the archives of lived-career management experiences of the researcher as well as others. The motivation was that employed discernible strategies can be extracted to derive culturally embedded elements for developing indigenous knowledge that would narrow the perceived gap.

The *fourth* and final rationale argued that the impressive continental and global rankings of transparent government approaches on policy matters encouraged the view that insightful elements may be derived from the investigated lived-career management archive for enrichment of career education policy redesign. The motivation was that the outcomes of this study can be accessed as a resource in career education policy reformulation processes. Then I presented the objectives of the study which were also fourfold flowing from the four argued rationales and motivations of the study. The *first* objective intended to establish the extent to which career theories represent SA experiences from which comprehensive explanations could be determined. Findings therefrom were argued as having potential to narrow the perceived gap in career knowledge and thus contribute to SA indigenous knowledge development in the field. The *second* objective was to evaluate the extent of change in career education imperatives and outcomes as may have been brought about by the democratic government in SA.

The *third* objective was to extract elements from lived-career management experiences of the researcher and others participating in the study so that these may be infused in career theories towards advancing indigenous career knowledge in SA. The *fourth* and final objective of the study was to extract discernible strategies from lived-career management experiences of the researcher and others towards enrichment of SA career education policy reformulation processes. These objectives captured the two-pronged significance of the study. The *first* pertained to theoretically and empirically investigated lived-career management experiences of the researcher and others which has great potential to contribute towards the indigenous knowledge in the career field scholarship. Thus, the perceived gap would be narrowed and simultaneously develop culturally embedded knowledge for the benefit of all potential stakeholders. The *second* significance pertained to the broad based literature reviewed and preferred methodological approaches employed to investigate the study which captured a historical, multi-voiced and multi-perspective approach on constraining SA complexities. Such an approach enabled a measurable perspective of changes and would benefit all stakeholders with currently relevant findings that are aligned and thus respond to national transformation imperatives, particularly relating to career education.

Consequently, chapter 1 concluded with emphasis on ethical adherence for the duration of the study which was expedited in accordance with the *Protocol reference number HSS/1260/104D.*

Chapter 2 covered **literature review** and was dubbed as *the rally* due to its length and it began with deconstruction of the study's topic to indicate how the study was conceptualised especially within the constructivist philosophical perspective. The conceptualisation essentially covered all dimensions of the study as an all-encompassing framework, especially the perceived complexities which were formulated to provide a major point of departure into the study as a whole. It preceded the four broad research questions which guided the study chiefly to ensure that ensuing literature reviewed acquired pertinent relevance as a backdrop. I then discussed definitions of core concepts to frame the study and to provide a common point of departure for the community of readers who have to engage with the study. I drew from existing scholarship as a broad career knowledge framework wherein existing knowledge provided a guideline on how the phenomenon of inquiry is conceptualised, what methods are used to investigate it and how these are evaluated.

Again, I introduced SA as a country and a developing economy to also frame the coined concept of *inxile* within its proper context as part of limiting the confines of this study. Along with this framing, I identified autoethnography, as a postmodernist approach, process and product through which I personalised my lived-career management experiences to yield a story as also congruent with paradigmatic perspectives, particularly on career knowledge at this juncture of the field's development. Accordingly, I argued for observed summarisation of dominant career theories into broad categories which accounted for the vast spectrum of existing theories in the field. Such a summarisation enabled a narrowed focus especially in view of consensus in the field, that these theories have a Western overbearing representation which disadvantages other sectors of the world's population including SA. The observed dominance was argued as bolstering the emergence of qualitatively based scholarly activity in the field, resulting in grouping of career theories as paradigmatic perspectives.

The first paradigm covers theoretical formulations that identified and measured characteristics resulting in the view of *individuals as actors* in career guidance processes. Such approaches primarily focus on matching the individual with similar others according to commonly chosen occupations as the basis for career decisions. The second paradigmatic perspectives: covers theoretical formulations that acknowledge the *developmental individual*, also viewed as agentic and self-regulating in pursuance of personal career development projects. The third paradigmatic perspective of career theories views *individuals as the authors* of personal career development imperatives. The third paradigm is underpinned in individuals' reconstruction of their career stories towards mutually meaningful relationships in practice favouring the pivotal role of the individual as the client. I also provided a snippet into selected SA empirical studies illustrative of nascent application of qualitative approaches in the field. The selected studies had similar resonance with the present study, thus also affirming a progressive approach into theoretical scholarship in SA. As a penultimate part of this chapter, I outlined the Systems Theory Framework [STF] and captured its components in Table 2.1 *firstly* as an enabler of the study's theoretical alignment, *secondly* for data analysis and *finally* for interpretation in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3 covered the **research methodology** and was dubbed as *break points* in that it primarily presented the methodology employed to investigate the study. Basically, it aligned the study with the broad qualitative research paradigm that corresponded with autoethnography as a preferred postmodernist research strategy. The chapter began with clearly stated theoretical and philosophical underpinnings as mandatory components of the study's fitting methodology. Theoretically, the study aligned with the STF as a metatheoretical framework in view of the argued gap in the career field as none among the dominant theories could be applied to explain and investigate the phenomenon of focus due to the study's cultural embeddedness. The philosophical underpinnings revealed the study's multi-perspectival angle that aligned with constructivism largely because the field of careers is multidisciplinary and embodies a diverse philosophical character in its conceptualisation.

Additionally, I elaborated on the multi-voiced quality of the study and indicated the voice of the researcher through autoethnography that embodied what became *Phase 1 data collection* presented in *Appendix D* embodying the lived-career management story of the researcher. In line with the multi-voiced quality, I also explained the identified and criterion sampled 11 participants, representative of four categories namely: three family members; three recent graduates; two peers (one peer discontinued participation) and three self-proclaimed inxiles. Subsequently, one focus group session was scheduled for purposes of capturing willing and available participants' unfinished thoughts as may have been aroused during individual conversations. The session became an opportunity to also include one additional youngest participant as well as one additional intergenerational participant towards further enrichment of collected data, thus enlarging to 13 the pool of participants' voices. I captured all narrative threads related to research questions as utterances in *Appendix F* which thus became units of analysis. Essentially, the two components of data gathering resulted in two-phased processes that when collapsed together supported the objectives of the study. Chapter 3 concluded with substantiated judgment criteria on how adequacy in the study was evaluated which was then followed by a brief account on data analysis processes that were explained in detail in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 covered **data analysis and findings** and was dubbed *the net approach points*. Having indicated the location of the study within the broad qualitative research paradigm, it became imperative to follow such designs which mandated an explanation of the originated data analysis approach that yielded findings. This was done in recognition of the theoretically argued stance that such designs are analytic in their conceptualisation, formulation and the type of research questions posed to guide the study and thus, required original data analysis strategies. Again, the emergent two parts of the study necessitated a clear distinction that accounted for all data collected and thus available for analysis. The process entailed the development of a conceptual framework for data analysis as well as an elaboration of steps followed in the process that eventually yielded concretisation and synchronisation of theoretical and conceptual constructs. These then formed the basis for interpretation and discussion of findings that were presented in Chapter 5 as explained below.

Chapter 5 covered **interpretations and discussion of findings** and was dubbed *the game.* Following on the unique quality of qualitative designs, interpretations and discussion of findings also mandated an original approach which was explained and theoretically substantiated. What was important in framing interpretations and discussions was the imperative to retain coherence and comprehensivity that ensured all collected and analysed data was contextualised. *Phase 1 findings* were interpreted and discussed according to emerged lived-career management approaches and strategies employed to navigate the argued constraining complexities in SA. Judgement criteria were guarded by extracting resonant utterances to highlight findings responding to each research question primarily employing conceptual constructs as privileged by the preferred research design.

Findings related to autoethnographic data were corroborated by family members whereas those relating to argued lack of change in SA complexities' impact on post-apartheid career processes positively affirmed the argument in resonance with views of all participants. Again, findings relating to elements that could be infused in indigenous career knowledge development scholarship were drawn from the archive of lived-career experiences of participants. Similarly, findings relating to discernible insights that could be infused towards enrichment of career education policy reformulation processes were highlighted. Notably, responses were framed from the inxile-exile political worldview reflective of SA's sociocultural past and present related to constraining complexities. Overall, interpretations and discussions satisfied criteria for judging adequacy in that the research questions were sufficiently addressed and thus enabled the study to conclude in the final chapter as summarised below.

Chapter 6 covered **theoretical and practical contributions, recommendations, future research and the study's limitations** which were all dubbed components of *the match* to conclude the study. Consequently, the study's contributions were theoretical and focused mainly on the study's conceptualisation and chosen methodology as providing a historical perspective into career knowledge that was representative of experiences in SA as a developing country. Practically: other scholars can adopt the approach to apply in a variety of studies. Practitioners in the field can appreciate the enacted career story as sensitisation into the actual experience towards insight development.

Recommendations were broad-based focusing mainly on the cardinal role of Life Orientation and the imperative to place the subject at the core of the school curriculum for the benefit of learners, communities and South Africa's economic development. Future research areas focused mainly on potential use of differing paradigms in investigating career development and management so as to derive transferable results to a larger number of individuals' experiences as opposed to the single case examined in the present study. Also, the study's limitations were highlighted pertaining to ethical boundaries which limited disclosure to what is acceptable in view of other individuals that are tied to the lived-career management experiences of the researcher. The chapter concluded in a *finale* that also wrapped up the employed metaphor of tennis as was extended in the entire study.

Last part

References – *the grand stand*

Appendices – *baseline*

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW: *THE RALLY*

2. Introduction

The preceding chapter provided an overview of the entire study as well as subsequent chapter summaries as an outline of the thesis. It was stated therein that Chapter 2 covers a review of literature in the field of careers and it seemed best to proceed from a contextualised perspective as presented in ensuing paragraphs and sections. The imperative for contextualisation was to cover a broad spectrum of literature focusing on enduring and current knowledge in order to theoretically justify the perceived gap in the career field as explained in the preceding chapter. Such a justification was deemed vital in that overall objectives of the study sought to narrow the gap while contributing to existing knowledge, theories, methodologies and conceptual frameworks towards bolstering the career field. In this regard, the essence of literature review also entails a process of learning from established scholars in terms of how they have engaged with the phenomenon of inquiry, theoretically, empirically and conceptually, focusing on approaches they employed, what their findings covered and to what effect (J. Mouton, 2001). Such learning crystallised the perceived gap which further assisted with improved ways on how it may be narrowed through the present study towards achieving identified objectives.

In the previous chapter I also mentioned the study's background, rationalisations, motivations, significance and ethical considerations as introductory components. Given the importance of a coherent and comprehensive point of departure, the identified components were foundational in the reviewed literature that comprised this chapter. Firstly, the conceptualisation of the study was discussed followed by definitions, explanations and discussions regarding the contextualisation of core concepts. Thereafter, the rest of the chapter covers the reviewed career theory literature that accounted for scholarly perspectives on career development and management constructs that frame career education as the demarcated area of scrutiny in the study.

Since desired comprehensivity proved impractical (Peiperl & Gunz, 2007) and also due to the study's confines, I drew from established scholars such as Akhurst and Mkhize (2006), Patton and McMahon (2014), Savickas (2013), Sharf, (2013), Watson and Stead (2006) among others for the scope of career theories. Overall, the literature review process was enriched by drawing from the proliferation of story and narrative approaches in career theory (Fritz & Beekman, 2011; Hartung, 2013; K. Maree, 2011; Watson & Kuit, 2011) and their place in autoethnography (Chang, 2008; Ellis, 2004; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011; Hayano, 1979; Moor, n.d.; Muncey, 2005, 2006, 2010) as advancing postmodernist perspectives (Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000; Thrift & Amundson, 2011; Stead & Bakker, 2012; Young & Popaduik, 2012). Also reviewed were some SA empirical studies that reflected current scholarship in the area of study (Botha, 2014; Buthelezi, Alexander & Seabi, 2009; Coetzee & Bester, 2009; Long, 2013; J. Maree, 2015b; Maodzwa-Taruvinga & Divala, 2014; Obi, 2015; Vincent & Idahosa, 2015).

It became evident from the literature reviewed, that the phenomenon of inquiry was explained in parts within career theory knowledge which led to the System Theory Framework [STF] (Arthur & McMahon, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006, 2014) as a relevant metatheoretical framework for examining and explaining this study's area of inquiry. The STF provided the important alignment of the phenomenon of inquiry with theoretical and philosophical underpinnings in the methodology chapter as well as for data analysis and interpretation in subsequent chapters of the thesis. The next section covers explanations of how the study's topic was conceptualised.

2.1. Conceptualisation of the topic

The study's multifaceted topic originated from my lived-career management experiences and thus uneasily fitted Backhouse's (2009) description that in SA "many people doing PhDs are *older* and midway through career" (p. iv, italics added for emphasis). Notably, the emphasis in the expressiveness of the developmental life stage relates to Bauger and Bongaardt's (2017) conflation of "Erickson's life stages" and Kegan's 1994 "structural development theory" (pp. 2 – 3) which denotes an individual's growth of complexity of the mind through an ability to order events into a coherent story of one's life as was done in this study.

In that regard, the acquired world-views resulted from my personal and professional orientation that resonated with Manganyi's (2013, 2016) struggles to become a clinical psychologist under apartheid; Botha's (2014) career narrative on her struggles; Mangena's (2015) rendition of his courageous life-career journey as a self-proclaimed yet highly admirable patriot, as well as Riordan and Louw-Potgieter's (2011) conclusions on eventual career success of female academics. As a career development quest, my lived-career experiences were unique in their depiction in this thesis but definitely not exceptional especially in view of Watson's (2015) account on older women "whose careers have progressed steadily and against considerable odds through times of major socio-political and economic change in South Africa" (p. 202). Accordingly, I regarded a Doctor of Philosophy [PhD] study as a journey (Bitzer & van den Bergh, 2014; Msimanga, 2013; Nkambule, 1999) towards a symbolic summit at the academic ladder of formal studies even though it didn't mean a person could not still go down to go up again repeatedly, towards fulfilment of personal career aspirations. Thus, from where I was standing, the next stage seemed alluring and created a compelling urge to look down, back to where I started to develop and manage my career. I then realised that something can be learned from my lived-career management experiences especially on strategies used towards reaching the academic summit.

The stated urge became more compelling when I paused to reflect and looked around me at social, economic, political and educational dysfunction which continues to shape career experiences of many South African children and young adults. I realised that black learners, tangled at the *coalface* of the controversial education system within a complex socioeconomic context, are hit the most (Laher & Cockcroft, 2013b). They seemed to trail at my footsteps as very little seems to have changed in terms of the weather and storms they still have to endure in their career development and management processes. I further realised that I have been trapped at the beckoning point of this ladder and it seemed the time was now to pen down my lived-career management experiences through an investigation of the phenomenon within SA career education and in the field of careers. Fitzgerald and Betz's (1994) insist that the lack of indigenous knowledge on career behaviour is largely due to biased researcher behaviour rather than career theories themselves.

Fitzgerald and Betz's (1994) further assert that such knowledge will remain unknown "mainly because we have not asked" (p. 105), an assertion from which I then took a cue and formulated four evocative research questions embodying SA contextualised career knowledge and experiences. The posed questions intended to establish my "own understanding, meanings or interpretations of phenomena" (Stead & Watson, 2006, pp. 184 - 185). Furthermore, and being mindful of Simmonds and du Preez's (2014) concerns about delayed stating of the research questions in most SA PhD studies, I hastily stated these as follows:

o What career management approaches can possibly be discerned from lived-career management experiences of one inxile in South Africa as a developing economy?

o What prevalent socio-economic, educational and political/historical complexities still persist and impact on individuals' career management processes in post-apartheid South Africa?

o What insights can possibly be discerned from lived-career management experiences of South African inxiles towards enhancing career theories in SA as a developing economy?

o What critical inputs can possibly be derived from career management experiences of South African young graduates, my peers and fellow inxiles towards enrichment of the South African career education system?

With the guiding research questions stated, I further noted Simmonds and du Preez's (2014) advice that SA emerging scholars should locate their PhD studies in the global knowledge society towards advancing SA's post-apartheid knowledge project particularly in the humanities and social sciences (Sitas, 2016). Also noted was Stead and Watson's (2006) focus on "indigenisation of career psychology in South Africa" (p. 181) which includes "determining the meaning of existing approaches in the South African context" (Ibid). Again, I felt inspired by Stead's (2004) observation that career theories "seldom demonstrate in depth how cultural issues play a role in career" processes (p. 397). Taken together, the derived sense was that indigenisation entails focusing "on issues pertinent to their own (*emerging scholars'*) context but still to be part of the larger (*global*) body of psychological knowledge" (Stead & Watson, 2006, p. 188, added italicized words in brackets).

Briefly, it meant that developing indigenous knowledge processes privileges SA emerging scholars an opportunity to engage in studies that reflect their perceived cultural perspectives towards increasing knowledge beyond the confines of their cultural limitations (Hofstede, 2001; Schein, 1992) as this study aspired to do. However, Eaton's (2002) contention that the subject of national identity as an element of culture is largely overlooked in SA psychological discourse added to the interest. Furthermore, Laher and Cockcroft's (2013b) statement that in SA, the concept of "culture is euphemism for race" (p. 540) was congruent with Stead's (2004) assertion that "in psychology, disentangling culture from ethnicity and race is a complex task" (p. 392) which then became enlightening observations. Such views acknowledge the complexity associated with well protected diversity fundamentals enshrined in SA's Constitution of 1996 as a binding social contract among all of us.

Fundamentally, the field of psychology is regarded as "a cultural enterprise" (Stead, 2004, p. 398) that has been blinded by its quest to become a "respectable science" (Botella, Herrero, Pacheco & Corbella, 2004) and thus in need of indigenising scholarship. In that regard, the stated remarks underpin the imperative for better definitions of our culture, one that can bequeath individuals with a "sense of self-respect, and (feelings) of being part of something one can be proud of" (Solomon, 1992, p. 104). Accordingly, Solomon's conception of culture evoked several inquisitions such as: what values influence SA's individuals, community and national culture? Which values do we as South Africans wish our children and future generations could learn in their life-career development and management processes from which they can derive a sense of self-respect and feelings of pride? What value orientations should underpin career knowledge in our quest for indigenous scholarship which we should deliberately infuse in our career education as a developing country? Thus, Solomon's (1992) simplification denoting culture as: "the way we do things around here" (p. 104) was troubling considering SA practices as framed in the thesis. Importantly, the foregoing conceptualisation directed the study's focus towards indigenously reconstructed lived-career experiences from an evocative and reflexive perspective, utilising the techniques of storying and narration for capturing meaningfulness of the process (Angus & Greenberg, 2011; Botella et al., 2004; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000).

Mignot (2004) asserts that processes of personal meaning construction always embody social consequences, denoting a duality of life and career as in the present study. This duality placed the study within the demands of scholarly ethos particularly in the field of careers which is undergoing extensive research, theoretical and practical scrutiny in the wake of postmodernist approaches (Mkhize, 2011; Patton, 2011; Young & Collin, 2004; Young & Popadiuk, 2012). Thus, the clearly retrospective conceptualisation involving lived-career meaning construction of experiences demanded explication of foundational perspectives from which the study progressed. Reviewed literature explained these perspectives from the broad subjective-objective paradigms and this study aligned with the former. Specifically, the constructivism and social constructionism perspectives foreground the vocabulary of social science methodologies, including interpretivism which Schwandt (1994) regards as thinly distinct from constructivism.

As such, the stated perspectives are explained as broad metatheoretical paradigms which "inform what we believe and how we act in relation to career" (Young & Popadiuk, 2012, p. 9). Schwandt (1994) regards them as means to guide the reader towards the kind of inquiry to expect in a particular study because their significance is fundamentally fashioned by the purpose of those who use them. Young and Popadiuk (2012) concede that researchers "do not begin as epistemologists" (p. 9) especially at this stage of the study. However, it seemed prudent to clarify these perspectives within the study's conceptualisation discussions so that it progresses from a philosophically established foundation because paradigmatic imperatives are regarded as the basis of many emerging approaches in the career field, such as autoethnography in this study. According to Young and Collin (2004), constructivism originated from developmental and cognitive psychology that regarded the individual as mentally constructing "the world of experience through cognitive processes" (p. 375). Implied is that the world cannot be immediately known but can be constructed by the mind towards developing meaning or attaching meaning to what is already known through processes of self-organisation and order. Hence, the common goal of constructivism is to understand the complex world of lived experiences (Schwandt, 1994).

Since the mentioned perspectives are regarded as following the subjective persuasion in knowledge creation in the social and psychological worlds of individuals, social constructionism acknowledges that these worlds are concretised through social processes and interaction. Therefore, social constructionism "reflects the social/contextual engagement" (Patton, 2011, p. 122) that denotes recursiveness as the STF's theoretical construct and exemplified in Blustein's (2015) remark on women's career experiences. Additionally, it further denotes connectedness (Mkhize, 2011) of the individual to his/her social world through the epistemology that recognises that "knowledge and social go together" (Young & Collin, 2004, p. 376). Accordingly, social constructionism externalises the individual's cognitive processes of knowledge creation by acknowledging the discursive discourse inherent in these processes. Hence, Young and Collin (2004) contend that as an epistemology:

> Social constructionism asserts that knowledge is historically and culturally specific; that language constitutes rather than reflects reality, and is both a pre-condition for thought and a form of social action; that the focus of inquiry should be on interaction, processes and social practices (p. 377).

Given the social context in which careers unfold as well as the cultural angle of this study's conceptualisation, it resonated with the exploration of the interconnected lived experiences which Blustein, Schultheiss and Flum (2004) consider as encouraging the inclusion of contextual influences in career processes through the "use of narratives, stories and conversations as representations of current discourses and a means of understanding career life" (p. 424). Therefore, social constructionism enables multiple perspectives of knowledge from social interactions that rely on reflexivity as well as acknowledges the historical and cultural embeddedness of lived-career experiences (Cohen, Duberley & Mallon, 2004; McLeod, 2004; Mkhize, 2011; Stead, 2004). Botella et al. (2004) proposed another angle which they refer to as relational constructivism with an aim to entertain the debate between constructivism and social constructionism although from the narrative perspective. This is because "we are the stories that we live and tell, and we live and tell the stories that we are" (p. 123) in a clearly relational interchange, based on the following assumptions: *being human entails constructing meaning; meaning is an interpretative and linguistic achievement; language and interpretations are relational achievements; relationships are conversational;*

Conversations are constitutive of subject positions; subject positions are expressed as voices; voices expressed along a time dimensions constitute narratives; and *identity is both the product and the process of self-narrative construction* (Ibid, pp. 120 – 122). Interestingly, Schwandt (1994) emphasises the similarities within these perspectives, regarding them as directional in terms of understanding a study's conceptualisation instead of explicating what one will find in a particular study. Hartung (2013), McLeod (2004) and Stead (2004) concur by highlighting that social constructionism represents an integration of numerous diverse elements of thought such as social phenomenology, hermeneutics and poststructuralism which in essence, accentuate appreciation of narratives within practice. The stated views are consistent with Young and Collin's (2004) outline of ambiguities that essentially underpin the discussed perspectives, and thus regard constructivism as generically the all-embracing of these perspectives.

This understanding was also supported by Patton (2011), which then also explains Cohen et al.'s (2004) preference to describe the construct of career as recursively connecting the individual to the broader but shifting social world. Such a description echoes one of the core concepts (recursiveness) of the Systems Theory Framework which Patton and others have conceptualised. Contrarily, Schultheiss and Wallace (2012) argue in favour of social constructionism as the all-embracing description of these perspectives. This argument embodies Botella et al.'s (2004) aforementioned assumptions on their conception of relational constructivism. Yet, Young and Popadiuk (2012) rationalise that fundamentally and in both perspectives: the individual and social processes are important. Such a rationalisation allowed this study to progress from the constructivism perspective due *firstly* to its focus on the researcher's lived-career experiences which were reflexively constructed and interpreted to then embrace the perspective as explained. Also, the rationalisation corresponds with Young and Collin's (2004) *discourse of subjectivity and narrative* (p. 381): entailing the discourse of the self over time, in context and covering one's unique form of narrative or life-career story. *Secondly*, the life-career story was witnessed and corroborated by others' voices (social constructivism) that also formed part of this study's knowledge creation processes because shared meaning-making is essentially, part of culture (Stead, 2004).

The stated dimension further corresponded with Young and Collin's (2004) *contextualising discourse* (p. 380): entailing the location of individual's career processes within their historical, cultural, social and economic contexts, thus understanding the person in his/her social environment. Importantly, the relevance of the perspectives in career knowledge lies in that the career is a significant individual's preoccupation in his/her life and constructing a meaningful recollection of the processes involved, aligns with constructivism as a foundational perspective. Again, seeing that individuals' careers are not constructed in isolation of their sociocultural milieu, social constructivism intersects as also a foundational perspective. It then makes sense to consider constructivism as the generic perspective in career knowledge creation processes and will thus be drawn-from in that understanding in this study. Overall, the finer discrepancies among the perspectives signalled that they cannot be resolved within the confines of this study.

Furthermore and due to that the hermeneutic quality of a career-story is inexhaustible, a non-linear approach to its depiction was enriched by minimal use of "metaphorisation" (Mignot, 2004, p. 457), evident in the game of tennis which also coloured my reflective lens (Combs & Freedman, 2004). The game of tennis is a vividly lonesome yet captivating exemplar of cognitive, affective and behavioural personal arsenals employed to win some and lose some. As a competitive sport, Ryba, Ronkainen and Selanne (2015) offer the view that "very few researchers have examined how elite athletes narrate their sporting careers" (p. 47). However, my view of a career is explained in the sections below and thus extended the game as a metaphoric literary device that L. Richardson (1994) describes as "the backbone of social science writing" (p. 519). I also borrowed from Davidson's (1986) pictorial dimension of a metaphor to acknowledge that "there is no limit to what a metaphor calls to *our* attention" (p. 263, italicized for added emphasis) in particular reference to the study's conceptualisation as explained, on which all definitions, explanations, meanings, arguments and discussions were embedded.

2.2. Definitions of core concepts

The following core concepts framed the scope of the study wherein acknowledgement of infinitely derivable meanings should, where possible defer to the conceptualisation as the frame of reference.

2.2.1. Career

The concept of career is historically associated with vocation, occupation, occupational roles (including student, voluntary worker or parent), work, work-history, work experiences, working life, job, and job experiences (Patton & McMahon, 1999; Stead & Watson, 2006). A job is regarded as a collection of tasks that needs to be done (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godshalk, 2006, 2010), concurring with Moerdyk's (2009) definition that a career is "a set of interrelated jobs that a person follows over his life, with some kind of upward trajectory" (pp. 177 – 178). It also entails a metaskill that involves identity crystallisation, lifelong evaluation of self and interpersonal situations according to one's values and goals (Arnold, 1997; Kidd, 1998) which according to Parker and Roan (2015) tend to focus on authenticity, balance and challenge particularly for women. Notably, the authors agree on an individually constructed and subjectively embodied formulation of the concept whereby authenticity emerges in later life mainly for women. Importantly, authenticity was evident in this study in relation to the researcher's own conceptualisation that was clearly depicted as resilience and adaptability of other older SA women's voices as reported by Watson (2015).

However, Baruch and Peiperl (2000) propose a multidisciplinary character of the concept as embedded in psychology, social psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, history and geography among others, perhaps sports sciences as well! This justified the sometimes simplistic explanation of the concept as work, leaving one wondering: what comprises work? Is work linked to survival means such as income generating activities (including sporting careers) or those that reward an individual with a psychological sense of achievement? Does the notion of work denote similar career experiences for individuals? Veldsman (2014) states that: in 2012, "275million unemployed/informal day-hire out of a total work force of 382million" (p. 5), formed part of vital statistics regarding Africa as a whole. Hence, Stead and Watson's (2006) regard of a career as work "inside and outside the employment context" (p. 183) according to the individual's lifelong responsibilities and relationships acknowledges SA's shrunk job market and thus impels further scrutiny of the concept of career.

Considering the cited authors' various conceptualisations of work and career particularly as a "means through which individuals implement a self-concept" (Patton & McMahon, 2014, p. 5), I wondered about those individuals, some of who are graduates and involved in recycling work referred to as "abomakgereza" (Maphumulo, 2015, p. 15). They are identifiable by huge soiled bags containing their wares ferried in trolleys often labelled Shoprite, Pick n Pay or Checkers in the streets of Johannesburg. Are they subsumed in the description of the concept of work as a career and thus implementing self-concepts? Such puzzlements were invoked given SA's context whereby work is mainly for survival and related career experiences do not extend beyond basic need-fulfilment (Watson, 2013). Again, the assertions that "the career field has paid little attention to a broad understanding of work in all its forms" (McMahon, Watson & Bimrose, 2015, p. 254) substantiated the view that the concept of career embodies a narrow, middle-class quality (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005; M. Richardson, 1993). Accordingly, McMahon et al. (2015) conclude by conflating agency and subjective career understandings as reflective of the "*individuals' own interpretation…at any given time*" (p. 255, italics added for emphasis). Taken together, it was from stated puzzlement and conflations that then encouraged this study's reflexive meaning and description of the concept of career from personal experiences as follows:

> A career has been a deeply seated, almost imperceptible yet continuous quest for personal/psychological need fulfilment whereby work or jobs presented separate obligatory means for eking out a living, inextricably enmeshed within SA's historical, socio-economic, educational and cultural contextual influences, notably without a desire for an upward trajectory and definitely not within organisational hierarchies. It embodied an aspired for self-identity forming part of ongoing and meaningful sense of personally and communally rewarding accomplishments.

Notably, the foregoing description resonates profoundly with McMahon et al.'s (2015) summation that subjective interpretations of career incorporate minimal tangibility of individual's perceptions, attitudes and orientations. They accentuate the fluidity that is characteristic of what Blustein (2015) considers the "complex, murky nature of a working life that exists amidst family commitments, shifting political factors, radically transforming economic structures and complex and nuanced cultures" (p. 225).

In relation to career management, Greenhaus et al. (2010) argue that the concept of 'career' (and thus its management) can also be understood through six historical themes which reflect contexts and stages, stated as the *advancement/stability* theme, the *professional view* of career theme. *Career as a calling* viewpoint, the more contemporary views of *boundaryless and protean* themes, the *social influences* theme as well as the *developmental or stage based* theme. Considering the stated historical themes, I associated personal experiences with the boundaryless and protean themes that emphasise the individual's role as also described by Muchinsky et al. (2006). Given the differing dimensions of the concept, I wondered about how the majority of SA individuals would relate to this study's reflexive conceptualisation as was explored and reported on in the study's findings. Thus, in the next section I discuss the concept of career within the career development perspective.

2.2.2. Career development

Greenhaus et al. (2006, 2010) define career development as "an on-going process by which individuals progress through a series of stages, each of which is characterised by a relatively unique set of issues, themes and tasks" (p. 13). The construct is also viewed as a lifelong process of managing learning and work (Neault, 2002; Patton, 2005; Tadic, 2005; Watts, 2004). During stakeholder consultative processes the DHET (2015a) conceptualised the construct correspondingly as a "lifelong guidance for learning and work and is linked to policy agendas relating to lifelong learning, workforce development, and social inclusion" (p. 72) and it remained unchanged in the gazetted version (DHET, 2016, p. 21). Notable among cited authors was the interchangeable use of the concept 'management' to describe career development. My sense of the construct was that:

> Career development relates to the process of consciously establishing one's learning(s), skills, knowledge, competencies, and acquiring helpful attitudes for one to function optimally in a job or career within formal and informal opportunities, thus enabling one to earn a living. It is a process that also becomes a critical foundation of what one would then monitor and steer-forward as part of career management at an individual level, sometimes including the (supportive) role of employing organisations. Moreover, such an awakening enhances realisations that the process is also bounded to one's family, community and societal establishments for the benefit of self, one's family, community and society.

The stated sense of the construct resonated with descriptions in cited literature except for the extended benefit beyond the individual due to the superimposing cultural collectivistic value orientation of *ubuntu* denoting "a common humanity, in interconnectedness that used to provide relief and meaningful engagement in communal life and supported the ethical-moral self" (J. Maree & du Toit, 2011, p. 23). Similar interconnectedness is accentuated in McMahon, Watson, Chetty and Hoelson's (2012) representation of a SA career development narrative whereby the individual, her family and her socio-economic circumstances are intertwined. Thus, in SA and indigenously, individuals' career outcomes have communal implications (Mkhize, 2011) whereby a person's involvement in a career process impacts on all interconnected others for the greater good of human requirements (Mandela, 2010b; Watson, McMahon, Mkhize & Schweitzer, 2011).

2.2.3. Career management

Career management entails a process of developing one's identified career goals that are simultaneously monitored through possible strategies (Greenhaus et al. (2006, 2010). It also refers to a combination of approaches adopted by individuals and organisations to enhance career development processes (Haase, 2007; Neault, 2002). Overall, McIlveen (2009) agrees with Baruch and Peiperl (2000) in highlighting the meagreness of research examining the actual process of career management and highlights the need to review its practices with intention to look for patterns and to link these with a wider framework of the construct. Thus, according to my conceptualisation:

> Career management relates to an individual's tasks to steer forward one's career life as it develops throughout educational, learning, training and work opportunities, utilizing acquired skill-sets afforded by one's abilities and interests in alignment with values and goals from which an adaptable and meaningful identity is derived within one's socio-cultural, economic and political context.

Evidently, the inferred developmental processes indicate growth that encompasses life-long learning. In that regard, one would manage these to realise what one would understand as one's career, evidencing interchangeable use of career development and career management constructs (Patton & McMahon, 1999).

Therefore, the foregoing descriptions as I understood them within a developing economy that was largely shaped by historical, cultural, socioeconomic and educational influences, embodied peculiar complexities as I explain in the next section.

2.2.4. Complexities

According to Edwards (2015) the SA democratic government inherited a complex heritage of struggles, and Microsoft Thesaurus (Windows 7) permutes a complexity as a difficulty, an intricacy or a complication. Bloch (2004) explains complexities as denoting "actions and reactions in systems that seem at first glance to operate in random ways" (p. 346). These pose as imperceptible interconnectedness of non-deterministic and non-linear elements within the universe operating as systems, and result in tension between order and disorder. Noting this intricacy, Pryor and Bright (2003) argued strongly for acknowledgement of complexities in career studies. The authors identified four thought-leadership trends including *contextual/ecological*, *systems theory*, *realist and constructivist epistemology* and *chaos theory* approaches that underpin complexities in careers. Related to these, Bloch (2004) proposes six principles that reinforce complexities including: *open exchange* (whereby individuals are interconnected to internal and external systems within the universe); *networks* (whereby individuals' interconnectedness spiritually interweaves within far-reaching nodes existing even beyond each individual's imagination); *phase transitions* (denoting limitless career phases throughout individuals' lifespans); *fitness peaks* (rising from the lows to the highs in pursuance of one's aspirations); *nonlinear dynamics* (individualised experiences randomly occurring in career transitions); as well as *attractors, bagels and emergence* (whereby individuals move through familiar paths or transitioning in circular shapes and emerging into novel experiences).

It is a universal fact that all career processes involve a struggle for one to achieve according to one's goals. But, aligned with the stated complexities and from the positionality of this study's lived-career management experiences, I argued for idiosyncratic, multi-layered and interlocking systems of complexities. I regarded these as persistently impinging on career development and management processes of SA individuals. Akhurst and Mkhize (2006) assert that the country's challenges as a developing economy "impact at the heart of career education" (p. 139).

Such challenges necessitate drastic transformation, an observation I agreed with especially in view of the employed benefit of hindsight from my own lived-career experiences. Similarly, N. Duncan, Stevens and Canham (2014) highlight that the current SA historical juncture affords an opportune moment to vigorously examine enduring challenges that constrain SA's transformation as related to the country's racial past. Advancing the agenda of the Apartheid Archive Project [AAP] ensures that SA does not forget how millions of lives were profoundly devastated by our collective past. Seemingly, the post-apartheid democratic era has brought with it a surreptitious veil of cautiously mastered amnesia that prompted the need for the apartheid archive project (N. Duncan et al., 2014). In that regard, a widely held contention is that the past era spun over half a millennium of oppression from which originated almost all societal ills confronting SA (T. Mbeki, 2002b). These resulted in societal modelling that twisted the existence and fate of African lives which continue to reverberate significantly in the present (Chinyamurindi, 2016; Walton, Bowman & Osman, 2015).

Mangena (2015) observes that "what is a miracle is that we do not hate our slave masters and colonisers" (p. 38), which resonates with Netshitenzhe's (2016b) reflection that other nations who have transitioned from oppressive pasts employed "profound and brutal self-critical paradigms based on an appreciation of the deficits…in national developments" (p. 39). He further notes that such a paradigm "is largely absent in South African…intellectual and socio-political discourse" (Ibid). As such, and in the context of this study, I succumbed to the allure for brutal self-critical paradigms and formulated at least five constraining complexities related to atypical difficulties that persistently hinder individuals' career success. For SA and its citizens, these complexities form elements of "a painful story, but no carpet is large enough to sweep it under" (Sitas, 2016, p. 65). Therefore, I reviewed and explained them across individuals' systems of existence in the next paragraphs.

Firstly, **complexity at personal level** which entails minimally developed insights into one's self-knowledge and positive self-identity as critical components of career behaviour. It also denotes an individual's unpreparedness to deal with challenges that require adaptation to known or unknown circumstantial demands that would enable adequate responses to overcome career impediments.

With the stated angle in mind as a point of entry, and since this study criticized the National Development Plan 2030 (NPC, 2012) for not articulating the imperatives pertaining to individuals' prerogatives for their own self-development along with those expected of all other stakeholders towards the vision statements of the current policy guideline, I selected from an avalanche of literature on related scholarly suggestions. Importantly, I briefly outline some descriptions of various multifaceted core components that together, enhance or when absent, inhibit individuals' career behaviour. Among these are 1). Brenner's (2015) *molecular literacy curriculum* that is based on an "overriding principle…help(ing) learners to change their way of thinking" (p. 315) to enable them to benefit from enriched learning approaches at university. 2) Reeves, Mashiloane, Bowman, Richards and Koen's (2015) *Go to University To Succeed Programme* [GUTS] through which learners from underprivileged backgrounds were selected to create pathways for their access at university. Over and above the learners' school performance, the programme was designed for those who seemed more motivated to progress to university; those with community service orientation and leadership tendencies; and those with better "English language proficiency, interpretation and writing skills" (p. 302). 3). Matope and Badroodien's (2015) articulation of the contradictory connection between achievement and aspiration, whereby "on the one hand, individual aspiration serves to guide learners about what they seek to achieve…to push themselves and to exert the necessary effort to succeed" (p. 59). Briefly, such an understanding is said to account for "elements of dreaming, imagination, and fabrication" (Ibid).

4). Walker's (2015) impassioned advocacy for the *capabilities-friendly* approach which downplays the imperative to only avail external resources such as money to increase access, but also emphasises the imperative to rather promote confident student identities, higher academic achievement aspirations, mindfulness of racialized privileges within the socio-economic inequality discourse as well as gendered narratives which at times affect personal wellbeing especially that of females. 5). Merino and Aucock's (2015) findings which report on a single case study demonstrating enacted "role-modelling, guided mastery of Self-Regulated Learning [SRL] strategies and skills" (p. 163) which all highlight the significance of cultivating an individual's academic resilience.

6). Liccardo, Botsis and Dominguez-Whitehead's (2015) scrutiny of what they call *social asymmetries* in knowledge backgrounds to refer to individuals' social deficits related to inequalities yet subjected to generic educational expectations. Interestingly, they distinguish between *knowledge-that* and *knowledge-how* constructs to demonstrate what matters most in gainful utilisation of academic access opportunities. Accordingly, knowledge-how entails an individual's "knowing how to do things (internally, as in reasoning or deliberating in one's mind, but also externally, as in doing a task in the observable world" (p. 377). Notably, the authors highlight that knowledge-how is more difficult to attain than knowledge-that. Basically, the difference rests on an individual's capability to comprehend learning components beyond one's antecedent impediments, creatively interpret and successfully apply these to demonstrate acquired skills and competencies. Subsequently, each of the foregoing strategies correspond with the tenets of the "Personal Life Planning Programme" [PLPP] (Mokoena, 2006, p. 2) whereby young people's experiences of self-mastery were investigated and found to be minimal. Such miniscule personal regard results in lifelong struggles to overcome deeply seated feelings of personal inadequacy. It impacts negatively on processes of natural human development and hinders individuals' performance towards adequacy. Hsien and Huang's (2014) descriptions of individuals' socioeconomic deprivation as well as Mokgele and Rothman's (2014) findings on the importance of students' needs for overall wellbeing, are telling factors that when absent, personal development gets hindered.

Furthermore, T. Mbeki's (2002a) call for arousal of individuals' consciousness towards purposeful commitment to the important task of self-definition especially among Africans: is overarching. Central in the appeal is the need for individuals to reconnect with their inner core as part of self-knowledge towards staving off any inhibiting self-doubt for one to achieve maximised potential (J. Maree, 2015a; Watson et al., 2011). Uy, Chan, Sam, Ho and Chernyshenko (2015) as well as Ellery and Baxen (2015) characterise an awakened inner core as proactivity, adaptability and boundaryless career attitudes. Extraordinarily, the urgency of the aforementioned imperatives in SA finds expression even outside academia.

In one other example, the *kwaito* (referring to a cultural music genre popular among the youth) legend and musician, Tshabalala (n.d.), popularly known as Mandoza (Livermon, 2016) even composed a song directed at the youth. The inspirational lyrics in the Zulu song entitled *Uzoyithola kanjani uhleli ekhoneni* (loosely translated to imply an inquisition on how one will succeed without exerting oneself). Therefore, It seems personal reawakening is a key concern across all societal spheres. In that regard and in view of meagre empowering conditions in SA, this study argued that for individuals to extricate themselves, they need to heed all invitations towards self-advocacy particularly in that the times we live in, the need for selfhood can be more pressing than the need to stay alive (Bordin, 1994), the essence of which is captured as follows:

> An individual must be viewed as more than a passive participant with the pushes and pulls exerted by the environment. If individuals are to become independently identifiable factors in the interaction with their situational contexts, they need to construct self-images of what it is that they possess that influences their responses (p. 53).

Bordin's (1994) contention clearly goes against what he regards as the Maslovian perspective that attains self-actualisation needs only after basic needs are met, much in line with this study's propositions for individuals to resume ownership of their career processes. Accordingly, without personal arousal and self-advocacy, individuals remain constrained (Bloch, 2004; J. Maree, 2015a; Mokgele & Rothman, 2014; Watson & McMahon, 2009).

Secondly, **complexity at familial level** which results from a lack of necessary socio-economic resources required to develop oneself in a desired career-focused direction whereby an individual's family background influences one's progress in life (Bloch, 2004; Crossland, 2006; Gama, 1984; Tchombe et al., 2012; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010). This particular complexity firstly weakens the parental role as a guide (Singh, 2016; Watson, 2013) and undermines Blustein's (1994) conception of mirroring in the vocational realm whereby ideally, optimal parental involvement in children's development fosters self-discovery that is fundamental to identity construction processes. Mirroring exemplifies an enabling family context that encourages sufficient internalisation of an individual's self-esteem and validates in tandem, one's sense of unique abilities as well as desired self-awareness to navigate career development and management terrains.

In this study, SA's historical and socio-economic conditions are argued as having decimated individuals' family life and continue to confine millions of families at the lowest rung of economic benefit. This argument bolstered Badat's (2010) contention about the prevalence of under-prepared students who skew towards the "largely black and/or of working class or rural poor origins" (p. 9). Also bolstered is Biko's (2008b) inference that for one to see the colour of poverty, they should look at black people, supporting the view that "the majority of poor people live in developing countries" (T. Mbeki, 2002a, pp. 78 – 79). More succinctly, Machika and Johnson (2015) cite one respondent in their study who lamented that "my grandfather told me that this is the last candle stick for this month, why am I using it for my study purposes" (p. 174). Thus, being bequeathed the legacy of impoverishment alerted one to far reaching implications: mainly that social class and economic standing not only impact accessibility of resources for one's career choice, but also affects attitudes, customs and expectations one may experience (Greenhaus et al., 2010). As such, many ills continue forming part of inalienable influences as entrenched at the root of familial complexities (Bloch, 2004; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010).

Thirdly, **complexity at an educational level** which results from an impoverished educational system (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006; Bloch, 2004; Botha, 2014; Crossland, 2006; Gama, 1984; Stones, 2013; van Zyl, 2014) that is beyond the individual's control, especially one devoid of career guidance and counselling. Essentially whereby, if the opposite existed, the world of work would be adequately explored and understood in relation to one's career orientation and existential need for meaning and significance (Fraser & Killen, 2005; Herholdt, 2004; Walton et al., 2015; Watson & McMahon, 2009). Nkambule (1999) along with Silbert, Clark, and Dornbrack (2015) concur with Dominguez-Whitehead and Sing (2015) in highlighting that educational complexities are rooted at much deeper levels of individuals' socioeconomic backgrounds resulting in a strongly bimodal education system. Predictably, the majority of individuals populate the worst half whose educational struggles sparked the recent students' uprisings in the country (Cele, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2016; Masondo, 2015a). To illustrate, Machika and Johnson (2015) capture two students' frustrations firstly thus: "NSFAS rejected my application. I only received an [sic] sms with the message 'Rejected' without any reason" (p. 177).

The pain and frustration are poignant especially in that the yearned for government financial aid is inadequate, illustrated in the second reported experience as follows:

> I get R500 a month from NSFAS and I can only buy from Pick 'n Pay which is so expensive and when it is up I have to wait till the next month to buy food and go hungry to lectures because I have to buy toiletries and food as I cannot ask my mother because she is a single parent of three children (Machika & Johnson, 2015, p. 175).

Overall, Seroto (2004) highlights a strong correlation between the level of education and individuals' standard of living avowing that denial of good education opportunities leads to perpetual impoverishment. Seroto further highlights the HIV/AIDS pandemic in SA that in part, renders some young people orphaned and predisposes them to dropping out of school or unable to alleviate their vulnerability towards meaningful career experiences as argued in this study.

Fourthly, **complexity at societal level** which results from a governing system that persistently falters due to historical policy systems that were designed to create a divided society, and are presently grappling with policy reformulations in attempts to bring about winning strategic approaches (Barnes & Cooper, 2014; van Zyl, 2014). Seroto (2004) notes the sad reality pertaining to the gap between the poor and the rich, the rural and the urban, which persists and continues to widen. The divide goes beyond the obvious as captured in Machika and Johnson's (2015) study reporting on one respondent that "financial aid outside the university it [sic] is very scarce for people doing visual arts. They help engineering students and science students and management students get help from corporate companies" (p. 176). These are factors which T. Mbeki (2002a) underscores by highlighting that out of the estimated 6 billion people in the universe, "840 million people are malnourished and 1, 3 billion people live on incomes of less than one dollar a day" (p. 78). These standards of living have not changed since they were reported in 2002 in that the poverty line still stands at a dollar a day, translating to about R501 a month or R16 a day (Purfield, 2016). Yet, the world of opportunity knocks similarly to all, although easily accessible to those on the high end of societal economic resources (Blustein et al., 2002; Blustein, Kenna, Gill, DeVoy, 2008; Durrheim, Tredoux, Foster & Dixon, 2011; Gama, 1984; Herbst, 2005).

Hence, observations about SA as a nation of two countries: the *first* boasting "an economy that, encouraged by a pro-business government, is growing much faster than it did under white rule in the 1980s and is attracting ever-larger amounts of foreign investment" and the *second,* "barely resembles the first" (T. Mbeki, 2002a; p. 78). Overall, economic growth is at snail-pace and fails to lift the majority of individuals out of poverty (AFP, 2015; Mashaba & Morris, 2015; T. Mbeki, 2002a; Purfield, 2016; Trading Economics, 2014). Also, there exists corresponding common views exist that the *first country* is rich and largely white while the *second* one is poor and largely black (Gama-Chawana, 2013a, 2014). The NDP 2030 (NPC, 2012) endorses the views, stating that opportunity is persistently determined by race, gender, geographic location, class and linguistic background. Overall, it confines individuals in the circumstances of their birth that are deeply entrenched in inequality (Soudien, 2015). Which, as a result, destroys trust among fellow citizens as much as it defines the country's profile as inheritance from the colonial past still haunting the present (Barnes & Cooper, 2014; Durrheim et al., 2011; J. Maree, 2009a; NPC, 2012)*.*

Finally, **complexity at a global level** which results from a socio-economic order that separates the developed from the developing economies as a natural offshoot of the colonial heritage that left Africa and other developing regions heavily short-changed in the distribution of benefits of the globalized economy (Dominguez-Whitehead & Sing, 2015; T. Mbeki, 2002b). The outcome is observed lack of fair and equitable global order particularly in that boundaryless careers stretch beyond individual's geographic space (Muchinsky et al., 2006; Parker & Roan, 2016). The world of work similarly stretches according to all of individuals' network nodes due to global career attractors and emergence principles (Bloch, 2004) and increases adaptability demands (J. Maree, 2015a; T. Meyer, 2004) as part of internationalisation and virtualisation of careers (Mayrhofer, Meyer & Steyrer, 2007; Obi, 2015) as well as a dynamic psychological-employment contract (Odendaal & Roodt, 2009b). In my interaction with young students, they often express keenness on boundaryless career goals yet local developmental needs require all the talent the country can produce in efforts to rebuild SA's economy. Also, T. Meyer (2004) concurs with F. Williams (2008) in their unambiguous view on the posed paradoxical phenomenon in that cross-border experiences are necessary for interchange of knowledge and skills.

Overall, it was from the argued perspectives that the study progressed in recognition of constraining complexities. Clearly, they hinder SA individuals from experiencing career fitness peaks (Bloch, 2004) and true freedom. Moreover, they typify complex-contextual influences in SA career education as a developing economy, also discussed in the next paragraph.

2.3. SA as a developing economy

An innumerable number of indices exist to compare nations utilising diverse and vastly populated criteria. As examples, the Africa Competitiveness Report (WEF, 2015) reflects similar data as the Global Competitiveness Report (WEF[2], 2015). Both are based on 12 Pillars to measure economic competitiveness of profiled nations whereby SA is featured as one of those in Africa showing signs of positive development. Also, the African Transformation Report profiles growth with depth in Africa and presents SA as the link to the rest of Africa (African Center for Economic Transformation [ACET], 2014). From the economic and human development perspective, a developing economy is characterised by low income earnings, low levels of health, nutrition, education and adult literacy among its population (Dalton-Greyling & Baur, 2013). Accordingly, there are 49 countries worldwide that are thus regarded, and 33 of these are in Africa, 15 in Asia, and then Haiti to total the number. Africa as a continent is regarded as economically vulnerable due to unstable agricultural produce, unstable exports of goods and services, remoteness from world markets as well as being prone to displacement due to natural disasters and extreme weather conditions (Dalton-Greyling & Baur, 2013).

However, M. Mbeki (2009) attributes the current state of the continent to neo-colonialism which enriched a few individuals that perpetuated destruction in spite of the world having done nearly everything to help Africa develop. Maathai's (2004) autobiography exemplifies incontestable inflow of foreign global (largely Western) support including to her Greenbelt Movement which culminated in her being awarded the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize. Sadly, African states remain in decline due in part to political decisions such as those that led to the genocide in Rwanda (Rusesabagina & Zoellner, 2006).

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[2]The Global Competitiveness Report will be the only source referenced henceforth due to the stated similarity with the African edition of the same source where SA is profiled.

Other strangleholds also include bribery and corruption (Shelley, 2004) estimated at R30 billion a year in SA alone (City Press Says, 2015), natural resources trap and poor governance (Dalton-Greyling & Baur, 2013; M. Mbeki, 2009) and xenophobia (AFP, 2015; Dominguez-Whitehead & Sing, 2015; J. Maree & du Toit, 2011). Compounding these is poverty (Mashaba & Morris, 2015; M. Mbeki, 2009) which the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection [MISTRA] (2014) insists compete with inequality as major challenges for SA. Also, race troubles among a myriad of salient factors that inhibit transition towards development (Durrheim, Mtose & Brown, 2011) thus placing the country in high rankings among the "most economically unequal societies in the world" (MISTRA, 2014, p. 104). Taking together the foregoing factors, one can be forgiven for a ray of relief due to psychologically pacifying positive representations of Africa such as that in Berndsen and Pennington's (2008) book entitled *Africa: The good news,* which intentionally highlights Africa's success stories and positive change in the continent. The book's coverage was good indeed especially on the representation of SA within the continent which corresponded with that presented by ACET (2014) without ignoring the challenging realities.

Amidst the realities, SA is regarded as better developed in comparison to its counterparts due in part to its *strength of auditing and reporting standards* (Institutions – Pillar 1) and *regulation of securities exchange* (Financial market development – Pillar 8) for which the country is ranked Number 1 in both criteria, and 56 on overall economic development out of 144 global economies. These rankings make SA the second highest ranked in Africa (WEF, 2015, p. 341) although rated the 4th richest country in Africa (Dalton-Greyling & Baur, 2013). The general consensus on SA's better economic reviews stems from perceived political stability and progressive reconstructive efforts post-apartheid which have positioned the country as a gateway into the rest of Africa (M. Mbeki, 2009; Simmonds & du Preez, 2014; Veldsman, n.d.). Interestingly, even fellow Africans view SA as the engine of development for the continent (Haffajee, 2015) which places a bigger responsibility on the country to live up to these expectations even though "the magnitude of the problem numbs the mind" (Mangena, 2015, p. 25). As such, SA is characterised by a mixed economy straddling both the developed and developing economy dynamics (Gama-Chawana, 2013a) and thus congruent with T. Mbeki's (2002a) already stated representation of it as a nation of two countries.

I explained the foregoing characterization and reviewed it within the hierarchical (top-down) colonization discourse featuring broader contexts of Western (top) and indigenous (down) nations particularly from the perspective of the psychology discipline (Mkhize, 2013a). In there, the notion of development is explained within a descending transfer of knowledge whereby one is value-free and the other is value laden, with the latter expressed within cultural psychology foundations. These are interlinked with critical psychology tenets espousing diversity as underpinned in cultural, social and historical contexts. Such perspectives affirm indigenous psychological foundations that are regarded as never inert in knowledge development (Mkhize, 2013a) but progresses through the oral tradition (J. Maree & du Toit, 2011) even though overshadowed in scholarship by historical colonial ideologies. Since all forms of life are affected by the argued dichotomy of human existence, Seroto (2004) concludes that developed and economically better-off countries are generally able to provide better education for their citizens even though the net effect of societal ills impact on everyone (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010). Therefore, SA's peculiar economic duality locates development along racial, rural-urban, rich-poor or advantaged-disadvantaged binaries as manifest inequality elements (Netshitenzhe, 2013), and thus a developing economy (Gama-Chawana, 2013a). Taken together, the stated complexities and SA characteristics underpinned ontological, epistemological, axiological and methodological assumptions of this study (elaborated in Chapter 3) and influenced the coinage of the inxile concept as discussed in the next paragraph.

2.4. Inxile

An *inxile* was a deliberately originated concept referring to an individual who remained in SA during the apartheid era when going into *exile* was a widespread phenomenon of the times towards achieving political liberation. It aligned with what is commonly referred to as an *internee* in reference to a prisoner, captive or detainee (Microsoft Thesaurus, 2007) even though the invention's phonics essentially harmonised with the exile concept in view of the corresponding prefixes. Thus, the term esoterically explained the political standing of one inxile who did not go to exile when leaving SA was a common approach to serve/save/liberate the country in opposition of the apartheid regime.

The coinage enriched the philosophical lens through which this study was undertaken and came about also due to sublime perceptions of career mobility privilege for some individuals on the basis of their inxile-exile status, captured as follows:

> Exile conditions included opportunities, but also hardships and losses. Education, training, socio-cultural socialisation, political involvement, experiences and observations in the host countries, as well as international interaction with other peoples, cultures and ideas were of great advantage and have been instrumental in shaping ANC leadership personalities in prolonged exile (Schleicher, 2011, p. 3).

It was interesting to note that my sublime perceptions are clearly captured in Schleicher's forgoing account and resonate perfectly with Mangena's (2015) statement thus: "I already knew there was a general observation that the skills of other South Africans were not being harnessed for the good of the country simply because they were not members of the ruling party" (p. 203). However, the overarching goal of leaving SA was to return with a highly educated and well exposed cohort of individuals with intentions to plough back towards progressive national developments (Mangena, 2015). Odhoji's (n.d.) account on *The Miriam Makeba Story* illustrates insight on life under apartheid leading to exiled career management experiences for many other South Africans as also recounted by Morrow, Maaba and Pulumani (2004) on heart-wrenching life and educational experiences in exile. Related to career experiences, they write as follows:

> There has been no systematic study tracing the subsequent careers of SOMAFCO students. It would indicate, among other things, the extent to which the school prepared its students for fulfilling and successful lives in South Africa, perhaps very different from that envisaged by the school's founders. This is just one of the studies of SOMAFCO and its impacts that remain to be carried out (p. 179).

Morrow et al. (2004) further refer to the existence of an archive at Fort Hare University library developed to preserve the legacy of life in exile and is readily accessible for extensive research purposes, clearly beyond the scope of this study. Unmistakable though are the collective misery, pain, suffering, diseases and lost opportunities for normal lives in exile. Those who remained behind suffered just as much and the parallel psychological anguish has far reaching consequences than can ever be fully understood.

Echoing the stated sentiment, Krog, Mpolweni-Zantsi and Ratele (2008) maintain that comprehending the source of narratives is at times only possible through the input of those who have personal experience of the "ground" (p. 544). Ndlela's (2013) effort to also account for all the unsung heroes and heroines who lost their lives in the struggle is an effort to evoke their voices which got silenced by the evil system of apartheid. The author's one statement: "the pain of our losses is simply too great" sums it all, also appealing for more stories of similar experiences to be explored for sharing thus:

> There can be no end to the telling of stories. Nor should there be an end to the writing and recording of our experiences and our history. I can only hope that these few episodes from the lives of these heroes and heroines will make us pause for a moment and realise how fortunate we are to have gained our freedom. What we now have was paid for by the sweat and blood of ordinary people who were motivated by their love for all the people of South Africa. It was their vision to liberate not only the oppressed people of South Africa, but the oppressors as well (Ndlela, 2013, pp.137 – 138).

Chiefly, the purpose of the coinage was not to compare the pain, the loss or experiences especially in this study but to provide pertinent contextual reference as explained, a pertinence that remains a challenge for the field of psychology as revisited by Nicholas' (2014) focus on the psychological sequelae of apartheid. Related to the need to enliven the ground, I explained the preferred approach of autoethnography in the next section.

2.5. Autoethnography

Watson et al. (2011) note that there has been minimal scholarship into researching career underpinnings in the African context, and even more negligible is the determination to develop means that evaluate indigenous career experiences. Thus, the appeal was understood as insistence for local scholars to present their knowledge in approaches relatable to the simplicity of lives and experiences of real people (Ladson-Billings & Donnor, 2008). Winters (2016) applied the theory of self-authoring in her study investigating young adults' developmental processes to establish a subject of focus, understanding it and reflectively evaluating it through internalisation towards arriving at a broader meaning. The complex process enables individuals to understand themselves and the world around them that also involves others in their lives.

As such, the cognitive complexity is obscured in Ladson-Billings and Donnor's (2008) implied simplicity in its characterisation as diaries, journals and self-reflective essays. On the other hand, Ellis (2004) relates such personal writings to a method that links the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social and political, referred to as autoethnography. Muncey (2010) regards the method as a research approach that benefits the individual through creative processes including prose, poetry, and music or art-work representative of evocative experiences. The origins of the concept are attributed to Karl Heider's 1975 reference to Dani people who wrote about their cultural experiences (Chang, 2008; Tabudi, 2008) which corresponds with McMahon et al.'s (2015) view to emphasise culture and context in career research as well as Watson et al.'s (2011) invitation for African scholarship with increased local cultural representations as was done in the present study.

However, it proved difficult to confine what is cultural to a particular definition in SA (Stead & Watson, 2006) although conceptualisations of this study embodied lived-career management experiences wherein the life-career in the experience entailed all that is cultural within the narrated contextualising story in *Appendix D*. In that regard, narration and storying as elements of autoethnography are elaborated below in Section 2.2.7.1 of this chapter. Furthermore, autoethnography as a technique denotes the researcher's involvement in the subject of research (Ellis et al., 2011; Hayano, 1979) as also implied in Winters' (2016) self-authoring processes as in this study. Major reasons for the emergence and increase of such studies include: inauspicious appeal of studying minorities due to decline in colonial (Western) supremacy; an interest in Third World courses and Ethnic Studies focusing on insider neighbourhoods as well as an increase in requirements for pre-doctoral scholarship associated with shrinking funding for studies in outer societies (Hayano, 1979). Overall, the process involves a method of writing that is recognisable by self-representations and also through decisions made about what will be included or omitted (Dyson, 2007), and seemingly, the best way to understand the process is for one to immerse oneself in it (Wall, 2006). Accordingly, the *auto* refers to the self as author, the *ethos* refers to people and *graphos* refers to writing (Moore, n.d., pp. 1 - 2), hence a narrative that investigates the self among others in a cultural context (Spry, 2001; Wolcott, 2004).

Forms of autoethnographic writings include lived experiences, evocative narratives, personal narratives, self-stories (Chang, 2008) and reminiscent descriptions (McIlveen, 2008) that recount on authentic researchable experiences. These have found favour in arts and humanities (Ellis, 2004) as well as in sociology, communication, education, religion and in nursing disciplines (Autoethnography: A Social Science Inquiry Method, n.d.; M. Duncan, 2004). Thus, as a method, autoethnography is both a process and a product (Ellis et al., 2011). There was noted lack of consensus among scholars on precise definitions of the method. Ellis et al. (2011) regard the minimal agreement as due to a crisis of representation that emerged with postmodernism whereby social science scholarship questioned the focus on theories instead of stories, physics instead of literature, being distant and value-free instead of being consciously value-centred (Mkhize, 2013a), and thus challenging canonical ideas of what research should be like. Moreover, L. Richardson (1994) asserts that "a post-modernist position does allow us to know 'something' without claiming to know everything…and still have plenty to say as situated speakers" (p. 518). Similarly, Mkhize and Frizelle (2000) consider the said era as amenable to leveraging cultural theory inquiry towards balancing traditional scientific methods and challenging their domination by showing that knowledge can be gained in many ways (Wall, 2006). Hence, "having a partial, local, historical knowledge is still knowing" (L. Richardson, 1994, p. 518). According to Hayano (1979), the core of the shift in paradigmatic foundations is encapsulated in:

- o Inescapable recurrent problem of human presence in data collection
- o Criteria inclusive of some prior knowledge of the people, their culture, language as well as the researcher's acceptability among the represented natives
- o Acknowledging that at times, the scholar can be the one who has acquired intimate familiarity with the subjects of research
- o Self-identities seeking a distance from master status particularly in relation to the subject of inquiry's pertinence to group membership; and
- o Acknowledgement of diverse training among scholars, therefore yielding many styles of data reporting and analysing

Paradigmatic transformations are often accompanied by resistance in any science (Chang, 2008; Hayano, 1975; Wall, 2006). Associated with autoethnography are claims of:

- o Insignificant theoretical value in published scholarship compared to research findings and thus represents minimal rigour
- o Subjectively inclined data analysis using techniques and theories adapted across disciplines
- o Applied action emphasising one's own people, and thus fixation with one's navel in isolation of others
- o Minimal emphasis on how one's research problem or its advantages differ from insider perspectives
- o Research bias tendencies due to the objective-subjective division in collecting, interpreting and reporting findings
- o Overlooking the fact that culturally lived experiences among individuals vary and can be contradictory, thereby challenging insider's perspective which can thus never be a true representation; and
- o Excessive representations due to questionable decisions about sensitive, illegal or confidential information which pose ethical dilemmas

Accordingly suggested by Chang (2008), Hayano (1975) and Wall (2006) are a number of strategies which can be employed to mitigate autoethnographic processes, including:

- o Focusing on the subject of investigation inclusive of the self and others
- o Supplementing memory with other data sources
- o Emphasising analysis and cultural interpretation
- o Accentuating its substantive and heuristic value
- o Consideration of moral and ethical issues
- o Advocacy for affirmation of culturally diverse and marginalised voices; and
- o Significant role of its inclusion in programmes for change and/or development

Consistent with the foregoing strategies, Chang (2008) emphasises the need to proceed with caution chiefly from a clear ethical, conceptual, paradigmatic and methodical stance which were all considered in the process of this study.

Also, Section 1.5 of Chapter 1 detailed the ethical considerations which prefaced Section 2.1 of this chapter covering this study's topic conceptualisation. Paradigmatic and methodological assumptions are accounted for in Section 3.1.2 of Chapter 3. Given the explicated accountability for the choice of research strategy, the study proceeded and aligned with Reda's (2007) summation that autoethnography is a form of expressed protest ushered by postmodernism and subsequent methodological moments (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b). Furthermore, interest in autoethnography privileged me a hindsight perspective as the author of my life-career management story employing reflexivity in relation to work (Huntley, 1997; Sliep & Kotze, 2011) as discussed in my conception of career (i.e. Section 2.2.1). The process yielded an introspective yet belated kind of authoring compared to Savickas' (2011a) earlier stated kind of authoring. The processes are similar though in that authoring entails being self-conscious, adopting a narrator perspective.

The narrator perspective entails self-making, identity crafting, meaning making from pertinent incidents, self-defining moments, life-changing experiences and memories that typify life (Botella et al., 2004; K. Maree, 2011; Muncey, 2010). As the privileged author living within a shared past to present time and space, I got alerted to Bakhtin's (1990) "inner determinateness of a human being" (pp. 101 – 102) whereby my inner world was also contextualised in the life of the other. It accentuated the shared quality of human existence as characterised in the notion of dialogism whereby one is thus constituted through connectedness with others and the entire world (Muncey, 2010), thus an interdependent view of self-hood named "collectivistic" (Mkhize, 2013a, 4-4) in indigenous societies. Again, Mkhize (2013b) highlights resonance within the integral otherness in the individual's conception of self, noted by Muncey (2010) as symbolic of Bakhtin's depth of thought as ahead of his time given the era (Bakhtin, 1990) in which the philosopher is said to have recorded his views. Given that the self's existence is contextualised, Mkhize (2013b) emphasises the possibility for one to investigate one's inner world through utterances emanating from multiple voices that comprise self.

Thus, the alignment of the study with reflexivity, self-construction, self-authoring as well as with multiple voices resonated with autoethnography (Muncey, 2010) which seemed to complete justification of the process preferred for the study. In this regard, I noted McIlveen's (2008) critical indicators of quality in autoethnographic accounts as amenable to:

- o Be(ing) a faithful and comprehensive rendition of the author's experience (i.e., fairness, ontological authenticity and meaningfulness);
- o Transform the author through self-explication (i.e. educative authenticity and catalytic authenticity); and
- o Inform the reader of an experience he or she may never have endured or would be unlikely to in the future, or of an experience he or she may have endured in the past or is likely to in the future, but has been unable to share the experience with his or her community of scholars and practitioners (p. 4).

Additionally, Ellis et al.'s (2011) reference to autoethnography as also a product resonates with McIlveen's (2008) critical indicators of the product as something that may be read and thus corresponded with intended format outcomes of this study. Again, as a privileged author that engaged in the process to produce a self-reflective product, I was drawn to Bakhtin's (1990) author-hero relationship that is characteristic of creative processes. Accordingly, the hero embodies cognitive-ethical decisions and purposes to form an intuitable whole with anthropomorphized meanings that may unfold in any utterance (D. Patterson, 1988). The outcome takes a form and a life of its own and the author can only refer to the creation with limitless interpretations and understandings (Bakhtin, 1990). Interestingly, Muncey (2004) draws a distinction between "meaning of an experience and meaning in an experience" (p. 2) whereby the former is phenomenological and the latter embraces lived experiences, as in the final product of this study. Furthermore and related to the notion of an intuitable whole, is the element of spirituality (Mayer, Surtee & Barnard, 2015) which Bloch (2004) describes as forming part of network nodes in an individual's systems of complexity as earlier discussed. It further corresponds with Pryor and Bright's (2004) explanation of the connection between science and spirituality, articulated in career literature as "purpose, meaning, balance, harmony, passion, mission, commitment, contribution and integrity" (p. 20).

Therefore, intuitability (Bakhtin, 1990) and spirituality (Mayer et al., 2015) are elements of attractors (Bloch, 2004) and can be understood as what really matters for an individual (Pryor & Bright, 2004). Badenhorst (2009) considers all aforementioned elements as facets of *looney intelligence*, described as an invitation for individuals to enhance their "spiritual, emotional, and creative intelligence by connecting with the universe, listening to and following your intuition, by feeling your pain and enjoying your happiness more intensely" (p. vi). Interestingly, Patton and McMahon (2014) describe spirituality as an "esoteric construction" (p. 246) in agreement with Bhana and Bachoo's (2011) contention on varying conceptions associated with spirituality, and regard it as a regularly mentioned crucial influence for coping particularly among low and middle-income families. Seemingly seeking further clarity, Eanes (1997) associates spirituality with Victor Frankl's 1963 book: *Man's search for meaning* as it relates to individuals' inner desire to live meaningful lives as part of cosmic forces whereby all forms of life are interconnected. Again, Eanes offers a perspective from Erikson's life span design whereby meaning evolves from a basic sense of trusting others, through learning to trust one's self developmentally towards trusting a being much higher than the individual.

Mkhize (2011) explains the described interconnectedness from African conceptions of dialogism as relating to descriptions of the earlier cited core value of *ubuntu* as also embedded in complex philosophical and ethical implications. In that sense meaning in life and spirituality as a connector of one's unity with the universe is consistent with an individual's sense of development towards personhood as part of a quest to know one's self, also as belonging with others in an inextricable relationship. Interestingly, Eanes' (1997) contention explains the absence of meaning as prevalent among those "who are of modern Western culture" (p. 27), which in a sense, upholds Biko's (2008b) assertion that "the African Culture spells us out as people particularly close to nature" (p. 51). The belief underpinned the view that "in the long run the special contribution on the world by Africa will be in this field of human relationship" (Biko, 2008b, p. 51) in clear resonance with Mkhize's (2013a) explanations. Thus, the two pole ends on conceptualisations of spirituality bring forth humaneness as core in African scholarship (J. Maree & du Toit, 2011; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000; Mkhize, 2013a, 2013b; Watson et al., 2011) which was also aspired for in the present study.

Consequently, seeking meaning through my lived-career management experiences found support in Savickas' (1997) statement that seeking meaningfulness involves knitting a life story with its preoccupations and projects into a collective effort: to safeguard existence and cultural self-realisation for the group, and not just the self, as was embodied in the objectives of this study. Telling of stories is regarded as an earliest and universal human activity which differs only in its cultural orientation and form in which it is expressed (Hartung, 2013). Once out there, the story inhabits a variously interpretable life without bounds (Bakhtin, 1990), indeed for me, a career story that would become the carrier of meaning (Savickas, 2011b) and hopefully for others as well. As such, the self-reflective autoethnographic process intended to become a socio-political and culturally embedded hero that was cognitively, emotionally, morally, ethically and academically incarnated as lived-career management experiences. As a point of ponder, Muncey (2005) alerts that "if one wants to tell a complex story in which the disjunctions dictate that the whole is more than the sum of the parts, the method requires some portrayal of this disjunction" (p. 70). Given the implied complex story axiom, I made a "narrative turn" (Hartung, 2013, p. 33) and located my lived-career management experiences within career theory, first by clarifying the story and/or narrative process and/or product aspect in the next section.

2.5.1. Story and/or narrative?

Storying is a process of sharing one's experiences in any preferred form that highlights that "the very history of humankind is a story full of stories" (Botella et al., 2004, p. 119). It entails engaging in an interchange through any preferred method by which one believes would be meaningful towards perceived goals of the interchange. One may use the process of narrative to share one's story as in Botha (2014), Fox (2010, 2002), Juska (2004, 2007), Luhabe (2005), Maathai (2006), Mashaba (2012), Msimanga (2013) and Zulu (2005) as examples in that as individuals, we have been shaped by our past. Our present worldviews and our mind-sets are outcomes of our yesterdays (J. Brown, 2008; Mda, 2008). Indeed: "We fall in love through (and sometimes with) stories, from Shakespearean dramas to pop love songs. We grow up, work, rest, dream, suffer, and even die according to narrative patterns" (Botella et al., 2004, 119). Thus, the lived-career management story in this study became a carrier of what was and remains meaningful.

Hartung (2013) notes the pervasiveness of narrating that involves sharing of lived experiences in the career field as consistent with a trend in many other disciplines, thus demonstrating the innate nature of being human within the universe. As such, narrative is regarded as a progressive model for scholarly inquiry that advances human phenomena and lived experiences and thus a legitimate way of knowing (Hartung, 2013). In the stated sense and in this study in particular, Thrift and Amundson's (2011) assertion has relevance in that one's career story is integral to one's identity and helps one to find belongingness in the world which then gives wholeness to well-defined work related episodes as experienced over time. Accordingly, storying is an approach embodying the narrative as both a process when an individual reflects on one's experiences in meaning-making through self-construction, and a product when it becomes a story (Bujong, 2004; Winslade, 2005). Such a perspective clearly explains storying according to the constructivist approach particularly in career decision making as a desirable shift towards client ownership of the counselling process (Savickas, 1997, 2011a). It only differs within this study in that both the process and purpose entail authoring rather than counselling. Much the same way as Botha's (2014) own story in which narrative is employed also embodying a beginning, middle and an end in a process that enables one to reflect, express, construct and reconstruct self over a period of time.

Given the infinity involved in processes of self-constructing which simultaneously produce meaning: it explains the sometimes interchangeable use of the two constructs of narrative and story especially in view of the multi-voiced conception of the self that has emerged in the postmodern era (Botella et al., 2004; Mkhize, 2005, 2011). Winslade (2005) further infers the interchangeability as also related to one of narrative principles representing the existence of a lived experience that does not get captured in central stories chiefly in counselling spaces. The practice-theory elements explaining the process of storying find further expression in McIlveen's (2012) account clarifying the construct of narrative in relation to its components which then results in a distinction between the construct's use in career practice and in career theory. It is enlightening in that the two processes also present distinct models of understanding in the field even though practice tends to grow faster than theory.

Hartung (2013) contends that the pervasiveness of storying is what draws career scholars towards narrative theory as a means to comprehend vocational behaviour. The extent of scholarship in the career field using the constructs of storying and narration was measured for the period between 1986 to 2010 and yielded over 15 000 recorded publications (McIlveen, 2012, p. 62), notably using the constructs in combination. McIlveen's (2012) findings give way for one to then employ both constructs interchangeably especially in view of Anderson's (2004) assertion that: finding a balance within the narrative process entails externally descriptive and basic details which include the setting; internally subjective emotional content; as well as reflexive interpretive and meaning-making elements. These are then at times captured through the medium of language which can either be storied or narrated (Angus & Greenberg, 2011; M. White & Epstein, 1990) in spite of Speedy's (2008) assertion that narrative is a broader construct which differs from stories.

Evident though was that descriptions of autoethnography incorporate the use of storying and/or narration as inherent technique(s) without differentiating between the concepts. Consequently and given that autoethnography as an approach (along with critical and social perspectives of knowing) underpin African scholarship within the postmodern paradigm, I found correspondence in Watson and Stead's (2006b) remark that traditional African cultures value storytelling. It is a process that can contribute significantly to career development theory in different cultural contexts, as was aspired for through this study. Moreover, because: "the lived experience of 'ordinary citizens' does add the kind of flavour that macro-indicators can hardly capture" (Netshitenzhe, 2014, p.7). Therefore, how I organise the stock of my lived-career management experiences, how I express it and how I give it meaning: are inquisitions responded to in *Appendix D* and thus freed as in Bakhtin's (1990) hero, to acquire a life of its own. Because authoring of my lived-career management experiences draws from all my personal systems, the educational arena occupied a significant societal system and I briefly account for it in the next section.

2.6. SA as a country: A brief contextual history impacting on education

Fellow Africans in other properly named countries often tease and poke fun in that the name so passionately branded as *proudly South African* actually denotes a geographic position in the continent instead of a country's name.

Sitas (2016) correctly states that the country constitutes the "southern tip of Africa" (p. 65). Related to scholarship, Soudien (2015) views the country as "an ontological *hotspot*, one of the world's great social laboratories….it has concentrated within it almost all of the world's most egregious social challenges" (p. 201). On a certain level, both views are correct but to me, it is home providing with it contextual career management antecedents. However, Coleman (2014) considers SA as blessed with wealth of natural resources and lush agriculture although its political history resembles that of others in the continent, having endured colonial rule (DBE, 2013b; Engelbrecht, 2008; Krog et al., 2008; Maathai, 2006; Mangena, 2015; Mashaba & Morris, 2015; M. Mbeki, 2009; T. Mbeki, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c; N. Mouton, Louw & Strydom, 2012; Nittle, 2014; Seroto, 2004). Further reported are paradoxical complexities as the country's gift from its colonial history (DBE, 2013b; T. Mbeki, 2002b). The history of the struggle suffered by indigenous Africans is well documented in Bing (2009), Bowron (2009), du Preez Bezdrob (2004), Durrheim, et al. (2011), Guest (2004), Joffe (2008), Kathrada (2004), Laher and Cockcroft (2014); Maathai (2006), Mandela (1994, 2010a), M. Mbeki (2009), Robins (2005), Rusesabagina and Zoellner (2006) and Stubbs (2004), among others.

Seroto (2004) details a historical description contextualising findings relating to SA's educational pre and postcolonial chronology (DBE, 2013b; Durrheim et al., 2011; Gama, 1984; N. Mouton et al., 2012; Ndlovu, 1998; Nicholas et al., 2006; Sihlali, n.d.; SOMAFCOTRUST, 2013). Seroto (2004) estimates that about 300 laws were passed to foster a segregated society, among these, The Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953 along with The Extension of University Education Act of 1959 (Edwards, 2015) which ensured that Africans received inferior educational experiences whereby career education was miniscule for blacks. Political strife fermented endemic social unrest particularly within the educational terrain and sparked the June 16, 1976 Soweto Uprising (Mangena, 2015; Morrow et al., 2004; Ndlela, 2013; Ndlovu, 1998). The 1994 democratic elections birthed what became the new SA still characterised by all imaginable socioeconomic ills that are well-entrenched in SA's fibre and it will take many generations to resolve – if ever possible (T. Mbeki, 2002b).

Thus, the education system became the pivotal area requiring urgent redress, resulting in the introduction of the Outcome Based Education [OBE] system, commonly referred to as Curriculum 2005, which articulated aspirations of desired improvements (Rulashe, 2004; Seroto, 2004). OBE turned out to be too difficult to implement mainly due to historical infrastructural deficiencies at all black schools which had no capacity to absorb radical curriculum changes. It is an understatement that several thought-leaders and scholars reported on the shortcomings of OBE in many parts of the developed economies to accentuate the system's failures in SA (J. Jansen, 1998, 2010; Khoza, 2015; Lombard & Grosser, 2008; Mangena, 2015; Naidoo, 2011; Olivier, 2009; van Renen, 2005). The curriculum itself was experienced as very complicated, mainly due to that most teachers, on who successful curriculum delivery depended, are largely products of the Bantu Education system themselves. They have no prior personal learning or exposure to draw from towards efficient implementation (Taylor, 2013). Responding to widespread discontent, the Department of Education devised and implemented the Revised National Curriculum Statement [RNCS] (DoE, n.d.). The RNCS was an attempt to simplify the OBE system. Contrary to Seroto's (2004) sentiment, not only schools in rural areas struggled with OBE but many urban schools falling within the historically disadvantaged communities also struggled (Black Economic Empowerment Office [BEEO], n.d.; Mokoena, 2006; Procurement Policy Schedule 80/20 [PPS], n.d.; Stones, 2013). Also, critical questions on expected career and economic successes, as popular measures of attained education-based outcomes, are still largely elusive across the country, as was argued in this study. As such, reform in career education began with the inclusion of Life Orientation [LO] in the OBE curriculum from Grade R - RNCS for Grades R – 9 (DoE, n.d.) through Grades 10 – 12 within the National Curriculum Statement [NCS] (DoE, 2008) in the first decade of the new SA. I discuss career education developments in the new SA's second decade in the next section.

2.6.1. SA's career education under the ANC led government from 2004 – 2014

Given that this study's rationalisations were also based on persistent career education shortcomings relating to OBE as the preferred approach for educational transformation, I wondered about the underpinning rational for the preference by revisiting the ANC's approach to education while in exile.

Accordingly, Morrow et al. (2004) describe events and processes involved towards achieving goals for the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College [SOMAFCO] established in Tanzania under severe exile conditions. The academy's curriculum comprised: "the entire learning experience of a person – both what is formally taught and other informal learning" (p. 79) in reference to the relationship between the political and educational learning components at the college. Seemingly, the ANC ensured quality educational experiences for those who went to exile especially during the 1976 Soweto uprisings. They were driven by the desire to overturn the effects of Bantu Education through broader and enriched educational contexts which I believe far surpassed what the inxiles got exposed to. Morrow et al. (2004) summarises what became the "curriculum and pedagogy at SOMAFCO" (pp. 79 – 99) generously supported by continental and global hosting nations who opposed the apartheid policies. The authors' overall opinion is that the curriculum was among the best in the world without overlooking extreme accompanying hardships. Morrow et al. (2004) state:

> It was also realised that if the system were to move away from Bantu Education, vocational schools offering technically-based learning would have to be developed alongside academic education. This in turn implied the need for practical training which eventually resulted in centres at Mazimbu and Dakawa which were partly factories and partly vocational training facilities: garment and leather-goods factories; mechanical and carpentry workshops and similar enterprises (Morrow et al., 2004, p. 21).

Thus, the expressed opinion comparing educational exposure for the exiles and the inxiles stemmed from the vastly different educational experiences in exile and in SA as well as how they were managed. I think the international support offered far greater resources at SOMAFCO than could be available for OBE especially in that under democracy, the ANC became the leading party in government. Unfortunately, it also inherited greatly diminished resources for redress which could not be supplemented by international donor organisations. My overall inference was that had it been possible, the SOMAFCO model would have been far better than OBE. Accordingly, had the SOMAFCO model been expanded into SA's educational curriculum after apartheid, the present education system would be much better than it presently is.

However, due to the shortcomings that were experienced with the introduction of OBE, the DoE's (n.d.) RNCS was introduced as an improvement strategy. Acknowledging its shortcomings, the then Minister of Education conceded that reorganising a national curriculum is a major challenge for any nation, let alone one systematically destroyed under apartheid. Therefore, LO as a subject is described as one that:

> Guides and prepares learners for life, and for its responsibilities and possibilities. This subject addresses knowledge, values, attitudes and skills about the self, the environment, responsible citizenship, a healthy and productive life, social engagement, recreation and physical activity, and career choices. It equips learners to solve problems, to make informed decisions and choices, and to take appropriate actions to enable them to live meaningfully and successfully in a rapidly-changing society (DoE, n.d., p. 1).

In its purpose statement, the NCS (DoE, 2008) describes LO as a subject that "equips learners to engage on personal, psychological, neuro-cognitive, motor, physical, moral, spiritual, cultural, socio-economic and constitutional levels, to respond positively to the demands of the world" (p. 9). The overarching goals of LO are stated as intending to produce a kind of a learner who is "able to transfer skills from familiar to unfamiliar situations" (DoE, 2008, p. 5). The transference of skills related specifically to stimulating entrepreneurial intentions, recorded at 15 percent among SA's young adults compared to an average of 56 percent in some sub-Saharan African countries (Urban & Richard, 2015), with the goal to combat unemployability (Skosana, 2015). Accordingly, both the RNCS (DoE, n.d.) and the NCS (DoE, 2008) encompass the following learning areas: health promotion, social development, personal development, physical development and movement in Grades R- 6; with the onset of orientation to the world of work in Grades 7, 8 and 9 which cumulates to personal wellbeing, citizenship education, recreation and physical wellbeing as well as career and career choices in Grades 10, 11 and 12. Stated learning outcomes become specific assessment standards and progress to form part of the NCS towards the Further Education and Training [FET] phase in *Grades 10, 11 and 12* (DoE, 2008) articulating *Careers and Career Choices* learning outcomes, stated as follows:

> Learners must make critical decisions regarding career fields and further study. In order to help learners to make these decisions, they will be exposed to study methods and skills pertaining to assessment processes, information about institutions of higher and further education, and preparation for job applications and interviews. Self-knowledge and knowledge of labour laws, the job market, work ethics, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), learnerships and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), and unemployment are critical. Principles such as equity and redress are also addressed (DoE, 2008, p. 12).

Illustrated are core principles underpinning the OBE curriculum as 'streamlined and strengthened' to suit SA educational provision requirements. The objectives of the subject as a whole are commendable but arguments thus far in the study have demonstrated that the education system's yield does not match documented transformative measures (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006; Fraser & Killen, 2015; Mokoena, 2006; Singh, 2016; Walton et al., 2015). However, with regards to the LO subject, one can highlight the following excerpt (DBE, 2011, p. 25; NSC, 2008, p. 6):

> Life Orientation is the only subject in the National Curriculum Statement that is not externally assessed or examined. However, a learner will not be promoted or issued a National Senior Certificate (NCS) without providing concrete evidence of performance in the stipulated assessment tasks for that particular grade and meeting the minimum promotion or certification requirements for the NCS.

Clearly, the revised curriculum statements intended to make teaching and learning experiences practicable for teachers and learners. The goal was to serve the needs of the economy through personal development and career orientation. However, it remains contentious that the one subject that intends to measure learner competence is not externally examinable even at the school-exit level. Therefore, I briefly outline arguments I raised as lingering concerns in the next section.

2.6.1.1. Lingering concerns and complexities impacting on education

First to note was the fact that LO is still regarded as peripheral in spite of research findings recommending repositioning it to the centre of the curriculum (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006; Jacobs, 2011). Crossland (2006) found that "6% of career guidance in real terms…equates to seven minutes per week and a total of five hours per year" (p. 36) within findings on LO according DBE's 2002 and 2003 policy guidelines.

The topic on careers and career choice was apportioned 27 hours to be spread over three years covering Grade 10, 11 and 12 out of a total 240 hours of school time in the same period within the DBE (2011, p. 9) policy guidelines. Notably, these formed part of the then newly proposed Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement [CAPS] intended to run from 2012 – 2014 also discussed in Section 2.2.12 below. Clearly the change is miniscule for a learning topic with a lifelong impact on learners. Furthermore, Jacobs (2011) found that the available but limited research on the effectiveness of the subject often pointed out poorly qualified personnel who didn't feel confident to teach the subject. Jacob's study also investigated learners' perceptions on the subject and found mixed views: with those from better schooling environments seeing no value on the subject compared to those from disadvantaged schooling environments who viewed the subject favourably. Again, the mention of exposure to career guidance within the LO subject ranked in the middle of frequencies with no particular emphasis on the learning area. Interestingly, learners' suggestions on how the subject could be improved included: getting the subject more interesting, that it should be treated with a positive attitude like maths and science by teachers, it should cover real interests of the youth of today and not focus on gruesome details of harmful social ills like how sexual violation happens (Jacobs, 2011; Shefer & Ngabaza, 2015).

Furthermore, that the subject is the only one evaluated internally even at school exit level leaves its assessment in the hands of the same ill-equipped educators (Taylor, 2013). Cited reports on education generally point to poor teacher training across the curriculum, lack of resources in the majority of schools, impoverished family backgrounds and high unemployment as well as escalated health challenges (Stones, 2013). Hence, resulting quality output among learners is compromised and logically would not enjoy confidence in the employment sector. Add to this the fact that some institutions like the University of Johannesburg (Faculty of Health Sciences, 2012) often divides by two the Academic Point Score [APS] achieved by a learner in Grade 12 LO. Such a practice shows that the subject weighs very little in securing admission and does not necessarily predict academic performance at tertiary level.

Also demonstrating minimal educational transformation are the CHE (2010), DBE (2011, 2013b), DoE (2012), J. Jansen (2015), Ramphele (2012), Walton et al. (2015) who all support the view that very little has changed in the education system and in the overall quality of education. Consistent with the foregoing, is the *second* concern derived from media outcries which persistently accompany annual announcement of Grade 12 results, underscoring general crises in the quality of SA education even at tertiary level contributing to the phenomenon of unemployable SA graduates (Fin Week, 2009; J. Maree, 2009b, 2012; Mokgele & Rothman, 2014; Varsity SA, 2012). The weekly newspaper, *City Press* regularly highlights the magnitude of the stated phenomenon (Masondo, 2014a) leaving one wondering about the sincerity of the mentioned LO's purpose statement to equip learners for post-school workplace challenges (DoE, 2008). What is evident are students emanating from the school system who struggle to convert what they have learned into productive opportunities towards combating unemployability. This is despite the fact that both the RNCS and the NCS have entrepreneurial components. As such, Skosana (2014) indicates that entrepreneurship as a strategic economic driver is also prominent in curricular across many higher education institutions, supposedly designed to stimulate self-employment in the face of high SA unemployment levels, standing at 26.7 percent in *Quarter 1* of 2016 and only in reference to those who are actively seeking employment (Trading Economics, 2016).

Thirdly, SA's economic competitiveness reports paint a dire picture of the country's quality of education leading to less than desirable overall economic performance (ACET, 2015; WEF, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015). This factor is inseparable from human capital's productivity levels in SA organisations. The poor productivity levels support J. Jansen's (2010) media utterance that "it would be interesting to ask an economist of education to calculate the costs to the economy of OBE in terms of the trained labour we did not produce" (p. 2). Also, recent economic indicators show a sharp decline in the country's Gross Domestic Production [GDP] which stands at 0, 60 percent (Purfield, 2016), the lowest ever in the democratic era of South Africa *(save for the impact of global recession of 2008-2009)* and far from the idealised 6 percent growth projections made soon after the democratic elections in 1994. Yet the same GDP is suggested to contribute around 30 percent of Africa's GDP (Trading Economics, 2014).

Such declines are partly attributed to almost annual and lengthy industrial action in the country especially in the mining and manufacturing sectors. These pose as factors indicative of discontent in workplace relationships, a phenomenon not unrelated to human capital career management complexities (Herholdt, 2004; T. Meyer, 2004). *Fourthly* and interestingly, the NCS (DoE, 2008) describes the kind of a teacher envisaged to bring about educational transformation in SA encompassing their role as: "mediators of learning, interpreters and designers of Learning Programmes and Materials, leaders, administrators and managers, scholars, researchers and lifelong learners, community members, citizens and pastors, assessors, and subject specialists" (p. 5). The intention is to attach greater value to educators by embellishing their roles but instead typifies role-overload (Parumasur & Barkhuizen, 2009). Evident is how overwhelming the expanded teacher roles are (Volks, Abrahams & Reddy, 2015) also considering the complex transitional curriculum requirements (Msomi, van der Westhuizen & Steenkamp, 2014). *Fifthly,* interested by Msomi et al.'s (2014) study focusing on teacher professional development during policy implementation transitions, I engaged in a personal communication (A. Ikelelaz, personal communication, August 01, 2014, pseudonym), a scarce-skills educator who had tendered her resignation along with four other educators at her school.

Her concerns subsumed the following: unsympathetic management, incompetent leadership with no credibility among staff and learners, indifferent learners, uninvolved and mostly unemployed parents, dysfunctional family dynamics partly inherited from the destructive forces of apartheid, complicated curriculum statements often resisted at psychological level and lack of essential resources. Also mentioned as a source of strife was the low morale and high stress levels among staff. These factors are consistent with reported teachers' work-related stress (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2002). Notably, the resigning educator (A. Ikelelaz) was incentivised by that she could cash her pension and resorted to quitting the profession along with many other teachers. The high teacher attrition rate was allegedly exacerbated by hearsay about the Gauteng Education Department that was said to be looking into fresh strategies that will prevent teachers from cashing their pensions when they resign (A. Ikelelaz, personal communication, August 1, 2014).

L. Jansen (2014) notes that there are only 400 000 teachers in SA and about six percent of them had enquired about their pensions, a percentage described as a "significant amount of classroom experience which the schooling system could not afford to lose" (p. 4). The author further reports on current Minister of Education's appeal to quell the rumoured loss of teaching personnel. The reported spate of resignations seems to also affect other civil servants (Merten, 2014) and thus corroborates grievances captured during personal communication, also supported by Taylor's (2013) observed alarming challenges still confronting the education system.

Sixthly, a quick review of the RNCS and NCS in the four reviewed subjects NCS Civil Technology (DoE, 2005a), NCS Electrical Technology (DoE, 2005b), NCS Life Orientation (DoE, 2008), RNCS Life Orientation (DoE, n.d.) showed how complicated the language used is, in describing the curriculum statements and their assessment. This review should be compared to the sentiment shared by one primary school principal in Mpumalanga (Taylor, 2013) highlighting that Grade 6 learners in his school perform poorly in mathematics as a subject because the language of teaching and learning is English, and many learners are not proficient in the language to also grasp mathematical concepts. This was compounded by cited multiple other African languages spoken by the same learners. Often, learners are unable to distinguish between the languages and tend to mix them in their interaction.

Clearly, teaching and learning experiences would be complicated when English is further used as a medium of instruction, let alone when subject specific jargon forms part of the curriculum statements. In view of the stated concerns also reflected in Nyamupangedengu's (2014) personal experiences relating to English language deficiencies, how then can such a dilemma be resolved because English is regarded as a language of business in SA and sufficient proficiency levels are mandatory for one to function adequately in the world of work? Such inquisitions characterise national discourse on how best to settle for a language(s) of teaching and learning to optimise educational experiences (Kamwendo, Hlongwa & Mkhize, 2014; J. Maree, 2015b). Nicholas et al.'s (2006) contentions resonate with such dilemmas and reveal how the field of career psychology is also grappling with similar imperatives as covered in the next seventh and final concern.

Over and above, the *seventh* concern related to imperatives in the career psychology field also grappling with how to respond to the peculiar and transforming SA society (Nicholas et al., 2006). Central themes posing as response focus on ameliorating the gap between SA and first-world career practices towards indigenously sensitised career orientations which then imply the imperative for considerations of the cultural and contextual influences (McMahon et al., 2015). Cooper (2014) provides a detailed account of the psychology field in SA and suggests ways in which training of psychologists may be improved although the author notes positive developments since the demise of the apartheid regime. Cooper's suggestions subsume career professionals' imperative to align with the indigenous knowledge requirement as argued in the field including those Akhurst and Mkhize (2006), Fouad and Byars-Winston (2005), McMahon, Watson and Patton (2005), Stead and Watson (2006), Watson (2013), as well as Watson and McMahon (2009). Nicholas et al. (2006) sums up by inquiring thus:

> What should our theory base be? Are our theories sufficiently sensitised to local cultural, socio-economic and social conditions? What should our role be and who are the clients? What values should be promoted? This is a far cry from when career psychologists were silently co-opted as servants of the apartheid system to serve racist agendas under the guise of neutrality (p. 8).

Thus, Section 2.3 on career theories is an attempt to also address the foregoing inquisition. Having detailed the foregoing concerns, I didn't lose sight of ongoing strategies aiming at addressing the raised concerns as outlined in the next section.

2.6.1.2. Some ongoing strategies to deal with stated concerns

Considering the above-stated concerns, it was evident that the legacy of apartheid will take a few generations to wipe out. However, there are some interventions which are efforts at redress but should be understood against the fact that in 2010, SA was reported to have a total of about 26 000 schools, a number that includes about 1098 privately registered schools (Schools for SA, http://www.schools4sa.co.za/). Accordingly, interventions such as 1) the *DINALEDI project:* focuses on underprivileged schools and was introduced in 2001. It attempts to improve teacher capacity, teaching and learning in mathematics, physical and life sciences. It started with 102 schools and has reported successful participation of 500 schools in 2013 (DBE, 2013a).

Compared to at least 25000 public schools in the country, the number of participating schools seems very negligible. Noteworthy though are Mangena's (2015) 2000 – 2008 Ministerial goals to overturn the maths and science deficit in the education of black children against the fully entrenched disadvantage emanating from the apartheid era. Therein, mathematics was deemed unnecessary for black learners as Bantu Education intended to produce labour from their education instead of any career that may have required skills associated with the subject. Even the ongoing global effort to steer young women towards careers in science and technology for which mathematics is mandatory, becomes inconsequential in that women's career processes are marred by gender inequalities (McMahon et al., 2015, WEF, 2016). Therefore, despite significant reforms in education since the inception of the democratic government in SA, the mathematics challenge remains rooted largely due to unavailability of sufficient and suitably qualified teachers in the subject. As such, utterances attributed to the current Minister of Basic Education (Angie Motshekga) provide perspective on the current state of affairs in this regard:

> We come from a past where not all learners have had the opportunity to take mathematics as a subject in school, hence the shortage of qualified mathematics teachers today. We need to work hard to ensure that all learners, no matter their social-economic background have every opportunity available to take up careers of their choice without any limitations (DBE, Media Release, 2016, p. 2).

Unfortunately, such conditions have influenced learner attitudes whereby some regard the subject as difficult and opt to drop it especially near the exit level of their schooling years (Pillay, 2015). Such attitudes towards mathematics have a spill-over effect into the post school lives of the learners as discussed in the next. 2) The *Gauteng Primary Language and Mathematics Strategy* towards improving proficiency in languages and competence in mathematics, implemented in 792 underperforming schools at Foundation Phase in 2011, increasing participation to 990 schools in 2013 (Fleisch, 2013). Reports on this strategy show marked teacher involvement and increased performance levels among learners although against a backdrop of about 2606 public schools in the Gauteng province.

3) The Western Cape Education Department Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (Schreuder, 2013) was conceptualised in the early 2000s but launched full scale in 2006 and targeted implementation in 2008 – 2016 as an eight year strategy to improve literacy and mathematics in 1050 schools in the province. Reported results show improvement with strategies in place to entrench the intervention into normal school functioning on cumulative basis, also against a total of 1672 public schools in the Western Cape Province. The *4) quality Learning and Teacher Support Materials* (DBE, 2013d) which encourages reading as a strategy – the task team mandated to audit the success of this strategy found satisfactory implementation in Gauteng and Western Cape schools and less than satisfactory in other provinces due to a number of resources and process based hindrances.

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement [CAPS] (*elaborated on in the next section)* was reported as 'well received' by education key stakeholders, mainly for its simplicity and desirable support at all levels of the system (DBE, 2013d). The report provides comprehensive recommendations which aim to improve education provision. Notably, Gauteng and Western Cape provinces have a combined total of 4278 out of the nationwide total of 26000 schools; 5) The *Rainbow Workbooks Project* (McKay, 2013) aligned to the CAPS to augment learning material in all subjects for various grades, mainly at Foundation and Intermediate Phases accounting for about 20 000 primary schools nationwide. Reviews of this project reported mixed outcomes relating to a) how to use them by satisfied teachers who feel that they structure lessons better, b) students who enjoy the workbooks in that they enhance independent learning experiences as the workbooks are also used for homework, and c) parents who also report enhanced involvement in the learning of their children in that they are able to work with them (Workbooks) as standardised material regarding school lessons. 6) The *New Curriculum for Technical High Schools* (DBE, 2013e) which flows from the RNCS of 2002, recapitalised from 2010 and revised in 2013 in congruence with the provisions of the NDP 2030 (NCP, 2012) to hasten output of individuals with technical and technological skills due to shortages in these areas among the country's human capital. The cited count for Technical schools countrywide was 49.

The *seventh* strategy embodies the broader national agenda to reconcile perspectives on what partly happened in SA's history that has brought us to where we are, in the form of Kani's (2008) powerful stage production: *Nothing but the truth,* reviewed as representative of the *theatre of reconciliation* (J. Brown, 2008; Mda, 2008). The production is prescribed for all Grade 12s in SA (DBE, 2015) and forms part of the school curriculum, thus regarded as essential for all segments of society to at least understand each other's varying experiences. It is important for children to gain insightful perspectives into aspects of political complexities. It also captures McMahon and Watson's (2013) emphasis that "past experiences influence the present lives of individuals, and, together, past and present experiences influence the future of the individual" (p. 280). In that regard, the department of National Education is commended for ensuring that such a carefully crafted enactment of suffering that impacted on individuals' career experiences are re-lived through the annually staged dramatization of the play as well (Nobulali Productions, personal communication, April 22, 2016).

Finally, 8) the *National School Nutrition Programme* (Education Policy: School Feeding Scheme, n.d.) was introduced in 2002. It has limited eligibility criteria including poor schools, poor learners, and lower grade learners as examples. As such, it entails poverty-relief programmes in schools. Although it is not directly related to curriculum content, it is still a vital indicator of the extents to which education provision is a critical concern towards required redress in SA. Such poverty alleviation programmes are regarded as added incentive to encourage school attendance and to minimise drop-out rates. Therefore, the study acknowledged that the foregoing strategies are not implemented countrywide but serve to give impetus to the revised curriculum with a view towards greater and impactful education transformation. Also, curriculum 2005 and its subsequent revisions are progressive in nature and remain miniscule but indicative of ongoing improvement efforts. Noteworthy is that none of the foregoing school level strategies focus intently on career education interventions. It also seems as if the DBE has adopted a strategy of just forging ahead in curriculum redesign in efforts to fine-tune OBE to SA education needs. The latest strategy is termed as CAPS and its intended provisions are elaborated on in the discussions below.

2.6.1.3. From NSC to CAPS

The CAPS is the latest educational reform attempt by the DBE (Coetzee, 2012; Khoza, 2015). Its stated purpose is to: represent policy statements, replace NCS Grade R-12 from 2012 to 2014 (DBE, 2011). Comparison of the NCS - LO (DBE, 2008) and CAPS – LO (DBE, 2011) showed structural rather than core curriculum changes (A. Coetzee, 2012). Structuring is a simplistic approach towards standardizing education countrywide although it has inherent limitations such as: limiting teachers' creativity and overlooks resource-shortages. Furthermore and according to Khoza (2015) as well as the earlier cited personal communication (A. Ikelelaz, August 1, 2014), CAPS does not make provision for remedial interventions because the work-programme is predetermined and requires adherence to maintain the prescribed pace. Furthermore, Taylor (2013, p. 4) notes that:

> The biggest obstacle to the effective use of these programmes in promoting teaching and learning is inadequate capacity on the part of teachers, school leaders and system-level officials. Specifically, the subject knowledge required to interpret the curriculum and translate it into meaningful classroom activities, is at a generally low level throughout the system (Taylor, 2013, p. 4).

Also noted as important yet disheartening are negligible outcomes of non-stopping teacher-in-service training programmes since the onset of democratic dispensation in SA. Further highlighted is the DBE's five-year-teacher-support plan in recognition of the demoralising difficulty the curriculum changes impose on teachers who often receive undeserved countrywide criticisms (A. Coetzee, 2012; Taylor, 2013). However and in itself, continuous professional development is a mandatory requirement in most professions such as in psychology (HPCSA, n.d.; Moerdyk, 2009). Still, it is not clear how competence is measured for LO teachers but for psychologists, who notably pace their own continuous development processes *as all professionals supposedly do*, there is an oversight body that ensures adherence according to stipulated criteria. The lack of clarity with regards to LO educators is contextualised in the discussions on the newly gazetted competency model for career development practitioners (DHET, 2016) which I review in the next Section 2.6.1.4. Consequently and in view of the foregoing concerns, I highlight the following points of consideration:

Firstly that the changes from RNCS and NCS towards CAPS fall short of required content based curriculum alignment with socio-economic dynamics confronting SA. *Secondly*, making policy changes based on a random change of schools by a possibly random learner does not justify the resources allocated for teacher training on how to adhere to the CAPS work programme. *Thirdly*, the structured approach is perceived as a policing instrument designed for education officials whose inspecting tasks would become less laborious when they just *tick in a box* to indicate how far a particular teacher is in accordance with the prescribed and paced work programme. For educators, it serves as a disincentive and relates to overriding stressful working conditions (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2002). *Fourthly*, Khoza (2015) reports on teachers' reflections on their teaching experiences of the CAPS whereby some teachers reported mere compliance as part of doing what the department expected them to do and only fewer had positive experiences to reflect on. Although the study sampled 22 participants across the curriculum, only one Life Skills educator was included in the sample compared to six for mathematics and five for the English language. Notably, even that one Life Skills educator's voice did not feature in the findings or in discussions of the study regarding his/her experiences on the LO CAPS curriculum, assuming that Life Skills also entailed the LO subject.

Fifthly, the issue of language remains contentious as SA is a multilingual country and simplified teaching and learning concepts should be of prior concern seeing that for a majority of black people English is not their first or even a second language. Utilising terms such as rubrics and grids should never have formed part of curriculum statements at the inception of Curriculum 2005 which has remained in force although regularly reviewed and revised. All the same, it is clear that the lethargic approach to career education undermines all other reported efforts (STATS SA, 2011) in that all learning should cumulate and find meaningful articulation through career success and economic success for individuals and for the country. In the next section I discuss the competency framework for career development practitioners which contextualise the earlier mentioned concerns related to LO educators' competencies.

2.6.1.4. The competency framework for career development practitioners

To its credit and within global discourse agendas, SA is reported as one of the countries that have "begun to focus some attention on the development and provision of career services" (McMahon et al., 2015, p. 257). This focus resulted in government initiatives to review competency requirements for career guidance personnel through the DHET (2015a, 2016, 2017; Executive Director: National Science and Technology Forum [ED: NSFT], 2016). Accordingly, the *National Policy on Integrated Career Development System* (DHET, 2017) supports the initiatives as also stipulated in the *Competency Framework for Career Development Practitioners [CDP] in South Africa* (2016) and intends to:

> Provide(s) guidelines to set a benchmark of minimum competencies that individual Career Development Practitioners must possess in order to offer Career Development Services in South Africa as set out in the Schedule. The framework is benchmarked on international standards but in line with the South African context, (DHET, 2016, p. 3).

Briefly, the cited policy guidelines regard the career development process as a joint endeavour by all service providers at all educational stages of the individual and beyond. This view is supported by the DHET's (2016) regard of Career Development Services [CDS] as descriptive of "all services and activities intended to assist all individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their careers" (p. 11). The stated approach does not necessarily scrutinise desired competencies of the LO educator whereby the guidelines confine a competency to "a cluster of related knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that enable a person to be effective in delivering career development services" (DHET, 2016, p. 10). Thus, a competent person is regarded as one who is "sufficiently qualified" (Ibid) in the service area of their delivery which is in LO for the designated educator in schools. Furthermore and generally, educators achieve various qualifications which are aligned with the South African Qualifications Authority's [SAQA] (DHET, 2015b) National Qualifications Framework [NQF]. Still, descriptions of "Figure 1: Career Development Practitioner Levels" (DHET, 2016, p. 13)   do not propose alignment with the SAQA's NQF to identify competency criteria for LO educators who according to Table 1 (Ibid, p. 4) are recognised CDP providers in schools.

However, the same Table specifies that educators generally possess: "4-year post-school education degree/diploma (*non-career development related*)" (DHET, 2016, p. 4, italics added for emphasis). Such broad descriptions are expected in a policy guideline but in cumbersome service delivery sites as in schools the competency requirements remain imprecise especially considering the *non-career development related* emphasis. Associated concerns were voiced by the Division of Registered Counsellors and Psychometrists [RCP] under the Psychological Society of South Africa [PsySSA] (2016, pp. 1 – 2) who contest the CDP's stated competencies that do not require registration with the HPCSA. Such an omission is said to create a gap in monitoring both competence and ethical adherence in comparison with the rigorous and mandatory training processes undertaken by RCPs. Hence, the ED: NSFT (2016) implores the DHET through their vested mandate to take the lead in proposing, prioritising and also to "define the content and process of initial training… in specific for Life Orientation Teachers…and align training content to the outcomes sought for public policy goals for education, training and employment" (p. 4). One might add the imperative to also align the training content and processes with the HPCSA as the custodian and oversight statutory body that oversees career professionals' compliance.

Furthermore, the embedded fluidity in the statement that "some CDPs will need to have a broad range of specialised competencies while others may require only a few or none at all, depending on the nature of the services they provide" (DHET, 2016, p. 11) goes against essential and clear-cut differentiation mainly for credibility which the clients need to base their selection of a service provider. Moreover, the HPCSA as a regulatory body provides exhaustive training guidelines and expected outcomes at all levels of competency categories such as that for the educational psychologist in this instance (HPCSA, 2017). The expressed view is amplified through one participant in the Australian Government: Department of Education, Science and Training (2004) review of the imperative to standardise competency levels of career practitioners, who stated that standardisation "'is a way to promote public confidence in services offered…it promotes accountability and enables customers to know what to buy, where to go, and how to evaluate services within an ethical framework'" (p. 9).

Nonetheless, the ED: NSFT (2016) expresses optimism in that the recognition of LO educators as career development practitioners in the competency model "accords them a special *professional* status..." and "will put a stop to the relegation of LO teaching to the least experienced teachers in a school" (p. 4, italics added for emphasis). Against this background, the concerns raised by RCPs within PsySSA (2016) merit a review of the competency model towards a streamlined approach that is not "in contradiction of the Health Profession's Act 56 of 1974…and the HPCSA's own policies and guidelines" (p. 2). In the next section I discuss career theories as an important component of literature review as mentioned in the introduction of this chapter.

2.7. Review of career theories

Reviewed literature has thus far substantiated SA's contextualizing factors that framed the scope of this study in the preceding sections. The relevance of reviewing career theories was overarching for purposes of this study as a primarily scholarly undertaking. Foremost and as a point of departure, Hysamen (1994) and Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) agree that a theory is a logical organisation of views that enable comprehension and insight with potential for practical application on a given subject. Turok (2016a) emphasises that of importance is "how theory and practice relate to each other, how the one feeds into the other and feeds back" (p. 59). Accordingly, career theories ought to entail simplified sense-making explanations of career behaviour and experiences condensed into logical propositions according to general rules, principles, diagrams and/or formulations (Krumboltz, 1994, 2011) for possible practical application. Considering the stated description of theoretical formulations, I evaluated the extent to which career theories offer explanations, logical propositions and understandings on career development and management as individuals' experiences in SA and found them limited. Related to that, are SA scholars' unanimous views that the field of psychology in the country still has a Western foundation (Cooper, 2014) including career psychology (Crossland, 2006; Nicholas et al., 2006), that has influenced both research and practice (Laher & Cockcroft, 2013a, 2014).

The concerning implication was that seeking theoretical explanations, logical propositions and understandings for personal career development and management experiences would result in a fragmented theoretical outline underpinned by Western theoretical formulations. This resonated with Stead and Watson's (2006) assertion attesting to the scarcity of career research conducted in the country, also citing the imperative to promote local scholarship towards indigenous career knowledge development. According to the authors, their edited compendium consists of chapters focusing on selected applicable parts embodying some SA relevance from broader career knowledge perspectives (Stead & Watson, 2006). Laher and Cockcroft (2013a, 2014) reiterate historical factors noted in Nicholas et al. (2006) whereby the skewed representations even necessitated the promulgation of the Equal Employment Act No. 55 of 1998 to regulate psychological assessment practices in the country.

The foregoing truncated background suggests that the field has not yet produced a theoretical formulation originating in SA to explain career behaviour and experiences of South Africans, which emerging scholars can apply, critique, expand or draw from for a study intending to investigate the phenomenon as conceptualised in this study. Hence, the rationale and motivation for this study reiterated the need for approaches that are foregrounded in indigenous knowledge for SA and towards optimal field development and application within the global knowledge community. Beyond SA's career field scholarship, there was noted general consensus among scholars that overall, there is no one theory that is able to explain career behaviour in full (Krumboltz, 1994). Blustein (2015) refers to the exploration on women's career processes (Bimrose, McMahon & Watson, 2015) and highlights that the international comparison presented in the book "underscores the difficulty in deriving universal theories that would be applicable across contexts (p. 224). However, it seemed that some career theories succeed in explaining the phenomenon adequately in developed societies. Krumboltz's (1994) statement aligns with Osipow's (1994) contention that career development theories offer perfect descriptions of career choice for some people, in total disregard of significant numbers of others. This criticism supports L. Richardson's (1994) view that theories resemble a building "sometimes quite grand, sometimes in need of shoring up, and sometimes in need of dismantling or, more recently, deconstructing" (p. 519).

Remarkably and in congruence with Krumboltz's (1994) argument that the field as a whole is still in search of a better theory which would meet criteria such as 1) *accuracy*: permitting descriptions of career behaviour accurately; 2) *responsible*: enabling individuals to own the responsibility for their own career lives; 3) *comprehensive*: covering a full range of circumstances that affect career satisfaction; 4) *integrative*: be relatable to theories in other domains; and 5) *adaptive*: improving and advancing in response to new and unfamiliar aspects of the phenomenon. Furthermore, it was noted that the aforementioned contentions are consistent with Patton and McMahon's (2014) observations that the field consists of an assortment of theories, covering numerous issues from various perspectives. In fact Savickas and Lent's (1994) compilation also consists of reports from broader scholarship's focus in the field, attempting convergence of career theories towards formulations of one grand theory or fewer theories covering wide ranging perspectives to explain career behaviour. The compendium details varying perspectives in favour of or against the career theory convergence agenda which, a decade later, remained an actively debated scholarly matter (Patton & McMahon, 2014). From a researcher's perspective, I found reasonable arguments on both sides of the convergence debate, in spite of consequent complications particularly for the field of practice.

As an example, Holland's (1994) argument is sensible in that theorists should rather focus on continuous refinement of their propositions since it is untenable to collapse all theories into a grand theory, in recognition of Krumboltz's (1994) metaphor on theories as maps for varying territories. Yet, Savickas and Lent's (1994) explanations on the benefits and contributions of convergence towards fewer career theories in the field are equally persuasive. Troubling with unsettled debates is accrual of sentiments as shared by Harmon (1994) thus:

> As a professor, I find teaching theories of career development problematic. I tend to go from textbook to textbook ... never satisfied with the way the textbook authors or I have organised the available literature. There seems to be no conceptual schema for organising the things we know about career development, choice and adjustment (p. 225).

Furthermore, Patton and McMahon's (2014) inquisitions on the same concerns are thus: "Which one (*theory*) is right? Who (*author*) do I believe? How can I know what to think?

They all sound good to me" (p. viii, italicized words added for emphasis) – clearly in reference to the plethora of dominant theories, which can be overwhelming to novice scholars. Moreover, the attempt to find career theories explaining career behaviour of South Africans as a developing economy, with which I could align personal lived-career management experiences according to Krumboltz's (1994) above-stated criteria, evoked sentiments similar to Harmon's and thus summarised perfectly by Patton and McMahon's cited inquisitions. I found that the field consists of a chorus of varying propositions, at best, explaining pockets of experiences and at worst lacking in comprehensible resonance to SA experiences. As a neophyte scholar, I made sense and found solace in Harmon's (1994) frustrations captured below:

> The theories focus on a segment of the population that has become increasingly smaller – those who have the luxury of (a) relative certainty of employment, (b) choice about the type of employment they will seek, and (c) the power to effect changes in their workplace. The theories do not address the experience of people in trying economic times when it is difficult for many people to find and retain jobs, let alone plan careers (Harmon, 1994, pp. 225 – 227).

Furthermore and in relation to SA's career experiences, the concerns go deeper as explained in foregoing sections and also articulated by cited authors including J. Maree (2009a, 2013), Mkhize (2005), Watson and McMahon (2009), largely because these concerns supported the stated and underpinning study's rationale on the knowledge gap in the field. Given this study's space limitations and in view of the vastness of career theories in the field as well as the minimal agreement among scholars, I opted for the following three means of categorising career theories. The option allowed for extensive yet summated treatment of the subject as a requirement for this study. *Firstly*, Patton and McMahon (1999, 2006, 2014) cover some of the well-established theories in the field. They present broad categories of *content* and *process* theories whereby the former predominantly explain career behaviour from individual factors' perspectives such as interests and values, whereas the latter category focuses on elements of time, phases and/or stages as characteristic descriptors in the ever changing life of an individual. Further covered are *wider explanations* in the field in acknowledgement of career development experiences of the less represented in dominant theories including women, the oppressed and side-lined (Blustein, 2015), particularly in contexts different from the "white western able bodied middle class male" (Patton & McMahon, 2014, p. 135).

Importantly, the authors seem to have categorised the theories to draw from for developing, describing and discussing their Systems Theory Framework [STF], regarded as metatheoretical and not a theory per se, but a framework to connect theory and practice in the field (Arthur & McMahon, 2005). *Secondly*, Sharf's (2013) categorisation follows the same pattern as that by Patton and McMahon's (1999, 2006, 2014). In addition, it also covers *relational approaches* (explaining career behaviour according to the influence of our relationships with others); *spiritual perspectives* (explaining career choice as a calling); and *chaos theories* (explaining career behaviour according to unpredictable and uncontrollable factors in individuals' lives). Accordingly, chaos theory perspectives on career scholarship were said to be still in early stages of development. *Thirdly*, Savickas (2013) primarily describes his life-career experiences to frame the notion of career construction within which the individual assumes three cardinal roles particularly in career counselling situations, *first as actors* within the vocational guidance paradigm: whereby individuals construct social identities relatable to others in their immediate environment of influence.

They also consider distinguishable qualities with which the individual is found compatible in relation to careers populated by similar others, commonly explained as a process of matching individuals to jobs or occupations (Savickas, 2011a). The author further explains that counselling individuals in accordance with their role as actors assumes a vocational guidance paradigmatic perspective and its distinguishing truth criterion is correspondence or congruence (Savickas, 2013). Notably, the vocational guidance paradigm subsumes content career theory formulations which Bujold (2004) contends remain useful for career theory, research and practice, even though they overlook inherent complexity in career behaviour. *Second, individuals as agents*: whereby career counselling focuses on individuals' developmental tasks of goal-setting as self-regulating agents driven by their motives and typical adaptation strategies to social expectations. Essentially, counsellors draw from vocational developmental theories because of their emphasis on agency, guided by constructivist principles of a) *concern* about transition; b) *control* over tasks to be performed; c) *curiosity* about pertinent activities, as well as d) *confidence* and self-esteem as coping strategies during transitional phases (Savickas, 2011a, p. 180).

The resulting four c's are regarded as dimensions of adaptability to which a fifth 'c' was added for "*cooperation*" (McMahon, Watson & Bimrose, 2012, p. 762), thus denoting inter-relationality, friendliness, interpersonal skills, accommodative and collaborative tendencies but was later renamed "*commitment*" (Ibid). Accordingly, career adaptability is argued by Creed, Fallon and Hood (2008) as aligned with individuals' behaviour tendencies to seek continuous self-discovery in response to "changing and unstable nature of work" (McMahon et al., 2012, p.762). Thus, individuals as agents typify the vocational development paradigm in that they develop requisite intrapersonal attitudes, beliefs and competencies towards efficient career choices and representative work adjustments (Savickas, 2013). The main criticism on this theoretical paradigm is that it postulates a series of decisions consistent with developmental tasks entailing creative processes and is thus unpredictable and unforeseeable, further compounded by individuals' unique circumstances and adopted problem solving approaches (Bujold, 2004).

The *third, individuals as authors:* explaining individuals' roles integrative of their actions and agency in personal life stories, denoting unique identities as societal expectations. The paradigm is marked by a shift from resemblance and congruence with others to self-making identities. The constructive aspect in counselling situations highlights awareness that the authored story is both lived and shared, whereby meaning-making brings forth recurrent themes within life-changing experiences from memory as an inextricable story component (Savickas, 2011b; Winslade, 2005). Savickas (2013) considers this paradigm as career construction counselling or life designing and thus denotes projects comprising reflective stories that people tell about themselves, producing themes on which the future can be built. Therefore, career stories are more about "uniqueness than resemblance, and emotion more than reasoning" (Savickas, 2013, p. 653). Accordingly, the third paradigm is congruent with Hartung's (2013) conception of it as the third wave: explaining career as a story whereby individuals narrate their autobiographies reflective of contextual influences and thus "its truth criterion is pragmatic effectiveness" (Savickas, 2013, p. 654). Another aspect of the third wave relates to its congruence with the earlier explained constructivist-interpretive and social constructivist perspectives under the broader constructivism paradigm agreed upon by Patton (2011), Young and Collin (2004) as well as by Young and Popadiuk (2012).

Accordingly, the place of constructivism in career studies is consolidated by Cohen et al.'s (2004) summation that social constructionism enables accessibility of "the parts that other approaches cannot reach" (p. 407) especially in view of the present study's foci. Furthermore and evident form the reviewed career theory literature was greater focus on the career development construct than on the career management construct. Given that this study's conceptualisation provided definitions of career development and management constructs wherein the inseparability of both constructs was acknowledged, I revisited the noted interchangeability. As such, I reiterated the noted scarcity of literature on the career management construct (Baruch & Peiperl, 2000; McIlveen, 2009) and referred to Greenhaus et al.'s (2006, 2010) formulations as specific to career management wherein Boyes' (2010) and Arnold's (1997) conceptualisations are subsumed. Interestingly, several scholars rather emphasise career management as a skill (Bridgstock, 2009; Jordaan, van Heerden, & Jordaan, 2014; Sullivan & Emerson, n.d.; Tomlinson, 2007; Z. Waghid, 2014). Notably, all resonate with Haase's (2007) view of it as rather a self-management competence which interestingly is also how the cited policy guidelines (DHET, 2015a, 2015b, 2016, 2017) seem to operationalise career development as an approach that invigorates citizens' ability to manage their own careers.

Considering the emergence of serendipity in career literature (Krumboltz, 1998; E. Williams et al., 1998) as well as the notion of happenstance and planned happenstance (Krumboltz, 2009, 2011; Krumboltz et al., n.d.a, n.d.b; Krumboltz & Levine, 2013), Neault (2000) still argues for the imperative to reconsider the relevance of career development theory, and views the construct as a career management strategy instead. Further noted was that Baruch (2004) embraces the life-stories theme as embedded in career management and Rehfuss (2009) acknowledges prevalent narrative propositions as also forming part of both theory and practice of career management. Clearly, the construct of career management as a skill, competence, self-management, serendipity, happenstance and planned happenstance is subsumed within the third wave constructivist perspectives of career theory which both explain and justifies how it was framed in conceptualisations of this study. However, Greenhaus et al.'s (2006, 2010) and Tadic's (2005) views that the career management construct is more commonly used than career development was not substantiated, at least in cited career literature.

Unmistakable still, was that the study's conceptualisation of career management as a construct as well as the personal life-career stage at which this study was undertaken, resonated more with career management than with career development theoretical descriptions. Considering the preceding diversity of views in the career theory field, I noted Peiperl and Gunz's (2007) perspective in which they hesitate to refer to the "field" (p. 7) of careers due to its rootedness in several varying disciplines, from very different intellectual traditions, thus regarding it as comprising a fragmented adhocracy. For this reason, the authors argue the impossibility for anyone to claim comprehensivity in literature review, and I therefore diverted to also evaluate the evident entanglement of theory, practice and research in the next section.

2.7.1. Theory, practice and research in literature review

First to note was that in the foregoing section I covered key strands underpinning career theory explanations on how the field is broadly conceptualised culminating in recent advances, represented as paradigmatic shifts marking current knowledge development in the field. These strands comprise knowledge capital in the field as articulated through various theoretical postulations on what is regarded as plausible in understanding career behaviour across the paradigms (Hartung, Walsh & Savickas, 2013). Importantly, this study's foremost rationale was that there was no body of knowledge that captured career behaviour of individuals in SA as a developing economy from which accurate, responsible, comprehensive, integrative and adaptive explanations (Krumboltz, 1994, 2011) could be determined, on how individuals develop and manage their careers. There was no overarching postulation that described relationships within individuals' intrapersonal systems that enabled enactment of career inclinations from which meaningful strategies could be discerned for application, and with which pertinent career adaptations to economic and personal demands, could be managed. Thus, the perceived gap encouraged pursuance of the study's objectives as a contribution towards increasing existing knowledge in the field. *Secondly,* the component of practice comprises the application domain of career knowledge as interventions, assessments, counselling and development in a dynamic relationship between the client and the expert.

Yet Osipow (1994) contends that career theories may embody useful propositions for career knowledge application, but does not preclude the imperative for practice to be foregrounded in its own theories. In light of Osipow's contention, several SA scholars highlight the dominance of foreign practice approaches in the field which overlook cultural embeddedness of the group's career needs in favour of the individual's (J. Maree, 2009a, 2013; Mkhize, 2005, 2011, 2013a, 2013b; Perry, 2009; Stead & Subich, 2006; Watson, 2013; Watson & McMahon, 2009; Watson et al., 2011; Watson & Stead, 2006b). However, the noted concerns are not limited to cultural influences adopted in practice, but also to expertise acquisition (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006; de Bruin & de Bruin, 2006) which is not foregrounded on cultural perspectives (Mkhize, 2013a, 2013b), compounded by the fact that theories generally take longer to account for rapid changes in the world of work (Harmon, 1994; McIlveen, 2012). Thus, the major contention challenging scholarship is also on finding patterns of career education that can respond to the massive SA complexities as already argued (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006).

K. Maree (2011) sums up and states that what is required is a meta-analytic approach to research, partly towards understanding whether theory follows practice or vice versa as a means to manage the divide, hence the view that the separation of theory from practice and research can be narrowed through convergence efforts (Lent & Savickas,1994). Overall, the third paradigmatic approaches are hailed as representative of significant improvements in the field, particularly career construction propositions which Watson (2013) asserts can be grouped within the "systems of influence proposed by the metatheoretical Systems Theory Framework" (p. 5). Even so, Savickas (2013) concludes by stating that differing scholarly views are inspirational to emerging scholars and expresses hope that the emerging group is likely to advance the field towards "the fourth paradigm when the music changes" (p. 660). What became clear from foregoing discussions was the inextricability of the three domains in the field. Given the earlier noted scarcity of career research in SA and the proliferation of storying in the field, I selected a few studies which align with the emergence of constructivist perspectives that also acknowledge qualitative approaches towards broadly comprehensible career behaviour.

The selection also served as a prelude towards establishing theoretical resonance for this study's personal lived-career management experiences, particularly within current thinking in the field. Importantly, there was no similarly conceptualised study among reviewed literature.

2.7.2. Perspectives on some practical applications

As an emerging scholar that sought to investigate personal lived-career management experiences through which I intend to make a contribution in the field, I noted Watson's (2013) assertion relating to the STF's proposition as a meta-theoretical framework that encompasses theoretical conceptualisation across paradigmatic perspectives. I further noted that the STF integrates constructivist career theory formulations and that *chance influences* within the framework also correspond with the elements of serendipity, happenstance and planned happenstance. From these realisations it became clear that the framework was sufficiently comprehensive to provide scope for theoretical alignment, analysis and interpretation of lived-career management experiences in this study's later chapters. Thus, following are brief exemplars of diverse studies undertaken mostly in SA which I group according to purpose of research, foregrounding theoretical structure, preferred methodology, findings and implications. Given the logical and earlier explained broad field of psychology as subsuming the career psychology subfield, and in view of the broad SA context of the present study, the *first* reviewed study was based on attempts by the field of psychology in its quest for market and social relevance (Pillay, 2016). The purpose was to establish the extent to which the field has disentangled from unfavourable evaluations based on perceptions that the field pandered to the whims of SA past apartheid policies, and remains with no visible outcomes on transformation efforts in the country (Long, 2013).

The study's theoretical underpinnings employed language used as the framing strategy within social constructionist perspectives to establish its goals. Thus, 9 combined presidential and guest speakers' keynote addresses at the Psychology Society of South Africa's [PsySSA] annual conferences from 1996 to 2011 were evaluated. However, the study's findings did not present a specific or clear transformation agenda for the field and this was attributed partly to that six of the nine keynote addresses were delivered by non-PsySSA office bearers.

Also, five of the six speakers were not psychologists, as well as that at the time of the study (after 18years) only three presidential addresses could be secured for analysis. The study concluded by calling for more studies on current discursive practices of psychologists whereby the discipline examines itself more intensely for reflexively based findings. Unfortunately, the study's outcome was a missed opportunity for discerning the field's theoretical, practice and research on transformative trends that could have been articulated at a SA podium where psychologists congregated annually. Resonating with the missed opportunity observation, Edwards (2015) asserts in congruence with Pillay (2016) that the field needs to transform towards a culture that advances humanity towards benefiting SA from a sensitised field that is grounded on *ubuntu* dimensions, with which I fully agree.

In the *second* qualitative study Singh (2016) investigated the "career guidance needs of post secondary learners who utilised a career advice services helpline" (p. v). The shared-call (telephone) based helpline is described as a national government service that is implemented by the Career Advice Service [CAS] and the NQF in association with the DHET and it is based on the rationale that "72.9% of households in SA had a working cellphone and18.6% of households had working telephones" (Singh, 2016, p. 24). Its mandate is to help all citizens in their career information needs even beyond their school years. The sample in Singh's investigation captured a total of 4264 documented queries/cases for the month of January 2014 but only 185 cases were used to complete the study. The good about the study was in highlighting that the service is hypothetically available nationwide which then removed rural/urban based barriers-to-access to some extent. Also, the author correctly mentioned that the focus on the January month data/queries posed as a limitation in the study in view of the fact that the month is considered a peak period for career information assistance. Especially, for those expectedly frantic post-school learners who didn't make preparations for a new academic year. One opinion related to yet another overlooked limitation of the study was the omission to mention the total yearly queries received by the service towards providing a contextualised overview of the accessibility of the service even without discussing its overall effectiveness.

However, the study's findings confirm the argued problems related to career education's deficiencies as well as the argued complexities that emanate from the poor career services in the country. The *third* study investigated the impact of 'gap-year' on career development after high school education as a growing phenomenon and part of decision-making processes of three purposely selected SA participants (M. Coetzee & Bester, 2009). The study was approached from constructivist-interpretivist perspective and acknowledged individuals' need for meaning in decision-making processes drawing from Mkhize and Frizelle's (2000) hermeneutic and dialogical underpinnings. Krumboltz's 1996 formulations based on Super's 1990 life-span framework were considered as theoretical structures. Lifelines, semi-structured interviews and collages were used for data collection and themes were derived from analysis. Findings reported negative experiences in career guidance at school as the first theme. All three participants had had some exposure to career exploration approaches (akin to Jacobs' 2011 study) before deciding on a gap-year as a means to first gain some work experience through travel and earning some money as key motivating factors. All three participants wished to further studies as a prerequisite to successful careers, coded as professional and financial security but had decided on a gap year with intention to resolve career indecision aspects. Conclusions were that the gap year did not directly enhance career decisions but benefited participants in gaining self-confidence towards making such decisions. Of significance about this study was the use of post-modernistic approaches which indicated that the third theoretical paradigm can be applied for research and practice in SA. However, the sample was notably drawn from privileged middle-class individuals falling within socio-economic stratum favourable to the notion of a gap year and the researchers could not interpret the findings as widely transferable.

The *fourth* study partly evaluated outcomes of career construction counselling on four purposely selected cross-generational-cultural-gender participants (ages 17 – white –female; 32 – black – male; 42 – white – male; and 65 – black – male) by analysing related thematic outcomes and the impact of specific career counselling interventions over time (J. Maree, 2015b). The longitudinal, explorative, descriptive and manifold case study was foregrounded on post-modernistic approaches encompassing career construction processes to facilitate adaptive behaviours.

The Career Construction Interview [CCI] (Savickas, 2011a) was used for data collection. Five themes were derived along with accompanying sub-themes supporting the role of career adaptability as a core construct in career construction theory and thus consistent with findings of various other studies using the CCI (J. Maree, 2015b). One noted contribution of the study was the potential narrowing of the gap between counselling theory and practice provided by career construction theory, particularly its narrative inquiry aspect which promoted critical (self) reflection. Importantly, biographical profiles of participants indicated potential for application on diverse populations and for life-long perspective to career counselling even though I could not ascertain the specific location of the study but it was clearly African.

The *fifth* study investigated benefits of the constructionist career counselling approach for 25 undergraduate students' career choice indecision in Nigeria, based on the Undergraduate Career Choice Survey [UCCS] (Savickas, 2011a) and employed a pre-post-test experimental design (Obi, 2015). Findings reported significant decrease in career choice indecision at post-test for the experimental group, also noted on retest results of the same group after an eight week interval. The noted decreases were attributed to possible enactment of learned career choice behaviours during intervention as well as on positive response to encouraged sharing of narratives with others. The others were perceived and inferred as supportive, thus indicative of probable effectiveness of constructionist approaches in career intervention processes. Further observed improvement among the sample in the construct measured after time lapse between test and retest was also noted for a probable and applicable developmental dimension of constructivism, not only among undergraduates but also among others even at workplaces (Obi, 2015). Still, the researcher cautioned against assumed transferability due to cultural bias inherent in the particular tool utilised for the study and called for more culture-fairness in other situations where the tool might be applied. The *sixth* study reported on the researcher's self-narrative as a black woman academic capturing SA historical complexities particularly related to English as a language of teaching and learning for English Second Language Speakers. English was regarded as posing a hurdle to maximal use of knowledge, literature and information due to required competencies in such a role within Higher Education Institutions [HEIs] (Botha, 2014).

The researcher refers interchangeably to story as a narrative that captured difficulties experienced by most blacks "with no exposure to linguistic capital dominating HEIs" (p. 1974) as a workplace in the study. Evident though was applicability of self-narratives for constructing meaningful lived-career experiences subsumed in third paradigmatic approaches (Hartung et al., 2013; Savickas, 2011a; 2013). Botha's (2014) conclusion that "I had to use concepts from other research works to enable me to express" (p. 1983) personal career experiences underscores the importance of hermeneutic approaches in career constructions (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006; Kamwendo et al., 2014; Mkhize, 2005; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000). Also, the captured lived-career experience embodied career management theoretical tenets as explained (Bridgstock, 2009; Haase's, 2007; Jordaan et al, 2014; Neault, 2000; Sullivan & Emerson, 2015; Tomlinson, 2007).

The *seventh* study reported on autoethnographies employing narrative and storying as appropriate methodological strategies "for studying either a single life or the lives of a small number of individuals because they simultaneously give a voice while enabling a reflexive process of identity construction" in a given context (Maodzwa-Taruvinga & Divala, 2014, p. 1963). The study summarised narratives of nine black women academics whose life-career development and management experiences also supported the present study's preferred methodology. Findings from the reviewed study indicated reflexivity as a lens through which historical, socio-economic and political complexities have shaped the participants' career stories with pertinent career identity outcomes that demonstrated application of autoethnography on career theory based studies towards knowledge development. The *eighth* study investigated the Academic Point Score [APS] as a predictor of academic and career success of 33 participants with lower than required scores but who managed to complete their studies in record time and went on to fill prestigious senior positions at workplaces as part of career management (Vincent & Idahosa, 2014). The study employed grounded theory methodology and interviews as data collection strategy. The study was pertinent in view of how admission policies can impose seemingly permeable barriers to career development and management processes particularly of previously disadvantaged individuals in SA, which career theory, practice and research should consider as part of focus in knowledge development scholarship.

Thus, the study's findings correspond with those by Andrews and Osman (2015) as well as by J. Maree (2015b). The *ninth* study investigated how socio-economic complexities variously impact on the education of black students and Ellery and Baxen (2015) applied Archer's theory explaining "mediation between structure and agency through internal agency" (p. 91). The authors examined a single case through reflexive understanding – shared as a narrative, capturing the case's agential journey to offset constraining complexities towards aspired for career development and management within SA's cultural context. The findings supported the present study's core view that taking ownership of one's career outcomes is central particularly towards indigenous knowledge development endeavours in the field. Thus, Ellery and Baxen's (2015) study was important firstly for examining a live case and the role of reflexively constructed agential behaviour in career processes for the individual. Secondly, for employing narrative approaches within a theoretical framework, and finally for seeming congruence with conceptualisations of the present study.

Given the multiplicity of career development and management dimensions that are variously investigated and this study's space limitations, I further briefly reported on the final and *tenth* study that investigated adolescents' perceived career complexities in an underprivileged environment drawing from the Social Cognitive Career Theory [SCCT] (Buthelezi, et al., 2009). Purposive sampling yielded 12 black participants, male and female Grade 9 and Grade 10 learners, between the ages of 13 and19 from a Soweto Township based high school. The authors employed qualitative conversational data collection and analysis to derive four themes centred on the school, the community, home circumstances and personal complexities – perceived as impacting on life and career development of the participants. The researchers' conclusion showed unhelpful career counselling outcomes from LO as a subject that is intended to equip learners with better career resources in comparison to curriculum provisions under apartheid in black schools (similar to cited findings in Jacobs, 2011). The researchers found lack of applicability of career theories and practices in that the learners "were not aware of traditional career counselling methods: that is psychometric assessments" (Buthelezi et al., 2014, p. 517).

Again, contextual factors were found to have a disadvantaging impact including lack of resources, lack of educational support, libraries and several others already cited in earlier sections of this study. The researchers conceded that interventions based on the tenets of the SCCT have potential for positive outcomes considering individuals' personal circumstances. These resonated with imperatives argued for improving SA career education that are succinctly expressed in Akhurst and Mkhize (2006), also fundamental for knowledge development in the career field. It is clear from forgoing discussions that SA career interest among scholars shows a move with times regarding paradigmatic approaches in the field. Notably, some scholars proposed newer guidelines for practice, such as Krumboltz (2009, pp. 141 – 14), K. Maree (2011, pp. 184 – 185), J. Maree (2015b, p. 3), Mkhize (2005, pp. 98 – 104), Patton & McMahon (2014, pp. 381 – 384), Savickas (2013, pp. 656 – 659), Watson & McMahon (2009, pp. 470 – 481). Thus, I generalised from the benefit of hindsight according to personal-professional work experience with teenagers and young adults, that what remained unclear emanated from the following observations:

o Constructivist approaches espouse hermeneutic awareness yet our youth tend to show apathy towards notions of self and selfhood within social and relational contexts required for self-development (Hsien & Huang, 2014; J. Maree, 2015a, 2015b; T. Mbeki, 2002a; Mokgele & Rothman, 2014; Mkhize, 2005, 2011; Mokoena, 2006; Watson et al, 2011).

o Technological advances tend to pose as a disadvantage due to the youth's preference for quick and easy access to information particularly for entertainment and connectivity as priorities (Bevan-Dye & Akpojivi, 2016). Increased social capital becomes what is important and is reported to be reaching "pathological patterns" (Dlodlo, 2015, p. 208) instead of also exploiting the accompanying advantage provided by vast exposure that may be gained from information explosion. Implied is that the youth have advanced tools for accessing career related information but remain oblivious to the power of information, literally in their hands.

o Storying and narrative compositions require deep personal insight and continuous introspective reflection which I believe are achieved through maturational processes.

The argued depths in maturity may not yet be accessible to young people at a critical time when they are supposed to engage with foundational career behaviour that would enable them to story their experiences, at least not in the teenage years and early adulthood phases.

o Required maturity to represent one's reality as honestly as possible depends on the inherent fragility dynamic in the client-counsellor relationship which may be hampered by questions such as: who am I storying for?

o Mandatory reality check on one's socioeconomic, educational and personal systems which need to be aligned in the eventuality of awakened career aspirations, i.e. how will they know if their story is congruent with their latent/developing/unknown aspirations, possibly buried within inherent intrapersonal systems?

o Individuals' preferences – whether they want to story or narrate their personal experiences given awkwardness that may be associated with heightened vulnerabilities.

o Youth and their being generally indifferent at times is a factor to be negotiated sensitively in that at times they may become comfortable in indifference – not being bothered with career indecision.

o In SA, educational experiences especially those of blacks have seemingly progressed from being inferior in the *Bantu education* kind of way to being inferior in a *stinky* kind of way. Such perceptions are likely to have entrenched a nothing-is-good-about-my-education attitude which is also deeply entrenched in the psych of young people. Establishing trust which is critical for attitudinal change is a process, a very long and difficult one at times.

o Consequent negative personal evaluation such as – am I good for anything? – could promote hesitancy which may stifle the best effort in counselling relationships.

o With 40+ learners in a typical classroom, who among educators, would have the resources required to listen or read through 1200+ school-wide storied output for effective counselling process implementation, that is, if it has to be done as efficiently as recommended? How will the delicate and cumbersome feedback process be managed? Where will the stories be safeguarded for privacy and confidentiality?

Township schools do not have lockers for children and most children don't have private bedrooms at home – if they have a home in the conventional sense.

o The recent drive by the Gauteng Education Department to give learners *tablets* is said to be producing comedy at schools. Apparently learners claim to have done school work on these gadgets and when *folders* are found empty, they accuse teachers of having unwittingly deleted them during evaluation, thus taking advantage of poorly trained teachers and the evident technological divide (A. Ikelelaz, personal communication, October 25, 2015). Therefore, electronically storied career projects might suffer the same fate.

o J. Maree (2015a) recommends compulsory community service for "all teachers and educational psychologists" (p. 398) and concludes that their safety needs to be ensured. What about the safety of those who live and work there daily? Also suggested is accompanying "appropriate emotional support" (Ibid) and financial incentives which are highly unlikely not even for permanently school-based counsellors, therefore: won't the storied narrative approach perpetuate access for the already privileged few who can afford private career counsellors?

Consequently, the purpose of theory is to formulate explanations as guidelines towards understanding representations of career behaviour. These guidelines become knowledge creation processes through research to inform the field's practice component. What remains not clearly stated is the purpose and intended overall outcome for clients in the field, impassioned in K. Maree 's (2011) inquisitions such as "how can we be sure that our core aims are aligned with the expectations of the population we serve" (p. 125). Again, J. Maree (2015b) argues that "education is about enabling learners to choose a career, construct themselves (realise their potential), design successful lives and make meaningful social contributions" (p. 408). However, I disagree with the part I underlined which I believe contradicts flexible lifelong learning career imperatives although I fully agree with the bracketed and latter part of the viewpoint. Regarding the field's relevance: Mashiyi (2015) hints on employability purposes; Z. Waghid (2014) cites social justice, economic development and equity as varied purposes and intended end results.

Undermining both aforementioned propositions is the "chronic mismatch between the output of Higher Education and the needs of a modernising economy" (J. Maree, 2009a, p. 430) which fuels the discourse of joblessness (Veldsman, 2014) particularly among SA youth, clearly resonant with the phenomenon of unemployable graduates (CHE, 2010; Fin Week Survey, 2009; Gama-Chawana, 2013a, 2014; Mashaba & Morris, 2015; Masondo, 2014a; T. Meyer, 2004; Varsity SA, 2012; Williams, et al., 1998). Given such concerns, I illustrated through the tenets of the STF the imperative for the field to explore flexible approaches with potential to address stated concerns. The illustration underscores Patton, McMahon & Watson's (2006) view that the STF "does not stand alone" (p. 71) as a framework, specifically in relation to flexibility permitted by recursiveness (McMahon & Watson, 2009).

2.7.3. The STF as an organising guideline

Conceptualisation of this study as the mainstay highlighted its multidisciplinary character which is in congruence with the field's multifaceted foregrounding (Peiperl & Gunz, 2007). Also, the given descriptions of core concepts evidently embodied social, political, economic, cultural and thus critical thinking components which explain the study's constructivist alignment with the STF, developed as a multidisciplinary framework (Patton & McMahon, 2015). Furthermore, the stated alignment and descriptions harmonise with Watson and McMahon's (2009) findings that SA scholars have been critical of the prevalent application of foreign frameworks in practice and thus support a need for culturally sensitized approaches that embody constructivism by encouraging reflective scholarship that is foregrounded on the stated dimensions. In addressing the Eurocentric leaning of career knowledge propositions, Patton and McMahon (2014) developed "a metatheoretical framework for the integration of career theories using systems theory" (p. xiii) as one approach among several others that are viewed as bridging frameworks. Among those proposed, the authors mention developmental-contextualism; learning theory; work adjustment theory, Developmental Systems Theory; and systems theory – all attributed to Savickas' 1995 work; social cognitive career theory and contextual action constructionism – attributed to Young and colleagues; concluding with foundational social constructionism as a metatheory in Savickas' 2005 and 2013a career construction theory (Patton & McMahon, 2014).

Therefore, Watson's (2013) earlier cited view that the STF contributes to perceptions of the framework as invaluable in the field supported the preference to align this study with the framework. To substantiate the mentioned value, Arthur and McMahon (2005) as well as Patton and McMahon (1999, 2006, 2014, 2015) rationalise the development of the STF as a reaction to traditional, yet limited viewpoints, proposing linearity and observability as convincing worldview elements, to explain development. Limited due to oversight on inherent complexities in human development as well as varying contextual influences accounting for individual differences, and thus in contradiction with the systems worldview that acknowledges interconnectedness among parts of a whole. A focus on the whole permits dynamic interaction and thus a qualitative dimension which can then be integrated to existing knowledge towards adaptable, purposive and reciprocal depictions of human behaviour.

Accordingly, the complex human system is itself symbolic of interconnected subsystems in a dynamic interaction with all other systems in the individual's process of continual change and adaptation in the environment. Furthermore, the process of developing STF is explained as approximating that of the General Systems Theory which is regarded as broader than the Open Systems Theory. The aim was to expand theoretical systems' thinking across disciplines in that its principles enhance understandable knowledge development patterns on people and on career behaviour for the STF. Therefore, the approach was applied by several scholars who advanced its application in various disciplines that comprised the intellectual foundation from which the STF was developed and first published in 1995 (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006, 2014) and in 2015 marked its 20th year of contributions in the career field (Patton & McMahon, 2015). Summarily, Patton and McMahon (1999, 2006, 2014) assert that the STF is primarily an application of systems theory to career theory and integrates individuals' various systems of influence inherent in career-decision making, resulting in significant innovation and hence a key constructivist framework (Watson, 2013; Watson & McMahon, 2009; Young & Popadiuk, 2012).

Further demonstrated are its application in several career theories such as in relational, dialogical self, career construction and contextual action theories as examples, including application in the complexity frameworks as a recent illustration (McIlveen, McGregor-Bayne, Alcock & Hjertum, 2003; McIlveen & Patton, 2007; Patton, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 2014; Patton & McIlveen, 2009; Patton et al., 2006). Notably, the authors mention the formulation of chaos theory of careers (Pryor & Bright, 2003, 2004) as foregrounded on systems and complexity theories (Bloch, 2004) to which they specifically credit deeper understanding of systems thinking's key concepts. Also highlighted are two fundamental issues in systems theory that emphasise the approach's complexity as characteristic of fairly new phenomena resulting in a limited number of underpinning components. These components include: *wholes and parts, patterns and rules, acausality, recursiveness, discontinuous change, open and closed systems, abduction, and story* (see Patton & McMahon, 2014, pp. 226 – 234 for detailed descriptions).

Also, the two fundamental issues mentioned cover *assumptions about knowing* which questions the possibility of an ever knowable reality given inherent human limitations with no absolutes in the tangential process of knowledge creation. Related epistemologies are indicative of reality as interpretable by the observer in interaction with the observed, thus corresponding with postmodernist constructivist multiple perspectives whereby consensus on what is observed is regarded as representative of the observed phenomenon, which simultaneously causes validity concerns for systems theory. Another concern relates to language limitations in that language varies on many dimensions and it is not static. Language as the intermediary in perceptions of reality poses validity concerns which undermine aspirations for consensus on observed phenomena required for alignment with stated postmodernist constructivist perspectives. Thus, thinking, knowledge creation and understanding in systems theory requires heightened awareness of this limitation (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006, 2014). Consistent with the given background of systems thinking and the rationale for application on career theory, the STF was developed a) in acknowledgement of dynamism characterising growth in the career field in attempts to respond sufficiently to its similarly dynamic environment;

b) in effort to hasten maturation of the field beyond disciplinary boundaries and thus a need to also draw from multidisciplinary perspectives evident across existing and newer theories; c) to enlarge the knowledge base of career practitioners in light of economic, sociological and political discourse impacting on decision-making processes of career services consumers; d) in acknowledgement of the divide within discourse and knowledge development resulting in continuing competing theories even among newer formulations without a clear indication on how the divide can be narrowed. This divide is further compounded by divergent philosophical underpinnings of career theories (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006, 2014). Therefore, the stated rationales for STF are lauded for providing coherence within contextualism and thus provide a basis for a framework that has embeddedness of commonalities that enable relationships for theory development as an overarching metatheoretical framework (Blustein, 2015; Patton & McMahon, 2014; Patton & McMahon, 2015; Patton et al., 2006).

The cited authors explain the STF as consisting of all the parts forming the whole of career theoretical development, particularly considering the centrality of the individual in meaning constructing processes by employing concepts that are already established in existing theories, as may be applicable. Briefly: the *individual's intrapersonal system* consists of theoretical constructs regarded as having an influence on career behaviours such as ability, personality, values and gender; *individual's social system* encompassing one's family background and educational experiences as examples; *individual's environmental or societal system* covering socio-economic and geographic location as examples. These three dimensions of the STF are regarded as *content influences* and are researched extensively in existing career theories. *Process influences* of the STF include *recursiveness*, a concept that explains the interplay within and between the systems of influence due to the complex and integrative nature of career behaviour; *change over time* – explaining the developmental aspect of career in that it spans over individuals' lifetimes; as well as the element of *chance* in that some of the major determinants of individuals' career trajectories are influenced by unpredictable events. Patton and McMahon (1999, 2006, 2014) provide detailed accounts of the framework and I condensed the key elements in Table 2.1 for purposes of this study.

Thus, the broken lines in-between the elements represent their ongoing interactive nature within and across the systems of influence - as also contextual.

Table 2.1 Individual and contextual influences in Systems Theory Framework, *Adapted from:* W. Patton & M. McMahon (2014). *Career Development and Systems Theory: Connecting theory and practice*. AW Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense.

CONTENT INFLUENCES			PROCESS INFLUENCES
Intrapersonal System	*Social System*	*Environmental Societal System*	
- Ability - Aptitudes - Interests - Gender - Age - Skills - Ethnicity - Sexual orientation - Beliefs - Health - Disability - Values - World of work knowledge - Personality - Self-concept - Physical attributes	- Family - Peers - Community groups - Education institutions - Media - Workplace	- Political decisions - Historical trends - Employment market - Geographic location - Socio-economic status - Globalisation	- Recursiveness - Change over time - Chance

Taken together, the STF captures a whole consisting of the parts as per theoretical formulations. Also, all the elements within the framework consist of theoretically established conceptual formulations across and within content and process theories.

Such broad categorisation in the field of careers is fundamental in theoretical arguments in this and subsequent chapters of this thesis. Considering the presented rationales, value and justification for STF as well as the authors' emphasis that the framework is not a theory of career development per se, I regarded the tenets of the framework relevant in this study due to the following reasons: *Firstly*, the STF's base identifying the individual, the individual's system, the social system, the environmental-societal system, recursiveness, change over time, chance, culture and context (Patton & McMahon, 2014; Patton et al., 2006) are comprehensive and flexible. They provided structure for an all-inclusive investigation of the subject of inquiry in this study, i.e. the self between and within all systems that impacted on lived-career management experiences across contextual levels. The linkages created among content, process, social, environmental-societal and chance influences, enabled by recursive representations of the phenomenon, permitted a comprehensive overview of *any* career behaviour within the study's focus areas.

Secondly, the core view of the individual in context enhanced conceptualisation of this study from an individual's point of view that made it possible to place it within career theory as also representative of my field of personal-professional interest. *Lastly*, the argued foundational premises of the framework as "Western" (Patton & McMahon, 2014, p. 260) did not pose a limitation in investigating career processes in non-western contexts, evidenced in this study's autoethnographic data analysis and presentation of findings covered in Chapter 4 as well as interpretation, sense-making and discussion of findings in Chapter 5. Supporting this position, Patton et al. (2006) cite several scholars and instances of STF application in multicultural settings, also in the form of the My System of Career Influences [MSCI] whereby qualitative representations of career experiences may be storied and thus encourage individuals' self-authoring in counselling relationships. Thus, the MSCI is consistent with storied approaches in the field as argued by Hartung (2013); K. Maree (2011); J. Maree (2015b), McIlveen et al. (2003), McMahon et al. (2004), Watson and McMahon (2009), McMahon et al. (2005), McMahon et al. (2015) and Savickas (n.d., 2011a, 2013).

Notably, Patton et al. (2006) as well as McMahon and Watson (2009) present South African case studies demonstrating application of the MSCI as a qualitative tool derived from the STF propositions that has since been "translated into a number of languages" (Patton & McMahon, 2015, p. 145) probably for increased application in varying contexts. In addition and to conclude this chapter, this SA study's overarching representation of the STF from an autoethnographic perspective eliminated expert-client power dynamics due to the researcher as the researched subject of the investigated phenomenon, and thus furthering application of the framework. Moreover, underpinning postulations had enabling significance in this study's undertaking as already mentioned and, as also demonstrated in subsequent chapters in this thesis.

2.8. Concluding chapter summary

This chapter began with a guideline on what was required in literature review whereby contextual and field specific conceptualisations demarcated the area of focus as in this study, which included overarching philosophical perspectives on which the study was based. Given the location of the study as well as inherent peculiarities characteristic of SA as a developing country, I illustrated how the chapter progressed from a common point of view through definitions and descriptions of core concepts to create coherence on how the study was framed. These included formulations on the concepts of career, constructs of career development and career management whereby different conceptualisations necessitated proffering my propositions to form part of knowledge enrichment processes in the field. Notably: a first step towards narrowing the perceived gap in the field, particularly in relation to career management as the primary phenomenon of interest. Furthermore, as the study was autoethnographic covering personal lived-career management experiences against the backdrop of SA's historical and persistent complexities, I argued on the idiosyncratic and multi-layered character of underpinning five constraining complexities. A detailed explanation of the method, process and product embedded in the preferred approach illuminated the underpinning postmodernist paradigm within which the study settled philosophically. Storying and narration as autoethnographic techniques aligned with the third paradigmatic approach characterising current scholarship in the career field.

Thus, a progressive move away from measuring individual characteristics and matching them to occupations in the world of work which are criticised as based on Western approaches that overlook SA dynamics in particular, given our history and turbulence in education and socioeconomic spheres of careers. These approaches encouraged the view that dominant career theories do not adequately explain SA career experiences. Further evident in the chapter was substantiation of the view that SA youth find themselves inadequately served by our education system which perpetuates disadvantage into joblessness and unemployment, which thus necessitated a brief scrutiny of LO as a subject intended to ameliorate the inadequacy within career education. The emerged picture supported the held view which was also embedded in the objectives of this study: to establish just how much has changed educationally for SA youth in comparison to the impoverished schooling that I was exposed to. However, I also provided a balanced overview by pointing out strategies employed in attempts to ameliorate the identified shortcomings. It emerged though that none of the improvement strategies addressed LO's shortcomings which then still perpetuates poor regard of the subject by learners. The consequences are expectedly adverse for them and the country when they exit school and post-school systems. I then argued on the onus to ensure that education system output serves the needs of career success as well as economic success for individuals and the country as resting with education providers within desired socio-economic systems in the country.

With regards to dominating theoretical formulations in the field, it seemed better to present a categorised overview of knowledge partly due to that none of the theories could be singled out for examination in alignment with personal lived-career management experiences. The categorisation took the form of content, process and newer theories that do not necessarily explain experiences of formerly marginalised individuals in SA. The categorisation also illuminated the divide between theory and practice with no clear distinction in scholarship leading to a view that each component needs to develop its own theories as connected by research. It was evident though that the two components are inseparable although events in the sphere of career practice tend to develop faster than theoretical formulations.

Another dominating discourse in career scholarship was the imperative for the field to evolve towards a unifying theory, with the convergence agenda a point of concern yet with minimal agreement on how the goal may be achieved. Such disagreement contributed in part to the formulation of the STF as an overarching framework given its foundational base established on theoretical concepts, particularly in that prominent scholars also regard the framework as sufficiently flexible. Importantly, the STF's flexibility served to accommodate complexities in the field of careers, also covering SA as the location of this study. The STF provided an organising qualitative approach in the field which is also consistent with postmodernist scholarship that balances the dominant prevalence of quantitatively based career approaches. I then profiled a few studies as exemplars on how current research feeds into practice especially in SA. The outcome was that sampled studies showed sensitivity to the need for qualitatively based investigation and application of current thinking which resonated with underpinning conceptualisation of this study. Perhaps the major contribution of this study could be the application of current theoretical thinking on personal lived-career management experiences in that autoethnography advantages the researcher to research self within a socio-cultural context. Another noteworthy aspect was that although career development as a construct is well-researched and documented in the field, the study's conceptualisation resonated with career management as a process drawing from skills and competencies forming part of self-management. Consequently, the chapter concluded with an overview of the STF as a framework for theoretical alignment in Chapter 3, as well as data analysis and presentation of findings in Chapter 4. In the next Chapter 3 I present methodological imperatives and argue for their alignment towards fulfilling the objectives of this study.

 CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: *BREAK POINTS*

3. Introduction

The preceding chapter provided a detailed conceptual background on the originated topic, posed and thus guiding research questions, core concepts and literature reviewed as the demarcated context for this study. This chapter provides a guideline that served as a plan of action that was followed to investigate the stated research questions because "it is important that the research question at hand should determine the research methods to be used and not vice versa" (Stead & Watson, 2006, p. 185). Stated differently, preference of a method benefits the kind of questions posed which also rely on their context (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b; Pieper, 1995), as was the case in the present study. Therefore, this chapter's parameters covered all facets of the research process which are explained in the next section.

3.1. The research design

A general consensus exists pointing to that the research design in a study entails exposition of the plan that was followed in its investigation (Bless & Higson, 2004; Creswell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b; Kerlinger & Lee, 2000; J. Mouton, 2001; Schurink, 2005). Therefore, this study's plan encompassed the research approach, theoretical and philosophical paradigms, research strategy, sampled participants and employed strategies to recruit them as part of data gathering, data analysis methods and how the findings are presented as well as indication of criteria by which adequacy of the study was evaluated. I explained each of these facets in the next paragraphs.

3.1.1. The research approach

The autoethnographic approach adopted for this study entailed researching the researcher's lived-career management experiences and thus located it within broad qualitative research methodologies.

Such methodologies tend to flow into various other forms of qualitative research designs such as case studies, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory and narrative inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b; Nieuwenhuis, 2010a; Speedy, 2008). Denzin and Lincoln's (2008b) views resonate with Nieuwenhuis' (2010a) description that qualitative research is "an umbrella term for a range of qualitative research strands that have developed over the years" (pp. 47 – 50). It is suitable for studies that are based on profoundly descriptive information on a given subject of interest or context for deeper understanding of what is being studied. This study, like a submarine (Nieuwoudt, 2007), was submerged within deep descriptions of lived-career management experiences of the researcher within the SA context in a way that privileged equally deep and meaningful explorations of the subject of interest. Due to the multi-voiced aspect of studies embedded in cultural phenomena, the sought descriptions were further enriched by the voices of the others (Mkhize, 2005, 2011, 2013a, 2013b; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000) particularly in quest for indigenous explication (Fitzgerald & Betz, 1994; Stead & Watson, 2006) of the present study's phenomenon of inquiry.

Furthermore, for qualitative methodologies to be explicitly explained, Denzin and Lincoln (2008b) provide a historical perspective of the paradigm in contextual moments they refer to as traditional, modernist, blurred genres, crisis of representation, postmodernist (*allowing for interrelated interpretive traditions),* postexperimental inquiry *(experimenting with novel forms of expressing lived experiences including autobiographical and co-constructed representations*), a methodologically contested present (*a period of great conflict and tension*), and the fractured future *(where researchers are confronting methodological backlash*) moments. The authors maintain that it is difficult to place a study within any of the historical moments because in qualitative research, epistemological theorising tends to acquire resonance across these eight moments, utilising what they refer to as "the bridge" (p. 35) as a metaphor capturing fluidity across underpinning philosophical assumptions in studies. As such, autoethnographies have been explained in relation to the postmodernist moment in that interrelated interpretive approaches are used (Chang, 2008; Ellis, 2004; Hayano, 1979; Muncey, 2005; L. Richardson, 1994).

Again, this study located within post experimental inquiry moment (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b) in that it expressed autobiographical, multi-voiced and reflexively co-constructed representations (Chang, 2008; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000; Wall, 2006) of lived-career management experiences. Thus, autoethnography as "my method of inquiry" (Belbase et al., 2008, p. 3) was theoretically supported along with enriching arguments that noted inextricability of others' voices, further argued in the underpinning philosophical stance as explained in the next section.

3.1.2. Theoretical and philosophical paradigms

The process of conducting research requires the researcher to state theoretical and philosophical foundations from which one's study flows. Often, studies flow from broad foundations such as qualitative and quantitative paradigms. Theoretical foundations explain perspectives consisting of frameworks within which a given study finds resonance, as a field of interest or of the investigated phenomenon. Philosophical foundations explain the researcher's held assumptions about the nature of existence and how it can be studied also in relation to the phenomenon of interest (Bakhtin, 1990; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b; Guba & Lincoln, 2008; Muncey, 2005; Pieper, 1995; Research Philosophy and Assumptions – SOBT [RPA-SOBT], n.d.; Stead & Watson, 2006). Therefore, this study was located within the broad qualitative paradigm, specifically as an autoethnographic design that also employed others' voices through narrative inquiry. Furthermore, theoretical assumptions aligned this study with career theories and argued for the System's Theory Framework [STF] as the guiding framework with which the phenomenon of investigation could be studied.

Important to note are the earlier discussed "fundamental issues in systems" (Patton & McMahon, 2014, pp. 224 - 226) which undermine absolute determinism of epistemologies in that knowledge creation processes are interminable. Also, perceptions of reality are moderated by language which further limits aspired for consensus on the observed phenomenon required for deterministic theoretical alignment. The implication is that theoretical assumptions for systems thinking based frameworks such as the STF require cautionary approaches in stating them as absolute, which then explains the framework's alignment with postmodernist constructivist perspectives.

However, given the flexibility clearly embedded in the STF formulation, it was also applied to guide data analysis in congruence with the stated underpinning theoretical assumptions. At this point then and to account for philosophical assumptions subsuming ontological, epistemological, methodological and axiological foundations, I began by highlighting Stead and Watson's (2006) assertion that indigenous approaches to knowledge uphold that "no philosophical orientation is seen as being superior to another" (p. 185) as well as Denzin and Lincoln's (2008b) emphasis on how the paradigm of qualitative research has been continuously changing, exemplified by the aforementioned historical moments. Therefore, stating philosophical paradigms of a given study fundamentally implies the imperative to also establish congruence with foundational theoretical assumptions of how career theories argue for philosophical assumptions especially those which this study aligned with. Accordingly, several important aspects emerged which I briefly argued as follows:

o The notion of a career as a multidisciplinary core construct was discussed from multiple perspectives that logically implied a multiplicity of underpinning philosophical assumptions. Therefore, the proposed conceptualisation of the construct aligned with constructivist approaches within which collectivistic sociocultural orientations are embedded (Fitzgerald & Betz, 1994; Mignot, 2004; Mkhize, 2005, 2011, 2013a, 2013b; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000; Muncey, 2004; Patton & McMahon, 1999; Savickas, 1997; Stead & Bakker, 2012; Stead & Watson, 2006; Watson, 2013).

o Similar to the concept of career, the construct of career management as the present study's phenomenon of inquiry also condensed a multi-perspective conceptualisation which concluded with the construct as a skill and a competence that is better explained as self-management within varying cultural contexts (Bridgstock, 2009; Haase, 2007; Jordaan, et a., 2014; Sullivan & Emerson, n.d.; Tomlinson, 2007; Z. Waghid, 2014).

o The career field itself is multidisciplinary and has varied conceptualisations which logically, also embody diverse philosophical assumptions (Peiperl & Gunz, 2007; M. Richardson, 1993; Stead & Watson 2006; Watson & McMahon, 2009).

Considering that the foregoing argued aspects largely influenced this study's underpinning assumptions, it is clear that they are consistent with Hartung's (2013) descriptions of career narratives: explained as foregrounded in constructivism, personal theory, biographical hermeneutic and social constructionism as discussed in the study's conceptualisation. Furthermore, Schultheiss and Wallace's (2012) insistence that world views that are based on subjectivity, multiple truths, interpretivism and context in career theories, can be grouped under social constructionism (constructivism for purposes of this study) in that it fosters new ways of interpreting the world. Thus, Ellis (2004) explains such a proliferation as due to a "renewed emphasis on cultural border crossing" (p. 200) in postmodernism which subsumes the earlier mentioned bridge metaphor in qualitative studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b). Furthermore, the STF as the corresponding theoretical framework for this study was explained as aligned with constructivist perspectives due to its multidisciplinary foundations which Savickas (2005, 2013) aligned with his social career constructionist theory that he attributed to Young and colleagues. Considering all above stated arguments to inform this study's philosophical assumptions, I believed thus:

o *Ontological assumptions* pertain to the nature of reality that is assumed by the researcher in relation to the phenomenon of inquiry as embedded in the concept of career and the construct of career management in this study. Therefore, ontologically, I assumed and believed that the construct embodied multiple realities which could be variously interpreted in relation to my lived-career management experiences that are subjectively constructed and understood. These assumptions underpinned processes that unfolded over my lifespan and influenced my view of the construct.

o *Epistemological assumptions* pertain to what can be known which the researcher assumes and believes is knowable about the phenomenon of inquiry. Thus, I assumed and believed that what I lived and experienced as a career could be constructed from memory, photographs, artefacts as much as it could be co-constructed with the voices of others whereby all sources were then interpreted to explain my lived-career management experiences. Again, the assumption aligned with the generic constructivist approaches through which the phenomenon was known.

o Furthermore, I assumed and believed that this truth was knowable as explained in methodological assumptions that I stated below thus:

o *Methodological assumptions* embody beliefs about what methods and procedures allow for the phenomenon to be knowable within a given paradigm. Again, the qualitative paradigm as the broad umbrella category within which autoethnography and narrative inquiry harmonises, enhanced the belief that the stated methods could enable investigation of lived-career management experiences and also enable corroborative voices through narrative inquiry as explained; and

o *Axiological assumptions* regarded what I believed was important and valuable in this study, mainly that the process of constructing my lived-career management experiences within a sociocultural context was vitally important and of value particularly in the field of careers. The effort was focused on knowledge enrichment that would primarily advance indigenous formulations from the constructivist paradigmatic perspectives in alignment with the present era of the field's development/scholarship as explained thus far in the study.

Consequently, the explicated philosophical underpinnings were congruent with the preferred research design for this study and predicated the research strategy as explained in the next section.

3.1.3. The research strategy and process

Pondering on strategies to employ as investigative enablers of posed research questions signals the researcher's progression from the paradigmatic phase to the empirical world in the process of extracting what one believes may be known under the chosen topic of the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2010b). Given L. Richardson's (1994) assertion that in postmodernism "we do not triangulate; we crystallize" (p. 522), the phenomenon was investigated by using multiple strategies to break from traditional yet limiting research boundaries. Stead and Watson (2006) propose six strategies they regard as offering "future directions for career psychology in South Africa" (p. 183). These capture processes entailing descriptions of what may be known, also analysing and interpreting what becomes known. Therefore, I explained the preferred process as it happened for this study in the next section.

3.1.3.1. Phase 1 data collection: Autoethnographic research process

Autoethnography entails a research process of self-authoring (Muncey, 2010) utilising the techniques of storying (Hartung, 2013) and/or narrative inquiry (Speedy, 2008). It is a process that is located within the postmodernist moment (Denzin & Lincoln 2008b) that has capitulated the self as among others whose experiences could be the subject of investigation (Belbase et al., 2008; Ellis et al., 2011; McIlveen, 2008; Ngunjiri et al., 2010; Spry, 2001). Thus, personal stories are entangled, constituent yet meaningful ways that are representational of phenomena and have enabled people to think and feel differently towards making sense of themselves and others (Ellis et al., 2011). Further enabled by the metaphoric bridge (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b) and realising that we are in a moment of discovery, interpreting and establishing ways of understanding, Peavy (1996) concludes that people have discovered the confidence for self-expression and to refer to personal foundations of their understanding. Criticism of the approach such as that it involves self-navel-gazing by the researcher encouraged the use of others' voices (Chang, 2008; Hayano, 1975; Wall, 2006) in alignment with the collectivistic value orientation within the sociocultural location of the study (J. Maree & du Toit, 2011; Spry, 2001; Watson et al., 2011; Wolcott, 2004). It is an alignment that is consistent with the view that "methods typically characterise particular roles for the researcher and participants, implying certain distinctions in identity" (Porter, 2000, p. 239). Thus, it was from stated arguments that autoethnography as a method was extended into the others' world and necessitated a distinction in phases towards coherent representation of all processes. Accordingly and for *Phase 1* data collection, Bochner's (2000) assertion that "we narrate to make sense of experience over the course of time" whereby "narrative is our means of fashioning experience in language" (p. 270) echoed the essence of my storying effort as presented in the following section.

Phase 1 Data collection

Thoughts about the impending data collection processes were a constant mental preoccupation especially in view of the study's autoethnographic design. These thoughts 'hung' around me unceasingly in a manner that exemplified Bauger and Bongaardt's (2017) descriptions of the structural development theory.

Accordingly, the mental preoccupation with historical events in my life consisted of a complex web of thought-threads that I cognitively tried to pull together into some coherent interpretation even for me. The demand to create meaning for myself was compounded by the equal demand to create meaningful representations for others as well in the light of Winters' (2016) descriptions of self-authoring processes. As such, I imagined how I would fulfil this phase's requirements particularly as I awaited the study's proposal presentation outcomes. Fortunately, the proposal was accepted by the *School of Higher Degrees Committee* and was further cleared by the *Humanities and Social Science Sciences Research Ethics Committee* which then permitted commencement of data collection processes. Thus, my life-career history became the *first* explored resource from which lived-career management experiences were reconstructed within pre-existing historical, sociocultural meanings, discernible as having significantly produced the trajectory of my present existence, personally and professionally, thus consisting of epiphanies (Ellis et al., 2011) and aligned with constructivist perspectives.

These were narrated (McIlveen & Patton, 2007; Speedy, 2008; Watson & Stead, 2006b; White, M., & Epston, 1990) and yielded storied descriptions of the phenomenon in *Appendix D* accounting for *Phase 1* of data collection without any claim for universal truthfulness (Facione & Facione, 2007) largely because "knowledge is to some extent perceiver dependent" (Pieper, 1995, p. 211). Because "narrative is the inspiration to find language that is adequate to the obscurity and darkness of experience" (Bochner, 2000, p. 270), I found a quiet place in my house, resumed the role of the "researcher" (M. Richardson, 1994, p. 517) on the self as the instrument, and revisited significant epiphanies that punctuated milestones in the story of my life from the earliest memory. I scribbled down on paper all surfacing memories in no particular order. I kept this scribbler with me through all I was doing in following days to be able to note down as much as possible that which was resurfacing from memory because writing is a dynamic process of creativity. Seemingly, these processes aligned with Ryba et al.'s (2015) reported approach in case studies, acknowledging the inclusion of the complex but still idiosyncratic features enmeshed in multiple storylines that are developed simultaneously towards forming meaningful links within the story.

These memories were subsequently grouped together and a pattern emerged from which subheadings were formulated along the lines of the following structure[3]:

My origins that captured events surrounding my birth from earliest memory and as shared during family gatherings including a private conversation I had with my elder sister on the circumstances of my birth after reading *In the meantime*, a book by Iyanla Vanzant (1997) that touched on the same subject. My sister was 9 years old when I was born and the conversation was after the passing of both our parents. The subheading also summarised political events in South Africa which preceded and entrenched legislation on apartheid just as I was born.

My heritage that captured my family life reflective of our socioeconomic status punctuated by extreme levels of lack but made liveable due to the warm and loving home I believe I was very lucky to be born into.

My formative years that captured the time when I started with formal education at neighbouring schools situated at a walking distance from home right through the June 16 1976 Uprisings, a period of awakening of my black consciousness. I ditched the English names I was christened with and embraced my black identity in the name Thabile. Overall, this stage was marked largely by my awareness on the cruelty of apartheid and Bantu Education as well as a realisation of just how impoverished I was although I seemed to be coping very well with the educational demands of school. There was a notable absence of any career related education as much as there was a pre-set school curriculum that I passively followed for its own sake rather than for any career or life goal. Still, I appreciated having escaped all the cruelty of the times. I was truly lucky that I survived.

The lucky girl – that captured experiences wherein I realised just how lucky I was to have escaped the crippling clutches of the apartheid system: being exposed to the world of work on weekends as a domestic helper at the age of 13 years; working as a casual shop assistant from the age of 19 years (after completing matric till I completed my first university degree) helped to lay the vital foundations of resilience. I even survived the psychosocial results especially related to political violence in the country which punctuated nearly every stage of my career development. My elder sister provided a life-saving intervention on which I was lucky to have the tenacity to build a career. Without her sacrifices, I am certain far beyond a shadow of doubt that I wouldn't be writing this particular sentence or be anywhere near the stage of my life-career management process. My initial glimpse of hope into a possible career in law was thwarted by political, socioeconomic and cultural forces that saw me studying for librarianship.

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[3]The given subheadings finally provided the structure of the life-career story that resulted in Appendix D (Part 2, pp. 343 – 432) of this thesis.

It was a field of study I heard about for the very first time when it was suggested to me by my elder sister, a moment after I was accepted and geared up for a law degree at the University of Zululand.

The drifter captured my realisations on how I seemed to have just drifted in the career development and management processes, without any guidance, counselling or mentoring even at tertiary level. I seemed to have just followed my heart with the passion to help others as the core driver that fuelled the many careers I embarked on only to move to the next one after every conquest. Eventually, I drifted through careers as a librarian, career counsellor, an educator, an academic and finally an industrial psychologist.

The reader capturing how my love for reading was accidentally initiated by my elder brother's writings which I bumped onto and found a very creative and engaging story I followed with each new development of the storyline when I was about age 10. It shaped my career life and it became my reservoir of knowledge and wisdom that have guided me. It also provided the straw I needed to clutch on when things went horribly wrong through all the career stages.

The newspapers and magazines my mother brought from her domestic work in the Johannesburg suburbs were thoroughly read by me and siblings before they started fires in the coal-stove: their real purpose and value! It is still my favourite pastime and is possibly the reason I was able to read through the mountains of mandatory reading for PhD studies.

The academic wherein the hand of God is undeniably visible in that adverse workplace circumstances (not the work itself) pushed me to the brink but I got miraculously rescued by omnipotent powers resulting in an ongoing academic career which I love. Through which I continue hoping there will be a life-long scope for sharing the knowledge I am presently crafting.

The industrial psychologist wherein I believe I finally arrived at my career home, after more than four decades of my life on earth. Primarily to help individuals realise their potential and achieve career success towards national economic success.

The hand of God that prevailed as an evident spiritual anchor and guided me through dire circumstances that had potential to derail my career development processes, and has remained as a steadying force through all career management challenges, as well as the…

The core of it all wherein I highlighted strategies and chance instances that led to unplanned breakthroughs which significantly moulded my career trajectory. This part constellated to highlight the role of sacrifices and selflessness of my elder sister who epitomised the value of *ubuntu* by putting my life-career needs ahead of her own. Without her interventions every step of the way, there would not have been a career story, let alone a study of this nature as an eternal feather of appreciation that salutes her beyond the limiting bounds of our physical existence.

The end wherein the life story ends but still resonated with others' lived-career experiences that point to the commonality of the impact of manifest complexities within an almost indelible sociocultural environment that sustained career management processes against the evils of apartheid.

According to Bochner (2000), the author's "emotional credibility, vulnerability and honesty" (p. 270) are inherent elements of stories that connect the past and the present. Hence, I noted in agreement that the process of writing my story was not linear in that it progressed over months. L. Richardson (1994) describes it as a process of feeling the truth as the "moral, intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, intuitive, embodied, playful pull" (p. 524) that enables a response to the writing process. A lot of what could be considered as trivial was actually the essence of what helped me negotiate the curves of time forming part of memory work. In addition, the use of photographs and artefacts that captured some of the epiphanies assisted in the crystallisation, thus connecting me to the experiences as much as possible. In reality, it is an understatement that the process was very painful in that most of my closest family members were already not in the world of the living. However, that I had a personal private space I could work at to reconstruct my life story was a great blessing in that I could freely allow the stinging river of tears to flow as frequently as they burned my eyes and cheeks. Nevertheless, being aware of Bakhtin's (1990) logic that once the hero is released, it begins to assume a life of its own which indeed, caused some personal anxieties.

Given that B. Brown (2010, 2012) advocates for vulnerabilities to be reframed as strength, made the storying process a worthy personal journey towards potential strength and much needed personal growth. Overall, I depended on reasoned judgement to determine relevance of epiphanies, because stories eventually assume unique artful meaningfulness (Bakhtin, 1990; Pieper, 1995) over which I have no control. Considering the cultural embeddedness of this study and due to that the life-career story was itself a multifaceted sociocultural product consisting of multiple voices (Mkhize, 2005, 2011, 2013a, 2013b; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000) that resonated with narrative inquiry (Speedy, 2008), I engaged with others as part of the *second* research strategy through reflexively guided conversations that became *Phase 2* data collection methods.

At this point it was imperative to first explain who the others are (sample) and how they were selected (sampling strategies) and then explain methods of data collection used.

3.1.3.2. Phase 2 data collection: Reflexively guided conversations

Prior to data gathering, I understood Berg's (2009) and Nieuwenhuis' (2010b) explanation that sampling as a technique is used to select representative portions from the population embodying the phenomenon of inquiry. Due to the dense nature of sought data in qualitative studies, several non-probability and purposive/convenient/judgmental sampling strategies can be employed mainly because participants are selected on the assumption that they know best about the study's subject and are purposefully chosen to participate according to core defining criteria. These types include stratified purposive sampling, snowball sampling, quota sampling as well as criterion sampling (K. Maree & Pietersen, 2010). Therefore, the criterion sampling technique was used to select four types of representative participants, totalling 12 consenting participants. Below is the criteria I used to select them, and they were grouped as follows:

o **Three family members**: (*serving as witnesses to my story*) having formed a continuous and consistent presence in my life-career experiences due to that they have witnessed my career management processes at various phases of my life, and were able to share their observations while also shedding light on the phenomenon of inquiry according to their respective understandings.

o **Three recent graduates** (*serving as agents embodying any change in SA's complexities that impact on career management processes from the apartheid era (during my times) to the post-apartheid era*) in that they represented the transitional generation which is much younger than myself. Their experiences in view of prevalent complexities (regarded as persistent) were necessary to establish credence to the minimal change claim embodied in rationalisations of this study.

o **(My) three peers** (*serving as corroborative participants*) whose personal stories had resonance within my story, while mine also found similar resonance within theirs; and

- o **Three self-proclaimed inxiles** (*serving as corroborators of SA's complexities parallel with my lived-career management experiences as a fellow inxile).* They are my generational contemporaries, having developed and managed their careers under similar political circumstances and provided generationally corroborative perspectives.

Proximal relations with participants enabled probable inferences about their socioeconomic backgrounds and none could be described as affluent in any sense, especially with a view from the past. Also, only two of the recent graduates (*Participant 2* and *Participant 3*) and one family member (*Participant 10*) have parents with professional qualifications as a possible antecedent to their manifest career trajectories. All others have had first-hand experiences of extreme poverty levels and all could relate perfectly to the poverty trap particularly among black people. Given the study's conceptualisation as the basis for the kind of questions asked for data collection, it seemed reasonable to conclude that other biographical data such as gender, marital status or educational level were of no consequence on the subject of inquiry. Again, their individual career trajectories were deliberately referred to in retrospect to ensure similar understanding of the questions asked. It was by default that all participants had completed Grade 12 level of education.

The recruitment strategy of Phase 2 participants

I have longstanding personal, collegiate and familial relations with all participants except for self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 11* who I had known about over the years through the media. They were all thus aware of my present engagement with the study and they form part of support structures in my life and career. This enabled me to recruit and access all participants first by textual instant messaging means. When initial consent to participate was indicated, I followed up each one with personalised and detailed emails. I attached on emails the detailed letter of consent (*Appendix B*) for increased familiarisation with the study content and binding ethical guidelines. The self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 11* was traced from his online presence and this was finally redirected to his current contact details which, in response, indicated willingness.

I thus followed it up with a formal emailed request, attaching *Appendix B* to clarify all pertinent aspects of the study towards informed consent, to which the outcome was positive. Table 3.1 reflects a summary of the participants' profiles as follows:

Table 3.1 Summary of participants' profiles

Participant No.	*Age Range*	*Type of participant*	*Selection Criteria*	*Purpose of voice*
Recent graduate Participant 1	Late 20s	Recent graduate	Embodying any change in SA's complexities	Share perceived persistent complexities
Recent graduate Participant 2	Early 20s	Recent graduate	Embodying any change in SA's complexities	Share perceived persistent complexities
Recent graduate Participant 3	Late 20s	Recent graduate	Embodying any change in SA's complexities	Share perceived persistent complexities
Self-proclaimed inxile Participant 4	Mid 60s	Inxile – multiple post matric training	Corroborating fellow inxile	Share contextual complexities
Self-proclaimed inxile Participant 5	Early 60s	Inxile – multiple post matric training	Corroborating fellow inxile	Share contextual complexities
Peer Participant 6	Mid 50s	Peer – multiple post matric training	Corroborative participant	Corroborate with personal stories
Peer Participant 7	*Withdrawn*			
Family member Participant 8	Late 40s	Family – multiple post matric training	Witness to my story	Corroborate my story
Family member Participant 9	Early 60s	Family – multiple post matric training	Witness to my story	Corroborate my story
Family member Participant 10	Early 20s	Family – recent graduate	Witness to my story	Corroborate my story
Self-proclaimed inxile Participant 11	Mid 50s	Inxile – multiple post matric training	Corroborating fellow inxile	Share contextual complexities
Peer Participant 12	Early 50s	Peer – multiple post matric training	Corroborative participant	Corroborate with personal stories

Phase 2 data collection measures

Stead and Watson (2006) note that "research participants from African cultures may prefer interviews or focus groups" (p. 185) for data collection measures.

However, Denzin and Lincoln (2008b) mention additional means such as direct observation, discussion of personal experiences and artefacts even though eventually, interviews and focus groups were primary strategies in this study. Therefore and to reiterate, *Appendix B* consisted *Letter of Consent* and *Appendix A* comprised the interview schedule as approved by the UKZN's Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee and both were respectively utilised to establish informed consent and ensured comprehensivity of conversations. Therefore, the envisaged data gathering process had mandated the construction of an interview schedule which formed core conversation points and guidelines. *Appendix A* consisted of 23 sub-questions derived from the four broad research questions. To illustrate Appendix A questions, the following sample from the 23 served to enhance understanding:

o   What do you understand by the phenomenon of career management?
o   From your earliest memory, are you able to narrate evident episodes of your observation of how I **(you)** managed my **(your)** career (**to other participants**)?
o   What socio-economic, educational and political factors may have impeded my **(your)** career management processes (**to other participants)**?
o   What present socio-economic, educational and political factors may be propelling career management processes in South Africa?
o   Do you think South Africa's career guidance education policy formulations may benefit from the findings of this study? Elaborate.

Essentially, Appendix A was designed as a structured set of comprehensive questions intending to evoke others' viewpoints and impressions on the study's focal areas, and thus became the instrument I used to guide conversations towards wholly captured representations of the phenomenon of inquiry (Balaam, n.d.; Speedy, 2008). Nieuwenhuis (2010b) and L. Richardson (1994) support this description by adding that in qualitative research, the researcher's subjective immersion in the research process equates with the researcher also becoming the research instrument that cannot be removed. As such, I prepared myself sufficiently towards immersion as explained. Furthermore, interacting with participants at such proximal engagement inevitably elicited naturally occurring tacit processes of also observing interview settings, nuances, non-verbal cues, unarticulated feelings, thoughts, statements and/or reactions during the entire process of engagement.

A process which Moerdyk (2009) and Nieuwenhuis (2010b) confirm as foundational in knowledge generating and thus the authors also describe how one can observe, its benefits as well as the various forms of observing. These were explained in the letter of consent so that participants could know beforehand that I would be taking notes during conversations. The mental notes became part of thick descriptions which allowed ongoing reflection and enhanced insight on the phenomenon. To adequately employ all the above stated techniques required a skill within the heuristics paradigm entailing non-judgemental and in-depth discussions. Thereby, involving an encouraging approach for the participant to think aloud (Facione & Facione, 2007) in response to conversation points, thus also eliciting "tolerance, clarification of ambiguity and thoughtful probing" (pp. 41 – 45) which enabled empathetic and expanded insight into improved data collection methods.

Phase 2 methods of data collection

Furthermore, *Appendix B – Letter of Consent* identified the *School of Applied Human Sciences – Discipline of Psychology* located at the *Howard College* within the *University of KwaZulu-Natal* as the custodian institution within which the study was conducted. It identified significant parties to the study such as the study's supervising professional as well as the *Ethics Committee*, including their respective contact details in the event any of the participants experienced a need to verify, complain or share views on the study as a whole with other identified parties. Fundamentally, it consisted of detailed descriptions of *firstly*, the *purpose of research* (i.e. indigenous knowledge development through evoking from memory pertinent lived-career management experiences of participants and of the researcher; review the extent of change from apartheid to post-apartheid era in the educational arena, particularly on career education; soliciting ideas, perceptions and understandings of lived-career experiences which may serve to enrich career theory knowledge development in SA; as well as what could be drawn from lived-career experiences towards possible infusion in career education policy reformulation in SA). *Secondly*, the *ethical guidelines underpinning the study* (i.e. informed consent, confidentiality of responses and its limitations, voluntary nature of participation, audio-recording of conversations and its purpose as well as how these will be safeguarded within the *discipline of psychology* including their disposing after a mandatory period of five years, observing of non-verbal interaction).

Thirdly, the *benefits* of the study (i.e. indigenous knowledge to the career theory field, alignment with the field of practice towards enhancing insightful application, input to career education policy reformulation processes. The benefits of the study to participants also included the valuable opportunity for them to contribute to the study as well as to my career aspirations through which I regarded as invaluable); *fourthly*, how *feedback* will be shared with each participant at the completion of the study (acknowledging their right to know about the study's outcomes). *Finally*, all the above aspects were condensed into a *declaration of informed consent* for participants and it required each to indicate by signature and give a date as mandatory authenticating parts of the process, showing readiness for commencement of the guided interviews.

Accordingly, the letter of consent was attached in the emails I sent wherein I highlighted to each participant the option to suggest a meeting place and also offered my practice rooms as an alternative towards securing private space for the meetings and also to allow participants preference where they would feel maximum comfort. Subsequently, I met recent graduates *Participant 1*, *Participant 2*, *Participant 3*; peer *Participant 7*; self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 11* and peer *Participant 12* at their preferred locations and conversations went according to plan except for peer *Participant 7* (reasons explained hereunder). I met with self-proclaimed inxiles *Participant 4*, *Participant 5*; peer *Participant 6*; family members *Participant 9* and *Participant 10* at my practice rooms. They were all familiar with both the place and set up. I met family member *Participant 8* at his home with which I am also very familiar. English became the language through which conversations were conducted although all participants are black and thus second language English speakers. I reasoned that English as a common language amongst us would ensure a reasonable degree of commonality in conversations regarding how meaning was framed and interpreted within a common cultural context and in relation to the phenomenon of inquiry.

Overall, all sampled participants were keen to participate although my peer *Participant 7* eventually could not fully participate primarily due to her enunciated personal circumstances, whereby it became reasonable to not proceed with the interview. Apart from personal circumstances, *Participant 7* indicated great discomfort with being recorded which I respected in accordance with the stipulation of the consent letter.

After convincing reassurance that the discomfort pertained exclusively to the recording request, I offered to email the electronic copy of the questions which we agreed could be completed at leisure. The email correspondence further ascertained that the earlier noted discomfort was not related to the study itself in that precautionary/longstanding ethical conditions were anticipated from the inception of the study should any discomfort manifest. Further email correspondence gave solid reassurances and I was mindful not to pressurise her with the request for the responses. I later accepted that the delayed responses rendered the data from *Participant 7* inaccessible and thus did not form part of analysed data.

To execute data collection, I made duplicate hard copies of the letters of consent so that each participant could also keep a personal, signed copy for any unanticipated need that could arise after the meetings, and I kept the second copy. I retained maximum professional engagement which was strenuous to some extent due to that we never interact formally in our normal interaction but it was necessary in this instance towards ensuring demarcated psychological space for the task at hand. The strain was compounded by the use of English which made the process unreal but we all seemed committed to the task and all went well. I used a recording device and the cell-phone recording application as backup in case one of the batteries lost power during data collection, which actually did happen in one instance! The duration of meetings ranged from 47 minutes for the shortest to just over two hours for the longest, averaging an hour for each which was sufficient to cover the guided conversations. I approached the conversations with the view that career management experiences are minimally intrusive in that career behaviour is largely enacted in the open and thus publicly observable and relatable even though I still maintained the highest possible level of ethical conduct.

I still noted reasonable discomfort levels among all participants which I attributed to our proximal relationship except for self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 11* whereby such was expected and mutually observable given that it was our first ever meeting for both of us. However, each participant seemed to make an added effort to have their respective voices adequately heard which I admired and greatly appreciated. I attributed the evidenced commitment to everyone's desire to contribute to the subject they found interesting and also to the success of the study, for which I am very grateful.

The noted discomfort during interviews was later confirmed by expressions of not having responded as well as would have been preferred by some of the participants. I deduced that the unprompted confessions related to participants' need and desire to make far greater and more meaningful contributions out of their own volition. It thus became difficult to walk away from the process without resolving the discomfort. I then decided to confer this dynamic with the study supervisor whereby I enquired whether I could set up a *focus group interview* session. This request was granted, and regarded as a healthy opportunity for those who felt the need to complete their viewpoints on the subject. Therefore, a focus group session was planned to take place a few weeks after individual interviews, a technique I describe in the paragraph below.

A focus group interview is a technique involving the use of in-depth group interviews whereby participants are selected because of convenience although not necessarily representative. Their inclusion depends on the focused topic requiring group viewpoints. Nieuwenhuis (2010b) states that focus group interviews can be used "for activating forgotten details of experience and releasing inhibitions" (p. 90) which may have impeded maximum responses, and Morse (1994) concurs in that additional interviews may be used "to fill the gaps left by the earlier interviews" (p. 229). In line with this study's data collection methods, the purpose was to give participants another chance to complete their thoughts in a group setting and to gather any fresh ideas which may have been prompted during individual interviews. I viewed the opportunity as also a chance to enable debriefing as a group towards regaining normalcy in relationships. This purpose is consistent with Gill, Steward, Treasure and Chadwick's (2008) other reasons for using the technique including "to clarify, extend, qualify or challenge data collected through other methods" (p. 293). The authors' views resonate with Halfpenny's (1979) conception of triangulation "because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality" and thus, "multiple methods of observation must be employed" (p. 815), from which the study also benefitted. However, the opportunity resonated more with L. Richardson's (1994) view that in postmodern studies, we crystallise rather than triangulate.

Recruitment strategy of participants – I intended to schedule one focus group interview session and emailed an update about this to those participants who expressed a wish for another opportunity as the primary criterion for the invitation. I decided to mention by email as well to some of those who according to my evaluation would benefit from participation as the secondary criterion even though I indicated that attendance was not compulsory. Eventually, only recent graduate *Participant 2*, self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 5* and family member *Participant 10* indicated their availability to attend the session. However, because qualitative studies involve real life messy processes (Parkhe, 1993), two additional participants (additional intergenerational *Participant 13* and additional youngest *Participant 14*) also became available for the session. I thus explained the rationale for their inclusion as follows: additional intergenerational *Participant 13* happened to be one of the very first among a group of students in my career as an educator.

Additional intergenerational *Participant 13* had left the country to further his studies outside SA for just over two decades and we had kept contact over the years in a mentor-mentee relationship. He had always been interested in my career processes especially because he had achieved much more academically than me over the years. His presence in the country at the time of data collection provided both of us an opportunity to engage deeper on the subject of my research as he was aware about it, and he became keenly interested to contribute from a diverse set of his own experiences. I believed the international exposure in his career processes could enrich the study through diverse views on the subject. I also could not find a negative reason to exclude his participation. After the keenness to participate was confirmed by text messaging, I emailed him *Appendix B* for his perusal of the ethical guidelines and for clearer details on the study. Thereafter, the date, time and venue of the focus group session was scheduled and confirmed to all potential participants. In the interim, I developed the data collection measure as explained in the paragraph below.

Focus group data collection measures – I designed *Appendix E* for the focus group session and it became a compressed version of *Appendix A* in that it consisted of seven core questions according to suggested guidelines (Eliot & Associates, 2005; Morgan, 2013; Rabiee, 2004).

As an example, Gill et al. (2008) advise that the measure should begin with easier types of interview questions so as to ease the participants into the process and they should range from four to six in total. However, *Appendix E* comprised of seven questions because one question was an inverse that resulted into two questions. As such, below are examples of the questions that formed part of the interview guideline:

o Is it important for individuals to know their strengths and weaknesses? Why?
o What is your understanding of the concept 'career management'?
o Which individual characteristics (from the younger and older generations) do you think can be included in the South African education system towards its improvement?

After finalising the interview guideline, the focus group session was held according to the schedule and the next paragraph explains the process on that day.

Procedure: I had requested additional intergenerational *Participant 13* to arrive earlier than was scheduled so that I could secure his declaration of informed consent which was duly explained and signed. The three other participants arrived and found him settled which made it easy to introduce everyone, with each participant casually informing others a bit more about themselves. The person who became additional youngest *Participant 14* introduced herself as well, and indicated that her role in the forum was to be a scribe for the session. Thereafter, the guidelines which were beamed as the first slide on a PowerPoint presentation were clarified. These began with the imperative to secure informed consent from each group member – although in the group setting. As such, I highlighted that the consenting processes were similar to those of individual interviews but also emphasised the need for the group to maintain confidentiality. Thereafter, the session commenced.

During participants' interchange of ideas on the first question, I noted non-verbal behaviour from the note-taker such as chewing the end-point of the pen she was taking notes with, alternated with nodding and occasional gazing at the ceiling as if formulating a thought related to an idea as was raised. As a family member, I was also aware that she was working on her undergraduate studies as part of her career development and management processes. It became difficult for me to silence her voice which posed a simultaneous dilemma for me in that I could only secure her formal consent after the session.

I took into account that she was among the group when informed consent was emphasised and decided to err on the side of giving her an opportunity to proceed and voluntarily share her views if she felt the urge to do so. I reasoned that such an opportunity for her and for me was a once in a lifetime occurrence. Because I had backup note-taking measures from prearranged voice recording of the proceedings to supplement written notes, it became easy to allow her to participate without a concern for losing vital data. Importantly, I ensured to explain the ethical guidelines to formalise her declaration of consent after the focus group session. As such, her profile approximated that of recent graduates and thus, also the youngest of all participants at age 22. Overall, the inclusion of additional intergenerational *Participant 13* and additional youngest *Participant 14* brought to five the total number of focus group participants although one member less than Chapter 1's (2010) recommended guideline of as few as six and as many as 14 members per session.

However, Gill et al. (2008) view six to eight members as the optimum group size for a focus group and they also state that successful sessions can be held with as few as three or four and as many as 14. Indicated as of importance is the mix of ideas, gender, ages, social and professional status of group members because overall, "there is no best solution to group composition" (Gill et al., 2008, p. 293). In that regard, the five attendees fell within the range and the session was informally facilitated as it was held at my practice rooms on a Saturday afternoon. It lasted for about two hours. I summarised the details of the focus group as well as the participants in Table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2 Focus group interview details

Participation Criteria			
Participant Identity	Their opinion	My opinion	Participation Decision
Recent graduate Participant 1	S P*	Satisfactory participation	Was not invited
Recent graduate Participant 2	N M P**	Needed more participation	*Participated*
Recent graduate Participant 3	S P	Satisfactory participation	Was not invited
Self-proclaimed inxile Participant 4	S P	Needed more participation	Could not make it
Self-proclaimed inxile Participant 5	S P	Satisfactory participation	*Participated*
Peer Participant 6	N M P	Needed more participation	Could not make it
Peer Participant 8	N M P	Satisfactory participation	Was not invited
Family member Participant 9	S P	Satisfactory participation	Was not invited
Family member Participant 10	N M P	Opportunity granted	*Participated*
Self-proclaimed inxile Participant 11	S P	Satisfactory participation	Was not invited
Peer Participant 12	S P	Satisfactory participation	Was not invited
Additional inter-generational Participant 13	N P***	Additional viewpoints	*Participated*
Additional youngest Participant 14	N P	Additional viewpoints	*Participated*

Keys:

S P* = Satisfactory Participation | N M P** = Needed More Participation | N P*** = Additional Participant

I explain in the following section how all collected data was managed and thus analysed to yield *Appendix D – Phase 1 Autoethnographic data* and *Appendix F – Phase 2 findings* derived from participants' transcripts.

3.2. Data analysis

Expectedly, the researcher ends up with vast amounts of qualitative data which, as in this study, required analysis to extract meaningful findings that were relevant to the phenomenon of investigation as detailed in the next Chapter 4 of the thesis. Thus, lived-career management experiences were narrated as a story captured in *Appendix D Autoethnographic data* from which utterances (Mkhize, 2013b) – *Phase 1* findings emerged thereby enabling extraction of vignettes as units of analysis (Riessman, 2000), a selection of which are presented as Table 4.3; Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 in the next chapter. Fundamentally, personal and contextual systems, recursiveness, change over time, chance, culture and context elements were inferred from *Appendix D* comprising my lived-career story.

Accordingly, interactive transitional experiences of (career development and) career management processes at all levels were highlighted as part of efficient data analysis. Moreover, Arthur and McMahon (2005) concur with Patton and McMahon's (2014) assertion that the "STF may be reconstructed according to the circumstances of the individual in context" and that "culturally and contextually sensitive representations may be depicted" (p. 260). Thus, it was possible to derive data related to this study's research questions from analysis processes that are presented in Chapter 4 towards integrative interpretation and discussions in Chapter 5. With regards to data gathered from participants: all recorded conversations were transcribed into textual data and were enriched with mental notes that were taken during the interview meetings. Also, seemingly unuttered thoughts, feelings, statements, nuances and other non-verbal cues that were mentally noted during conversations were considered towards enriched interpretation of findings. With transcribed hard copies at hand, Denzin and Lincoln (2008b) suggest a variety of data analysis methods which can be applied to extract relevant findings. Also and in relation to that task, Nieuwenhuis (2010c) identifies conversation analysis (whereby sequential patterns of interaction are sought). Narrative analysis: in search of narrative strings (which reveal commonalities running through and across text), narrative threads (whereby major themes emerge) as well as temporal/spatial themes (which reveal past, present and future contexts) as possible means from which to develop an empirical representation of the phenomenon of inquiry.

Nieuwenhuis (2010c), Facione and Facione (2007) further contend that accrued data can be analysed using tabular representations where argument strands can be written in one column and a second column be used for summarised thematic content of each argument strand, or by using decision maps where figures can be sketched to display alternative argument strands and considered conclusions. Although decision maps seemed an interesting and attractive data analysis strategy, expediency is often preferred when large volumes of data are collected as was the case in this study. As such, from the transcribed texts, narrative threads yielded utterances that were extracted as units of analysis (Mkhize, 2013b; Riessman, 2000) and captured as *Appendix F – Phase 2 findings* from data analysis processes.

Accordingly, some utterances were selected to illustrate others' voices as well as their seeming resonance with the eventually derived conceptual constructs (i.e. Table 4.6 & Table 4.7) in alignment with Nieuwenhuis' (2010c) as well Facione and Facione's (2007) approaches utilising tabular formats to condense findings. Expectedly, tabular representation of utterances fragmented narrations and for that reason, each participant's narrative was read and interpreted as part of a whole in accordance with hermeneutics (Mkhize, 2005; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000). Such an approach ensured that each participant's narrative could be meaningfully interpreted in its broader context. Again, it was an important consideration that formed the basis for interpretations and discussions in Chapter 5. Consequently, the foregoing accounts were subjected to criteria to judge adequacy and I explain how such adequacy was monitored throughout the study in the next section.

3.3. Criteria for judging adequacy

Generally, the research process mandates qualitative data interpretation towards sense-making of what has been gathered, while being mindful of that in qualitative studies "there is no single interpretive truth" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b, p 35). However, Durrheim and Wassenaar (1999), Ellis et al. (2011), Guba and Lincoln (2001) as well as McIlveen (2008) emphasize the imperative to apply evaluative strategies as mandatory means to judge adequacy. Accordingly, core evaluation criteria in qualitative studies include *credibility* (convincing and believable explanations arrived at through continuous construction / co-construction and interpretation / reinterpretation of meanings) related to the phenomenon of inquiry. *Transferability* (providing explanations that describe common and widely shared categories of human experience while also producing detailed and rich descriptions of context to the extent that findings are sufficiently similar to others' experiences). *Dependability* (whereby methodological decisions are substantiated and reasons for their preference are clearly stated resulting in a degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher says they did, also, whereby opinions and actions demonstrate rootedness to contextual descriptions). Also regarded as a criterion is *confirmability* (whereby the extent to which utterances, claims and evidence can be tracked back to their sources) can be ascertained).

Bulpitt and Martin (2010) as well as Muncey (2010) highlight that in post-modernistic studies, aspects of subjective reality can also be judged from multiple positions such as through reflexivity, resonance, coherence and truth (Bakhtin, 1990; Hayano, 1979). Pieper (1995) further argues from a decision-making perspective the importance for one to also account for one's biases that accrue from one's personal history and inclinations, including one's choice of assumptions and the kind of data collected. Resonant with Pieper's (1995) argument, Facione and Facione (2007, pp. 113 – 142) identify 14 probable biases that can accrue during sense making processes including: *satisficing and temporising, affect, simulation, availability, representativeness – analogical, generalising from one to all, us vs. them dynamic, master – slave power differential, anchoring with adjustment, illusion of control, eliminatory by aspect, risk and loss aversion,* and *zero-out tendency.* These biases are said to often happen singly or in combination and become a position from which gathered data can be evaluated. However, to establish criteria for judging adequacy in narrative inquiry, Speedy (2008) explains reflexivity as "the capacity of the researcher to acknowledge how their own experiences and contexts (which might be fluid and changing) inform the process and outcomes of inquiry" (p. 41), further stating that:

> If we can be aware of how our own thoughts, feelings, culture, environment and social and personal history inform us as we dialogue with participants, transcribe their conversations with us and write our representations of the work, then perhaps we can become closer to the rigour that is required of good qualitative research (Speedy, p. 41).

Considering the foregoing perspectives on the criteria for judging adequacy, Speedy (2008) asserts that research related to narrative inquiry requires different evaluation criteria. She draws from numerous authors' compilations across disciplines to formulate a list of suggested criteria which shows great resonance with Durrheim and Wassenaar's (1999), Ellis et al.'s (2011) as well as Guba and Lincoln's (2001) explanations. However, Bochner (2000) prefers 1) abundant concrete detail, concern for the trivial, flesh and blood of emotions encompassing facts and feelings; 2) storied frameworks that revolve around the past and the present capturing the curves of time; 3) honesty of tragic or comic emotional representations; 4) a representation of life as a transformational journey indicative of growth from what was to what now is;

5) Consistent ethical consciousness; and 6) overall, a lived experience that engages the heart and mind through meaningful representations. These are portrayed by Ellis (2000) thus:

> If I read the whole paper without stopping to evaluate cognitively from a distance – well that tells me something. The work has engaged me. If I read the whole story, stopping frequently to think about details of my experience, my memories or feelings called forth by the piece, then the work has evoked me (p. 274).

Taken together, the judgement criteria seem to also produce aesthetic merit in view of Denzin's (2000) contention that aesthetics result from where "the artful, interpretive productions, cultural heroes, heroines, mythic pasts, and senses of moral community are created" (p. 260). Implied is that it is in the created work of art as a whole that aesthetics can be discerned and appreciated. Accordingly, a synthesis of all judgement criteria resulted in Table 3.3 in effort to illustrate application across the distinct yet corroborative experiences of the researcher and those of the participating others.

Table 3.3 Synthesis of judgment criteria across the distinct yet corroborative phases of the study

Judgement criteria	Phase 1 research processes	Application in the study	Phase 2 research processes	Application in the study
Credibility | Truthfulness	Abundant concrete detail in the story capturing honesty in factual representations and genuine emotions as were experienced	Inclusion of family members as witnesses to the story. Examples of vignettes are used in interpretations and discussions	Participants' selection criteria ensured representation of experiences across the historical eras of focus	Examples of utterances are included in interpretations and discussions
Transferability | Impact and transformation	Locating the story in a sociocultural, socioeconomic and historical/political context although acknowledged as a limitation due to the uniqueness of an individual's experiences	Inclusion of peers and fellow self-proclaimed inxiles as corroborative participants	Sampling of participants across generations from apartheid era to post-apartheid era	Contextualised experiences across the historical eras and highlighted limitations in concluding Chapter 6
Dependency | Transparency	Preferred methodology (autoethnography) resulting in my life story captured in *Appendix D*	Conceptualisation of the study from chosen topic, explanation of core constructs	A selection of utterances representative of *Appendix F* findings capturing analysed results	Integration of utterances to support interpretation and discussions that link the extracted utterance to corresponding participant
Confirmability | Reflexivity	Subjective representation of narrated experiences drawn from memory, artefacts and photographs	Consistent reference to related experience	Reduction of transcribed interview data into narrative strings	Consistent reference to related narrative and linking the extract to its source/participant

Judgement criteria	Phase 1 research processes	Application in the study	Phase 2 research processes	Application in the study
Accountability | Substantive and enduring contributions	Exercising authenticity through autoethnography as a process and a product resulted in a storied account of lived-career experience as contribution to the career field	Formulating the study's topic in a manner that exposes the scope of the study and the unambiguous intention to incorporate others' voices	Adhering to ethical guidelines in the process of constructing local experiences that can be relatable to other scholars in the field and to ordinary individuals who may benefit from the study	Carefully selecting related utterances that enhance concealment of participants without compromising the essence of the utterance and using it where relevant towards a comprehensive study
Aesthetic merit	The intertwined life-career story is enlivened through the use of words and concepts that capture the essence of the lived experience within a sociocultural environment	The knitting together of pleasant and painful memories using words that capture the moment but also reverts the reader towards better/ recovered psychological states	Integrating what is sociocultural into the locale by also weaving it into the overarching discipline sphere according to the objectives of the study	Aspiring for coherence while ensuring the nuances of the study remain rich in their subtlety towards a connected wholly lived-career experiences

Overall, Bulpitt and Martin's (2010) as well as Muncey's (2010) statements that in post-modernistic studies, aspects of subjective reality can also be discerned from multiple positions are supported as much as Speedy's (2008) view that "different criteria" apply "at different moments through attention to purpose, and style" (p. 57). Speedy (2008) then concludes by highlighting that it is very rare for all evaluation criteria to be applicable in a given study. However, I believed that I could still strive to fulfil as many as possible with an aim to produce worthwhile research outcomes.

The goal was to contribute meaningfully to the subject of investigation, hopefully resulting in what Ellis (2000) regards as a narrative with a "soul" (p. 274) or one that is "not boring" (L. Richardson, 2000, p. 254). As such, the remaining chapters of the thesis provide broader contextualisation of the judgement criteria which culminated in the concluding Chapter 6 wherein pertinent contributions, recommendations, future research areas and limitations of the study are summarised. Consequently and of great importance in discussions of methodology is the imperative for the researcher to explain how they maintained optimal ethical adherence for the duration of the study. Accordingly, it was mandatory to follow guidelines of the custodian institution that was supervising the study (UKZN) along with professional codes of conduct from which personal understanding that showed adherence were formulated. These included informed consent from all participants, concealment of identifying details towards ensuring privacy, confidentiality of disclosures made in contribution to the success of the study while noting certain limitations, respect for participants and their utterances as well as a disclosed commitment to sharing the research outcomes as feedback to all participants. Still, personal stories imply a life lived among significant others whose roles in my life could not be completely concealed and where this was required, I exercised extreme ethical sensitivity and diligence towards preserving their dignity to the best of my ability. On that note, this chapter on methodology concluded and its summary is presented below.

3.4. Concluding chapter summary

This chapter covered all aspects of the research design as a representation of the enacted research process. As such, the design provided structure wherein it was highlighted that qualitative research was the umbrella paradigm for several strands that also included autoethnography as the preferred approach for this study. Autoethnography was explained and discussed as part of the core concepts that framed the entire study. When studies are located within broad categorising traditions it is usually because they are based on certain theoretical and philosophical paradigms. Acknowledging the study's theoretical and philosophical paradigms also necessitated their exposition so that the unfolding study could be understood within corresponding and justified paradigms. To indicate these perspectives for this study and in this chapter, I drew from career theories as the field within which the career management construct resonated in this study.

Importantly, the framework provided this study with a theoretical structure from which alignment could be safeguarded, also for purposes of data analysis and interpretation in the remaining chapters. Therefore, this chapter indicated the underpinning constructivist perspective as generic in view of that research outcomes yielded a career story which was consistent with the third paradigmatic era in knowledge development in the broader field of career theories. Furthermore and due to that the study was autoethnographic, it provided a firm indication that the researcher embodied the phenomenon of inquiry in the form of lived-career management experiences whereby the narrated story produced *Phase 1* of data collection. Again, because the study was framed within a sociocultural context which privileged others' voices within a collectivistic cultural background, it essentially indicated that a purposive criterion sampling strategy was employed to secure 12 consenting participants. They were grouped as four types of participants covering three family members, three recent graduates, three peers and three self-proclaimed inxiles whose voices enriched findings of this study on the phenomenon of inquiry. However, one participant from the peers group was withdrawn as she could not participate fully due to personal reasons which were respected in alignment with ethical obligations that guided the study.

Since all participants were familiar with the researcher, it posed discomforts during conversations that formed data collection processes. This dynamic necessitated further use of one focus group meeting to ensure maximum opportunity for additional views on the phenomenon which may have been omitted or overlooked during the individual interviews. This opportunity resulted in two additional participants – one intergenerational and one youngest participant. Their consent was duly secured to eventually yield a total of 13 others' voices which then enriched the study. Prior to these interviews it was indicated in the chapter how the interview schedule was compiled, basically from the four posed research questions which became 23 sub-questions for individual interviews and seven questions for the focus group meeting. Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 summarised the profile of the participants who shared a similar socioeconomic background as participants. It was further indicated in the chapter what comprised the criteria for judging adequacy in the study.

As a qualitative study, aspects such as credibility, truthfulness, dependability, transferability as well as reflexivity, coherence and resonance were all explained and also accounted for in relation to this study. The chapter was concluded with indications on how the important aspects of ethical adherence were maintained throughout the study. It was highlighted that the UKZN guidelines adopted and explained in Chapter 1 formed the bedrock on which all personal and professional ethical obligations rested as also stipulated within the HPCSA as a legal statutory body in the field. In the next Chapter 4, I discuss details of how data analysis was conducted to derive the study's findings.

CHAPTER 4 – DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS: *THE NET APPROACH POINTS*

4. Introduction

I noted in Chapter 3 that the process of data collection culminated into volumes of text which carry no value unless analysed for meaningful relevance in relation to the study's topic of focus, guiding research questions and concomitant objectives, thus a process requiring a degree of skill or technique to analyse. Employing creative strategies enables novice researchers to manage inherent frustrations presented by qualitative designs particularly in that such studies do not have predetermined data analysis strategies (Huberman & Miles, 1994). Since data collection processes spanned over two distinct phases for this study, the ensuing data resulted in *Appendix D – Phase 1 findings* from the autoethnographic data as narrated lived-career management experiences from which evocative vignettes were extracted as utterances to form units of analysis (Mkhize, 2013b). Also, *Appendix F – Phase 2 findings* consisting of narrative threads (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a; Speedy, 2008) were extracted from transcribed textual interview data from participants, thus also embodying utterances that similarly became units of analysis. In the next section I explain how the process of data analysis was approached, basically accounting for created strategies that yielded findings.

4.1. Data analysis approach

Huberman and Miles' (1994) concession that qualitative designs require uniquely choreographed strategic approaches emanates from the fundamentally analytic nature of these studies given their conceptualisation, posed research questions and samples used, as was the case in this study. Similarly, the process involved drawing from several authors' insights including Denzin and Lincoln (2008), Facione and Facione (2007), Nieuwenhuis (2010a), Patton and McMahon (2014) among others. Nieuwenhuis' (2010a) conversation analysis, narrative analysis and narrative threads resonated with Larkin, Watts and Clifton's (2006) interpretative phenomenological analysis [IPA] (pp. 102 – 120) whereby cumulative coding and integrative coding approaches are used to develop plausible thematic accounts.

Resonance was noted in that all authors emphasise the imperative for approaches that safeguard appropriately investigated, comprehensible and meaningful accounts of experiences and opinions shared by all participants on the phenomenon of inquiry. Essentially, emphasising the importance to base and derive all resulting temporal or spatial themes from the process of data analysis. Given the described imperative, it was clear that this study's broad research questions embodied pointers into what is appropriate, understandable and meaningful viewpoints from which evocative vignettes and utterances, thus units of analysis were ascertained. The research questions provided an organising framework for emerging patterns of meaning for purposes of interpretation. Larkin et al. (2006) contend that meaning patterns can also be derived from existing theoretical concepts thus supporting Table 2.1, capturing individual and contextual influences. To recap: these were derived from theoretical propositions and thus constructs that form the Systems Theory Framework [STF] (Patton & McMahon, 2014) which could then be used to categorise patterns of meaning. They further served to enhance congruence with conceptualised, emerging and thus plausible thematic accounts, also illustrated in the study by Blustein et al. (2002). However, in that study the purpose was to develop a coding system, as an example that confirmed Huberman and Miles' (1994) assertion regarding customisation of analytic approaches in qualitative studies.

Another striking element of IPA is that it encourages an expanded analytic approach that goes beyond first-order analysis whereby participants' viewpoints are just summarised but do not inform "interpretative or conceptual levels" (Larking et al., 2006, p. 103). In consideration of the above and to demonstrate the stated expansiveness in this study, I developed Table 4.1 that became the initial *conceptual framework* foregrounding the entire data analysis process. The framework was developed through identification of key words within each research question, providing dictionary meaning(s) of key words and also highlighted how these words were interpreted and understood. Hence, my understanding of the key word(s) was not limited to the given words, but also incorporated insight into what corresponded with my understanding of the data in terms of coherence and what seemed truthful in the data. Below is Table 4.1 as explained:

Table 4.1 Data analysis conceptual framework

Research questions	*Key word(s) in context*	*Dictionary meaning(s)*	*My understanding of the key word(s)*
o What career management approaches can possibly be discerned from lived-career management experiences of one inxile in South Africa as a developing economy?	Approaches	Manner or meaning a way of (Longman, 1978, p. 41); a way of doing something (Oxford, 2016, p. 60)	Tactics, methods, styles, enabling personal qualities
	Experiences	Something that happens to one and has an effect on the mind and feelings (Longman, 1978, p. 383); a gained knowledge or skill (Oxford, 2016, p. 514)	Life and living tactics, methods, styles, enabling personal qualities, processes, felt, undertaken, enacted, gone through

| o What prevalent socio-economic, educational and political/historical complexities *still persist* and impact on individuals' career management processes in post-apartheid South Africa? | Complexities | Unconscious images, wishes, fears, feelings etc. (Longman, 1978, p. 221); the features of a problem (Oxford, 2016, 294) | Ongoing, post-apartheid socio-economic, educational and political factors, challenges, opportunities |

o What insights can possibly be discerned from lived-career management experiences of South African inxiles towards enhancing career theories in SA as a developing economy?	Insights	The power of using one's mind to understand something deeply without help from outside information (Longman, 1978, p. 579); the ability to know the truth about something (Oxford, p. 777)	Ideas, perceptions Imaginations Predictions, dreams Characteristics Successful outcomes
Research questions	*Key word(s) in context*	*Dictionary meaning(s)*	*My understanding of the key word(s)*
o What critical inputs can possibly be derived from lived-career management experiences of South African young graduates, peers and inxiles towards enrichment of the South African career education system?	Critical – inputs	Marked by careful attention judgement, thinking, deciding turning point (Longman, 1978, p. 263) Something put in for use (Longman, 1978, p. 577); critical elements that must be available at a certain quality standard for use at a satisfactory level (Business Dictionary)	Contributions Strategies Characteristics Successful Improvements Enrichments

In that regard, the elaborated explanations further accounted for judgement criteria on adequacy requirements that are necessary for qualitative studies particularly within post-modernist conceptualisations as was done in this study (see Bulpitt & Martin, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b; Durrheim & Wassenaar, 1999; Ellis et al., 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 2001; McIlveen, 2008; Muncey, 2010; Speedy, 2008). Also, the importance of judgement criteria such as *accountability* whereby questions such as: which community's interests does this text represent? And: in what ways are researchers accountable to those people? As well as *substantive and enduring contribution* which interrogates aspects such as whether this text will endure and be of some lasting value in the field (Speedy, 2008). Furthermore, I developed Table 4.2 as a representation of steps I followed in the process of data analysis. In doing so, I ensured that the intended community's interests (contributions of the study) retain comprehensive coherence in terms of how data was analysed towards credible findings intended to also retain endurance that is of lasting value in the field.

Table 4.2 Data analysis steps and processes

Step	Data analysis process	
1	Developed a preliminary framework to provide an all-encompassing organising structure from research questions, interview protocol and focus group questions *Table 4.1 Data analysis conceptual framework accounted for this step*	
2	2.1. Phase 1	Read through autoethnographic data (Appendix D) and extracted broad STF key dimensions (in accordance to Table 2.1) discerned evocative vignettes relating to the research questions *This step resulted in Table 4.3, Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 capturing selected/relevant vignettes as examples for meaningfulness in this Chapter*
	2.2. Phase 2	Read through transcripts from all participants to extract narrative threads *Considered all judgement criteria as also reiterated in Section 4.1 of this chapter. This step resulted in Appendix Table F.1 to Appendix Table F.5 capturing narrative thread/utterances relating to all four research questions*
3	Generated a set of inferences from narrative threads and discerned meaning-patterns relating to Table 4.1 and theoretical propositions relating to Table 2.1. Inserted these as coding domains where applicable on all Appendix Tables identified in Step 2.2 Phase 2	
4	Revised and reviewed entire data by rereading autoethnographic data and transcripts of narratives and confirmed each inference and refined meaning-patterns *This step yielded Table 4.6 illustrative of participants' utterances that concretised meaning embedded in conceptual constructs and theoretical constructs*	
5	Refined meaning patterns and confirmed each inference for alignment with major thematic domains – *a process that yielded Table 4.7 illustrating synchronisation between conceptual and theoretical constructs*	
6	All processes in preceding steps provided coherence from which findings were interpreted for sense-making towards integrative and meaningful discussions in Chapter 5	

The preceding approach and sequential processes of data analysis enabled identification of this study's findings as explained in the next section.

4.2. Findings

Seeing that the data analysis conceptual framework in Table 4.1 logically establishes the basis for Table 4.2 which details steps on how data was analysed, the following section presents discerned *findings* relating to *Phase 1* and *Phase 2* of data analysis as frames of reference for interpretation and discussions in Chapter 5.

4.2.1. Phase 1: Findings from analysis of autoethnographic data

According to the STF (Patton & McMahon, 2014), the individual's system level, social system level and environmental-societal system level consists of influences as was summarised in Table 2.1. Accordingly, a selection of evocative vignettes were extracted from autoethnographic data and respectively captured in Table 4.3, Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 as examples for purposes of enhancing meaningfulness in this part of the chapter.

Table 4.3 Individual level influences with illustrative evocative vignettes from autoethnographic data

Individual level influences	*Vignettes from autoethnographic data*
Gender	"My mother was planning for me to start training as a nurse" "To them I may have seemed a young black woman" "I was now the eldest surviving female"
Ability	"I often performed well in my sums and in spelling, regularly netting the envied 10/10" "luckily passed and made my final exit from UNIZUL" "I happened to be the most qualified"
Values	"A good lesson that served to plant the seed of integrity towards instilling character" "The (our) decision to work hard at school with my friend" "I also started saving for university to assist my sister where I could"
Interests Interests	"I attempted to participate in sport (athletics), running the 800meters" "I had also become fond of debate" "I decided I would want to pursue law studies as a career"

	"I was already an avid reader"
	"I had taken psychology as a major subject"
	"I am not sure what happened to the dream to pursue law studies"
	"(I was drawn to the) high school youth I was yearning to help develop and grow with"
	"After completing this qualification (HRM)…industrial psychology became clear in my mind that I wanted to be an industrial psychologist"
	"Emergent subject of interest for the PhD"
	"(I) intensified buying of books across a variety of subjects but lately biographies and autobiographies"
Sexual orientation	"I drew a lot of attention…positive from the boys"
	"(It was) an innocent exchange…romantic undertones"
Self-concept	"I think I was maturing and developing insight in relation to my home-life environment"
	"University education had potential to shape me differently to my view and role of myself in the community"
	"However, that particular teacher was the only one I invited at my graduation party in November 1984 after completing my first degree at university"
	"I was generally scruffy"
	"(I just became) another Gama child"
	"I had very little awareness of how impoverished I was"
	"I became aware of what I came to refer to as my 'slave names' – Angeline and Joyce"
	"(It was) before reading Biko's…book on 'black consciousness' which accentuates pride in being black"
	"I passively resisted cutting it (hair) off"
	"I got a supplementary exam…which was an embarrassment among my group of friends"

Self-concept	"(It was) a means to instil positive identity" "I was working equally hard in self-development as part of my career management" "(I) seemed to be running away from a class of privilege which I knew I didn't belong to" "I came to understand myself as a people developer and a nurturer of human potential"
Skills	"I must have been good in cramming poems" "I became an established Geography assistant teacher" "I brought in all my examination skills and arsenals"
World of work knowledge	"I still hadn't even thought of what career I would embark on after matric" "When I got into my second year at high school in Form 2, my mother was planning for me to start training as a *nurse* at the Baragwanath Academic Hospital after completing Form 3, a career that I think she had decided on out of necessity and because the academic hospital was quite accessible from home" "Also, it was obvious that there wouldn't be any funds to further my studies since my sister was furthering her own at Fort Hare University at that stage" "I loitered around the township with no clear plan on what to do next" "I didn't have a specific goal I can quote as pressuring then" "Library Science…I was hearing about it for the first time" "I drifted along in search of the area of my total passion" "I took a year's break from studying in 1997 to make proper enquiries leading to my enrolment for part-time studies in 1998"
Personality	"I got to know myself better to recognise my introverted personality as quite normal" "It was a great joy to taste having neatly covered books for once in a lifetime" "I was really lucky to have had the foresight of anticipated failure" "I never forgot that teacher or that incident" "I committed to not getting any position less than being in the top-five in my class" "The magnitude of the lost two years meant further delay in career-life"

Personality	"positive reputation for my services from highly satisfied patrons"
	"It was apparent to me that I didn't relate well with authority in general"
	"it seems the best way to have harnessed my talents, skills and abilities was to leave me alone"
Ethnicity	"Thabile…the name was derived from its isiZulu language, it carries the same meaning in seSotho and Setswana"
	"My hair had grown into a big afro by 1978"
	"As a black youth myself"
	"Winning against 'a white school'"
	"What drew me to the delegate was that he was black"
Beliefs	"There is an invisible/inseparable connectedness with nature within the universe"
	"The loads of luck which saw me through the formative years"
	"It was during that idyllic phase that 'life happened'"
	"I believe one is never lucky in the absence of a super-power in one's life"
	"Presence of an omnipotent being in my life"
Age	"I was still five going on six years old when I started schooling"
	"nearly all of us were in our late twenties/early thirties"
	"Referring to me as a 'junior employee' even though I had a combined work experience of nearly 25 years"
Physical attributes	"I was the shortest child"
	"I was quite a scrawny child"
	"He (my elder brother) had a small body frame and his shirts fit me just perfectly"

The intrapersonal system level elements cited below were not represented in autoethnographic data and their absence will be argued in subsequent chapters.

Aptitude | Disability | Health	Not represented in the data

Again, the element of *spirituality* does not form part of the STF as a pivotal individual influence yet it emerged strongly in the findings as represented in the captured vignette examples. Its role and significance was thus interpreted and discussed in Chapter 5.

Individual level influences	*Vignettes from autoethnographic data*
Spirituality	"It was by sheer luck and the grace of God that some of us…managed to pass" "Learned family friends who I now realise were due to some divine intervention from the universe" "It is by the grace of God that none of us lost our lives" "The opportunity was a Godsend on my part" "At some point I decided to pull off the road to pray for some cheer" "It was a great showing of God's hand" "I know that God led my every move"

The next dimension of the STF (Patton & McMahon, 2014) comprises of individual's social system level of influences as summarised in Table 2.1. Accordingly, a selection of evocative vignettes were extracted from autoethnographic data and captured in Table 4.4 as examples for purposes of enhancing meaningfulness in this part of the chapter.

Table 4.4 The social system level influences with illustrative evocative vignettes from autoethnographic data

Social system level influences	*Vignettes from autoethnographic data*
Peers	"I was never teased by my peers about my lack"
	"There was one girl among us…we became best friends after being drawn to each other…by the natural desire to work hard"
	"My ex-colleague…also found a job as the senior career guidance teacher because she had an MA qualification in the same field"
	"Being able to read a lot more and to know about the existence of libraries is a gift she gave me to this day"
	"He (my classmate at UNIZUL) managed to find space for us at the Sharpeville Community Library"
	"He (my organisational internship supervisor) gave guidance on all of a person's domains"
	"(The) bond of trust allowed me a very safe learning space which I have treasured and will continue to do so for the rest of my life"
Media	"The violence received widespread media coverage"
	"We followed news reports for daily updates on what was going to be our fate"
Family	"My father had no formal education"
	"She (my mother) had a standard 2 education"
	"I enquired from my elder sister, who was still alive at the time, and must have been 9 years old when I was born, about what she remembered about the events surrounding the time I was born"
	"All she remembered was that, being child number five, I was born at home, at about 20:00. Modern day technology thus allowed me to figure out that it was on a Wednesday night"
	"These events were particularly very scary and traumatic because my father worked a night shift all my childhood and young adult life due to that the nature of his work required fresh bread to be delivered countrywide by daybreak"

Family	"This also meant that I grew up mostly with my mother because my father was probably asleep by the time we left for school. He would have also left home for his night shift when we arrived back home after school" "I believe that the greatest gift my parents ever gave me was holding the family together in that I was raised in a secure home where food, no matter its substance, was always provided for" "How my mother managed to raise all seven of us, is a mystery I am unable to unravel since I am asking these questions 19 years after she passed-on" "In retrospect, I realise that my elder sister never really had a childhood as she was the second in command while my mother toiled away from home" "The actual active parenting role fell on my sister's shoulders who was barely in her teens at the time" "My elder sister was punished for all kinds of things, including that we didn't eat our soft-porridge before going to school" "He would cut off big slices and help himself, knowing very well that with the seven of us as children, he could easily hide behind the crowd in that it wouldn't be obvious to my mother and all of us as to who the culprit was" "She probably was too tired to check on such after work due to all the parenting and work burdens on her shoulders" "My sister…with her first pay cheque she bought me proper/full school uniform" "I don't remember any repercussions at home or from school for being absent" "My sister…a crucial role in my life…her word was final" "Socioeconomic lack means that (We) are forced to study what our families wanted us to study" "One of my brothers' love to write fictional stories" "My parents and family provided the crucible" "She (my sister) knew that I didn't possess sufficient insight to understand at the time, hence she just instructed me as she did"

Community groups	"Probably at the advice of one family of (husband and wife) school principals my parents befriended at church" "Became life-long 'learned and educated' family friends" "Secured a merit bursary from Coca Cola" "A full bursary from the Institute of Race Relation of South Africa" "The librarians were willing to host us for the two weeks practical training"
Workplace	"The learned family…asked me to help with domestic work in their house" "I don't remember ever being paid for this work" "I started tasting the world of work as a domestic worker, at the tender age of 13years" "I got a holiday job at Sales House…which paid R45/week" "The university library also employed student librarians" "UNIZUL paid us R90/month for four shifts a week" "I had also secured a new teaching job…, Soweto" "Teaching was a personally fulfilling job, there were almost zero professional development prospects for me" "Previous workplace was highly conflictual"
Education Institutions	"Punishment by sending a five year old back home was not a wise strategy towards recovering the school fees as it just disadvantaged my learning opportunity while away"

Education Institutions	"Unforgettably, the isiZulu, Afrikaans and English poems: *Ma ngificwa ukufa by B.W. Khumalo*, *Muskiete Jag* by *A.D. Keet* as well as the *All things bright and beautiful by C.F. Alexander*. The isiZulu poem expresses sentiments on *when death overcomes me* and the Afrikaans one is about *chasing a mosquito*"
	"I recited the poems without complete understanding of embedded meanings, or conscious sense of pride and achievement"
	"One of the teachers spotted underneath the tunic collar what was supposed to be a vest, which my mom had sewn with very thick white jersey-material. It must have been very dirty as well and the teacher, who I had approached to mark my classwork while standing at the front of class, suddenly swung me around in great irritation and announced to the class to have a look at what I was wearing"
	"I must have been 10 years old at the time and I still have a vivid picture of that moment including what the teacher was wearing and exactly where I was standing in front of the class"
	"There was no hint of career education at lower primary"
	"There never was any career-focused education till I exited higher primary school"
	"All the boys in the class descended onto the teacher,… kicking and beating him"
	"The subject teacher, who never stepped back into our class ever again"
	"Schooling could not be salvaged as it got permanently out for the rest of the year"
	"Learning without depth or insight…is a handicap that hinders effective and impactful functioning in an individual's adult life"
	"I give you five minutes in my office"

The next dimension of the STF (Patton & McMahon, 2014) comprises the environmental-societal system level of influences as summarised in Table 2.1. Accordingly, a selection of evocative vignettes were extracted from autoethnographic data and captured in Table 4.5 as examples for purposes of enhancing meaningfulness in this part of the chapter.

Table 4.5 The environmental-societal system level influences with illustrative evocative vignettes from autoethnographic data

The environmental-social system level influences	*Vignettes from autoethnographic data*
Historical trends	"We used 'slates' and a specially designed pen-like stylus to write with during lessons" "I already knew that she didn't even have the matric certificate" "Cricket clinics…conducted in the townships by a benevolent group of sponsors" "The boys abandoned school…and walked around the township in search of the thug" "The subjects I took at school were just subjects without any relation to my ability or interests" "Generations got derailed and lost educational opportunities"
Employment market	"For my brothers, it was the true end of their school careers and they found employment at different places" "The senior librarian was highly efficient, very hard working, exceedingly knowledgeable about her work" "library had a well established reputation for effective and efficient service which required me to up my performance"
Political decisions	"The masterstroke…incident…the outbreak of what became known as the Soweto Uprisings on 16 June 1976" "Others lost their lives in the vicious carnage of the apartheid system" "Under apartheid, very few law students completed their studies" "SRC had planned to disrupt as part of political rivalry between the ANC aligned SRC and the IFP" "The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997…was due for implementation requiring a merger"
Geographical location	"I was born…in the Dlamini Township of Soweto in Johannesburg, South Africa" "proximity of the schools to our home was a convenient progression criteria" "I progressed to Musi High School in Pimville Township, also in Soweto"

Geographical location	"Baragwanath Academic Hospital was quite accessible and near to my home"
Socioeconomic status	"The slate and the two readers (probably handed down the line of brothers for me)"
	"I walked barefooted on biting frost all the way to school"
	"She (my mother) often worked for more than one family in Rosebank, Johannesburg, to supplement my father's meagre earnings and to make ends meet"
	"It seems the plan was for the white shoes to be coated in black polish for the winter season because I know that most of us loved walking barefooted to school but winter time we needed school shoes"
	"What I remember most about being at Ndondo is how I never had the required school exercises and note books"
	"I remember on one occasion picking up strewn newspapers in the veld on way to school to fill up the plastic bag I carried with my single exercise book in effort to make it look bulky like those of other children at school"
	"I never really ever had the required school uniform especially on the days when we were supposed to wear school tunics"
	"My teachers complained that what I used to wear was not proper school uniform"
	"I was always the first to run to the class where punishment was meted out to all learners who were not in proper school uniform. I got the beating each time even though to my mother's knowledge the tunic matter was a problem solved ages ago"
	"The love we shared (at home) became my treasured inheritance in a family background that barely survived"
	"It was obvious that there wouldn't be any funds to further my studies"
	"(My quest as an industrial psychologist) is an effort contributing to the development of the SA economy by improving workplace relations towards alleviating the poverty trap emanating from the country's perpetual economic underperformance"

Again, the influence of *globalisation* was not represented in autoethnographic data although the dimension of *psychosocial status* encompassing violence and crime in SA emerged strongly again. Notably, it does not form part of the STF as a social system level element, yet it emerged as a salient influence in the findings as represented in the vignette examples. Its role and significance was thus interpreted and discussed in Chapter 5.

The environmental-social system level influences	*Vignettes from autoethnographic data*
Psychosocial status	"I was so defenceless and my silent screams went on without mercy" "We later got to know that five male students were cornered and killed in various parts of their residence….on Sunday morning we went to the men's residence to witness blood splattering on walls and floors as hallmarks of the aftermath. One male student was… found by the IFP men…and smashed his head with a nail-prickled assegai…it was the saddest day of our lives at UNIZUL". "Very scary and traumatic because my father worked a night shift all my childhood and young adult life" "and recognising her struggles and sufferings…as the thoughts were with a sense of sadness than helplessness" "(The culprit) was pinned down to the ground and beaten so badly that I thought he had died" "The (school) boys caught up with him and stabbed him to death" "The violence of her murder (my sister) was hard to swallow"

Process influences such as recursiveness, chance, culture and context (Patton & McMahon, 2014) are inferable from vignettes in Table 4.3, Table 4.4 and Table 4.5. Their exact manifestation was interpreted within contextual and comprehensive discussions in Chapter 5 with illustrative excerpts from autoethnographic data. Consequently, according to processes captured in Table 4.2, the next section accounts for *Phase 2* findings from participants' narrative threads yielding utterances extracted from respective transcripts.

4.2.2. Phase 2: Findings discerned from analysis of transcripts (participants interview data)

Due to already explained unfeasibility of appending textual transcripts, it seemed expedient to condense findings into *Appendix F* wherein participant's utterances are presented in Appendix Tables such as in Appendix Table F.1 as an example. Each Appendix Table encompasses utterances related to each research question according to the four distinct groups of participants. Schwandt (1994) states it as a fact that "language and history are both the conditions and the limit of understanding" thus making "the process of meaning construction hermeneutical" (p. 120). In that regard, each participant's narrative was read as part of a whole to align it with the hermeneutic quality (Mkhize, 2005; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000) to then contextualise meaning. Such an approach enabled accessibility and authenticity of findings from which judgement criteria could also be ascertained. However, each Table is labelled in a manner that indicates which question the utterances related to and from which of the four participants' group. These then ensured comprehensibility towards corresponding interpretations and discussions covered in Chapter 5.

Seeing that meaning patterns were also derived from conceptual and theoretical constructs which eventually coded meaningfulness of all constructs, it seemed important to select illustrative participants' utterances which concretised all constructs. Such concretisation enhanced coherent and contextualised interpretations as well as synthesised discussions that eventually addressed the study's research questions with accompanying objectives which are all discussed in Chapter 5. Thus, Table 4.6 below captures the utterances that illustrated the inseparability of lived and career experiences, also acknowledging that isolating a particular experience with a view to coding it meaningfully is consistent with analysis processes of discerning within conceptual and theoretical contexts.

Table 4.6 illustrative participants' utterances that concretised meaning embedded in conceptual and theoretical constructs

Conceptual Constructs	Concretising meaning inferable from	Selected utterance from Recent graduate Participant 2	Metatheoretical Constructs (STF)
Complexity at personal level	All participants	"I was not knowledgeable about tertiary education…what it is…what I can study…the influence was from my parents…saying these are the ones to give you money"	Intrapersonal system

Conceptual Constructs	Concretising meaning inferable from	Selected utterance from Recent graduate Participant 1	Metatheoretical Constructs (STF)
Psychosocial status	All participants Articulated only by recent graduate *Participant 1* and self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 5*	"I was exposed to violence in the township where I grew up" Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 5* "From 1976 upheavals were severe …unfortunately I got arrested…police said they saw me in the front but I never saw me in the front"	Social system

Conceptual Constructs	Concretising meaning inferable from	Selected utterance from Family member Participant 9	Metatheoretical Constructs (STF)
Spirituality	Peer *Participant 6* and Peer *Participant 12* *Articulated by* self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 5* Family members *Participant 8* and *Participant 9* Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 11*	"Your religious beliefs are very strong"	Intrapersonal system

Conceptual Constructs	Concretising meaning inferable from	Selected utterance from Peer Participant 12	Metatheoretical Constructs (STF)
Complexity at familial level	All participants	"There are so many…finance was a problem…we lived out of nothing…totally nothing…some of my age mates left school. Poverty was just the order of the day"	Social system

Conceptual Constructs	Concretising meaning inferable from	Selected utterance from Self-proclaimed inxile Participant 4	Metatheoretical Constructs (STF)
Complexity at educational level	All participants	"Passing rates are very bad…government is pumping money into (education but if the children) are on drugs most of the time how will they pass…maybe they will pass because now there's a lot of tick…but deploy them into industry…they can't deliver"	Social system

Conceptual Constructs	Concretising meaning inferable from	Selected utterance from Peer Participant 6	Metatheoretical Constructs (STF)
Complexity at societal level	All participants	"I don't see our learners gaining anything from that (LO) with regards to careers…they still make the same mistakes that we made…doing teaching because they could not be admitted in what they wanted to pursue"	Social system

Conceptual Constructs	Concretising meaning inferable from	Selected utterance from Recent graduate Participant. 3	Metatheoretical Constructs (STF)
Developing economy	All participants	"I went into university thinking it's a three year degree…honours is your choice…masters is your choice…the fact that I had nothing…no information…so I think we don't have programmes at school that will try to give you all the information"	Environmental/Societal system

Conceptual Constructs	Concretising meaning inferable from	Selected utterance Self-proclaimed inxile Participant 11	Metatheoretical Constructs (STF)
Complexity at global level	All participants *Articulated by* Family members *Participant 8* and *Participant 9* Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 11* Peer *Participant 12*	"We are not treating education in the kind of manner it requires …much more than just going to school…it needs a long-term commitment…for us as black people …internationally…to a large extent I think we are failing to capitalise on educating our black race…I hope that one day we will have the political leadership that can respond to such a challenge"	Environmental/Societal system

Conceptual Constructs	*Concretising meaning inferable from*	*Selected utterance from Additional youngest Participant 14*	*Metatheoretical Constructs (STF)*
Critical insights relating to career management theories	Articulated by all *except* Peers *Participant 6* and *Participant 12*	"Sometimes it's the individual himself not pursuing their goals. There are people who are currently overcoming social ills… at times its just the person standing on his way of career management"	
		Family member *Participant 8*	
		"The country will be able to compete globally…do business competitively…it will be a global player"	
Conceptual Constructs	*Concretising meaning inferable from*	*Selected utterance from Family member Participant 10*	*Metatheoretical Constructs (STF)*
Critical inputs to enrich SA education processes	All participants	"Matric is very important but we reach it without knowing what we want. We can't even say no when pressured"	Process influences
		Additional inter-generational *Participant 13*	
		"Putting a lot of money into training good teachers for after-school programmes" "creating flexible opportunities for life-skills development. The USA… Canada are asking why the focus on maths and science"	

Considering all analysed data employing stated steps as analysis processes, it was evident that the STF (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006, 2014) became an all-encompassing metatheoretical framework. It enabled data analysis as rationalised in reviews of the framework that were summed up as Table 2.1 in Chapter 2, and theoretically and philosophically explained in Chapter 3. Eventual and meaningful inferences became major thematic domains as summated in the following Table 4.7 whereby the broken lines capture the overall seamless synchronisation interface between the two sets of constructs.

Table 4.7 Synchronised major thematic domains

Metatheoretical Constructs (STF) Content Influences	Seamless Synchronisation interface	Conceptual Constructs Complexities
Intrapersonal system Ability Interests Skills World of work knowledge Personality		Complexity at personal level Psychosocial status Spirituality
Social system Family Peers Community groups Education institutions Media Workplace		Complexity at familial level Complexity at educational level Complexity at societal level
Environmental/Societal system Political decisions Historical trends Employment market Geographical location Socioeconomic status Globalisation		Developing economy Complexity at societal level Complexity at global level
Process influences Recursiveness Change over time Chance		Critical insights relating to career management theories Critical inputs to enrich SA education processes
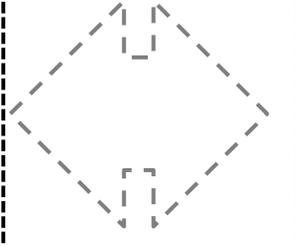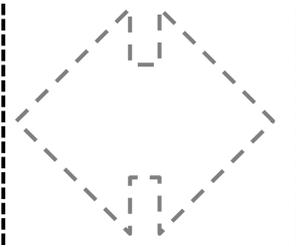
4.3. Concluding chapter summary

Data analysis was a critical part of the study in that it clarified the role of collected data in efforts to derive meaningfulness that was required for subsequent interpretation and discussions in a penultimate chapter towards the study's conclusions. Fundamentally, it emerged that for qualitative studies such as this one, there are no copyable data analysis approaches due to the varied nature of investigated phenomena which thus often employ varied designs that necessitate creative approaches. Such an approach was thus created employing strategies which firstly noted that the study's conceptualisation, research questions and selected participants essentially indicate the analytic nature of qualitative designs. The second strategy drew from the interpretive phenomenological approach [IPA] which clarified not only how to go beyond first order analysis, but to also exhaust transcribed textual data towards expansive handling of all available data as part of meaningful quality indicators for judgement criteria of the study. Finally, the strategy rested on extracting meaning patterns from theoretical constructs (i.e. Table 2.1) towards broadening conceptual constructs which then served an enriched approach to the data analysis process.

To account for the above stated approach, Table 4.1 was formulated as the overarching structure that embodied all strategies, whereby Table 4.2 further accounted for the actual steps that were followed as part of the data analysis process. Formulating the two Tables resulted in the process being broken down into two phases because data was also collected in two phases. Thus, *Phase 1 data analysis* related to autoethnographic data captured as a story in *Appendix D* and yielded findings that were presented in Table 4.3 relating to individual level influences with illustrative evocative vignettes from autoethnographic data; Table 4.4 relating to the social system level influences with illustrative evocative vignettes from autoethnographic data, and Table 4.5 relating to the environmental-societal system level influences with illustrative evocative vignettes also from autoethnographic data. Meaningfulness of findings was thus interpreted and discussed in the following Chapter 5 in relation to research questions and accompanying objectives of the study.

Due to the unfeasibility of appending transcribed textual data from participants, all narrative threads and utterances were analysed and thus yielded *Appendix F Phase 2* findings. Again, Phase 2 data analysis process followed the steps mentioned in Table 4.2. *Appendix F* covers Appendix Tables F.1 to Appendix Table F.5 according to the four research questions with narrative threads capturing participants' utterances. Clarifying explanations are given in relevant parts of *Appendix F* as a guide towards coherent meaningfulness of findings and I mention it in this chapter chiefly to highlight the link between the two data analysis phases. Furthermore, it was noted in this chapter that participants' narrative threads eventually concretised conceptual and theoretical constructs as embedded in the utterances and thus yielded coded meaning patterns. Thus, Table 4.6 captured this process and illustrative utterances were extracted to represent at least all the participants, impelling two entries from two participants for at least two of the sets of constructs. Consequently, harmonising all inferences within the created data analysis approach concluded when Table 4.7 resulted in illustrative major thematic domains, essentially showing synchronisation of the entire data analysis process. Thus, the next Chapter 5 covers integrative interpretations and overall discussions particularly in relation to the extent to which research questions and accompanying objectives of the study were addressed.

CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: *THE GAME*

5. Introduction

It was established in the previous chapter that data gathering and analysis processes eventually require interpretation so that meaningfulness can be inferred, contextualised and discussed mainly in relation to posed research questions along with related objectives. Given that data collection and analysis unfolded in two distinct phases as indicated in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2, the process resulted in *Appendix D Autoethnographic* detailed findings as *Phase 1* and *Appendix F* as *Phase 2* detailed findings from participants. As such, interpretation and discussions of all findings in this chapter attempted to retain the structure presented in the stated Tables in efforts to create maximum coherence and accountability to the study's overarching conceptualisation and rationalisations. However, the hermeneutic quality of human engagement was consistently borne in mind because utterances within narratives related variously to each question and was thus noted in view of the multifaceted quality of the study. Such an approach was required to present structured but integrative discussions that accounted wholly for the study's conceptualisation, literature reviewed and adopted methodology. Importantly, towards also ensuring accountability that then accentuated judgement criteria for justifiable conclusions as presented in the next Chapter 6. Notably, the major study's outcome thus far was the emergence and synchronisation of conceptual and metatheoretical constructs captured as Table 4.7 in the previous chapter, which I regarded as fundamental for framing interpretations as well as accrued meanings. Considering the foregoing chapter outline, I then elaborated the approach I adopted in the remainder of this chapter in the next section below.

5.1. Approach to interpretation and discussion of findings

The aforementioned major outcome (synchronised conceptual and theoretical constructs) became pivotal due to Huberman and Miles' (1994) contention that qualitative designs eventually assume a novel quality in their undertaking, also supported by Halfpenny (1979) in that opting for abstract conceptions is unhelpful for discussing such studies.

Thus, preference for originating constructs enhanced their conceptualisation through operationalisation in that they were based on concrete observations to derive Table 4.7. Accordingly, interpretations were primarily made based on original conceptions as a distinctive characteristic of qualitative designs. Halfpenny (1979) further asserts that all constructivist-interpretivist studies are exploratory and developmental for as long as originating concepts explain the process of immersion that then identifies the natives' conception of their collective world. Notably, Halfpenny's assertion corresponded with this study's overarching philosophical perspectives which enhanced cultural descriptions from experiences in ways that privileged access to natural forms of self-expression towards enriched interpretations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008b; Hartung, 2013; Hosking & Morley, 2004).

Expectedly, the explained approach was guided by underpinning goals which Larkin et al. (2006) assert are firstly an attempt to understand the participants' world, their experiences, processes and relationships, as well as to provide coherent descriptions of these elements as co-constructed between the parties in relation to the phenomenon of inquiry. Riessman (2000) highlights that the stated goals are largely determined by the researcher's speciality orientations which, in the context of this study correctly pointed to the subject of inquiry as embedded in the researcher's discipline of interest (psychology). The outcome is that the field gets enriched through shared meanings which in this instance acknowledged Rapley's (2001) emphasis to extract narrative threads within the talk as prompted by the question for enhanced contextualisation of interpretations and discussions. The stated acknowledgement brought to mind a conversation I had with the study supervisors where it was uttered that: we "*hope those participants' voices will have a strong presence in your study*" towards corroborations through others' voices in view of autoethnography as the study's strategy within the qualitative paradigm resulting in *Appendix D (my story)* and *Appendix F (voices)*.

The approach to interpretations and discussions was supported by underpinning philosophical perspectives which privileged self-expressive conceptions that captured definitive vocabularies as embedded in the community of the multiple voices. As such, the following discussions reflected how the researcher and participants defined themselves as well as how I understood these, importantly still within the study's theoretical formulations.

5.2. Discussion of findings

In the next five sections I firstly discussed findings related to the four research questions which respectively covered Section 5.2.1) on discerned approaches from the researcher's lived-career management story including those that were witnessed by family members; Section 5.2.2) on prevalent socio-economic, educational and political/historical complexities that were argued as persistent in constraining career management processes in the post-apartheid era. In this section participants' voices determined the extent of change which was argued as minimal in the study; Section 5.2.3) on insights discerned from lived-career management experiences of South African [SA] inxiles towards enhancing career theories in SA. These emerged as theming threads from which the indigenous perspective of knowledge was emphasised; as well as Section 5.2.4) that covered discerned critical inputs from participants' lived-career management experiences for enriching the SA education system. The last Section 5.3 evaluated the findings from the inxile-exile perspective which condensed the collective voices into harmonious coherence that captured the essence of the study's core focus areas. As such, Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 resulted as a concluding summarisation of discerned and inferred influences on career management processes of the collective voice across the posed research questions. Accordingly, the first section was discussed as follows:

5.2.1. Approaches discerned from one inxile's lived-career management experiences

The first research question was based on the rationale that none of the dominant career theories could be applied to explain career experiences of South Africans in general or be aligned with autoethnographic *Phase 1* finding in particular, which indicated a gap in the career field. The accompanying objective was to establish veracity of the rationale while also seeking for indigenous representations of manifested career processes towards narrowing the gap that would then also contribute to the field cultural representations of such knowledge. Since justification of the rationale hinged primarily on autoethnographic data, the findings therefrom were also subjected to corroboration by family members who participated as witnesses to the lived-career management story.

In view of the identified gap and the absence of a compatible career theory, the study's findings were then theoretically and philosophically aligned with the Systems Theory Framework [STF] (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006, 2014). This alignment provided firstly the means for analysis as presented in: Table 4.3, Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 as well as a reference for interpretations and discussions in this chapter. Importantly, each of the cited Tables respectively represented narrative strings extracted from the career story as units of analysis relating to individual, social and environmental-societal levels of influences. Hence, approaches and strategies employed in the lived-career experience were of interest as depictions of a sociocultural perspective that then addressed the first objectives of the study. To provide a brief theoretical backdrop, I highlighted through reviewed career literature that *career management* as the construct within the study's phenomenon of investigation, was less researched in career theories compared to *career development*. The lesser prominence of the key construct in literature resulted in common interchangeable use of both constructs in reference to career processes. As such, career development descriptions suggested the process as consisting of developmental stages (Greenhaus et al., 2006, 2010), a lifelong process of guidance for learning and work (SA Department of Higher Education and Training, 2015) as well as an upward mobility process in a series of jobs (Moerdyk, 2009).

Therefore, I held the view that such processes describe career behaviour according to individuals' developmental phases across his/her systems of influence, at times suggesting an upward trajectory. Accordingly, autoethnographic *Phase 1* findings were evaluated against the stated descriptions and it became apparent that the lived-career experiences showed no relatable career behaviour or deliberate career directed approaches. Essentially, there was evident absence of active career behaviour through primary, high school and university level education as opposed to equally emerging reactive career inclinations which occurred naturally as part of maturational processes. These happened without any guided intervention that may have drawn from intrapersonal systems towards career goals that then remained dormant.

The stated inferences were drawn from the Tabled analysis of vignettes which also show evidence of readiness for stimulation within educational social systems, which, nevertheless, remained latent mainly due to the Bantu Education system as described by Nicholas et al. (2006), Seroto (2004) and Sihlali (n.d.) that I got exposed to throughout my educational life. Gama's (1984) findings support the given interpretation in that there were no career guidance services for blacks at schools or in the township to supplement Bantu Education. Bantu Education was a system that was designed to produce unskilled or semiskilled labour from blacks that would serve the apartheid policies in the country at the time and was in full force when I was born (Appendix D, p. 345). As an illustration, the excerpt below attests to the kind of poetry I was exposed to at higher primary school thus depicting the kind of learning content that just scratched the surface of individuals' potential with no career related relevance:

Excerpt 1

> Unforgettably, the isiZulu, Afrikaans and English poems: *Ma ngificwa ukufa* by B.W. Khumalo, *Muskiete Jag* by A.D. Keet as well as the *All things bright and beautiful b*y C.F. Alexander. The isiZulu poem expresses sentiments on when death overcomes me and the Afrikaans one is about chasing a mosquito. I recited the poems without complete understanding of embedded meanings, or conscious sense of pride and achievement (Appendix D, p. 353).

Notably, I was about 10 years old when I was exposed to the evident memorisation which I seemed to have mastered very well, therefore indicative of inherent ability. However, *death and dying* were non-existent concepts in my consciousness at that age. Also, my life was filled with pressing poverty to appreciate anything *bright and beautiful* in my surroundings, and *chasing a mosquito* was hardly an entertaining activity for any educational meaning to be attached to it. Implied is that it was crucial for the education system to at least stimulate latent intrapersonal elements towards maximised responsiveness to learning experiences in that it was, and still is their primary purpose in the lives of individuals towards eventual career outcomes. Furthermore, the family environment is also an important informal educational social system even though autoethnographic data showed that my father had no formal education and that my mother had Standard 2 (Grade 4 equivalent) as her highest education level achieved.

Considering the socio-political environment in the country at that time, their limited exposure to formal education added to an impoverished family background that confined my educational/formative years in the circumstances of my birth (Appendix D, p. 345). The recounted circumstances indicated a lower social class in that my father worked nightshifts at a bakery and my mother worked as a domestic worker in the suburbs of Johannesburg. Still, findings indicated that their obligation of ensuring that I attended school was fulfilled, especially by my mother. She carried the burdens of our nightly safety while also ensuring that there was food for us and provided for our overall wellbeing including that of her own, alone most times, with seven children in the family. Such backgrounds had to be ameliorated by enriched exposure to formal educational systems especially for career imperatives towards any possible positive career outcomes as argued by several scholars such as Akhurst and Mkhize (2006), Bloch (2004), Crossland, (2006) and Gama (1984) among others.

However, my memory retained highly pronounced and atrocious experiences within school systems at all educational levels which were directly triggered by my socioeconomic circumstances. At this point, I reflected on an incident when we could only be bought shoes for the Christmas and New Year seasons. In this instance, white plastic shoes were bought for church attendance purposes on Sundays but limited resources meant that the same shoes still needed to be usable for school purposes. To that end, the plan was to cover the white shoes with black shoe polish although I am sure everyone knew that in a short space of time, the polish was going to 'cake' and peel off, rendering the shoes neither black – suitable for school, nor white – suitable for church. Generally, we enjoyed walking barefooted to school but winter time we needed school shoes which then caused teachers to complain that what I was wearing was not proper school shoes. In retrospect, I believe that it was a blessing that I had something to wear instead of staying at home due to my lack. Such a pattern of deprivation was not limited to school uniform but to all resources required for maximum provision towards a gainful/healthy educational experience. I am reminded again of an incident whereby one male teacher at high school punished me so mercilessly for missing a test due to circumstances that were beyond my control as captured in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 2

It was also in the same year that I attempted to participate in athletics, running the 800 meters, which unfortunately didn't last long as I got into serious trouble with the coaching teacher for events unrelated to the sport itself. The coaching teacher also taught us one content subject and often made us write tests every Wednesdays at 06:00 in the morning. The approach was that no one was allowed in class for the test after the teacher had arrived and thus he literally became the clock on test days. My brothers had the responsibility to walk me to the taxi rank on those Wednesdays as it was often still very dark for me to walk by myself, especially in winter even though they too still had to prepare for school. One fateful Wednesday morning the taxi I was traveling in drove past that teacher who was waiting by the next stop at the taxi rank and I was certain I would get to class in time. I think the teacher got a lift in a private car to get to school before me because when I got there, the test was already underway. Knowing the rule very well, I decided to hide in the girls' toilets till the start of school at 08:00, same time as when the test usually ended. The plan was to bunk that subject's lessons to escape the punishment awaiting me which I knew very well wouldn't pass till meted out. The teacher must have realised that I was then bunking his lessons and decided to come to class during one random period when there was no other teacher in class. At that moment, everyone looked at me and I looked at the nearby open window which was too high for me to jump out of, and the teacher reached me before any other means to escape could come to mind. In his hand, was the thin black leather switch we called *istrap*[4] which the teacher used to cruelly whip with on learners' stretched-out-opened-palms. The strap would then wrap around the hands such that a person would get twice as many lashes on the palms and on the back of both hands. The teacher then just came straight to my desk and without a word started hitting me all over my body with the strap. That went on for so long, so much that it seemed it wasn't going to end and the entire class was shell-shocked at the force with which the punishment was meted out. I was so defenceless and my silent screams went on without any mercy till the teacher was satisfied. All I noticed afterwards was that all my jersey buttons were ripped off due to the viciousness of the lashes. My hands, arms and upper body bore the hall-marks of the severe beating which, on hindsight, seem to have been well calculated because I wasn't hit on my head or face. God forbid how I would be looking like now with those tell-tale scars on my face! (Appendix D, pp. 360 – 361).

Emerging from Excerpt 2 are family considerations for my safety on my way to school yet the effort was met with gruesome cruelty on the part of the teacher. The punishment was not for failing the test but for arriving after him.

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[4]Istrap was a thin black leather strap that was designed for meting out punishment on learners. It was so strong and yet so supple that it never broke no matter how much force it was applied with.

The distance from home to the taxi rank near home was about five minutes, and probably 10 minutes from that taxi rank to the one near the school, and the walk from there was probably another 10 minutes. A rough estimation is that I may have arrived at school before 06:00 if I left home around 05:00 which implies that had it not been for that the teacher's arrival was the clock, I probably made it on time for the test. I considered the evident diligence to my school commitments as shown in Table 4.3 illustrating intrapersonal influences to argue the conclusion that I probably arrived at school earlier or in time for the test. Also, given that the taxi I was in passed him by at a subsequent taxi rank pointed to that I was reasonably early in that he too was to alight at the same spot as me. In retrospect, I believe that had the same vigour towards punishment been shown by similar passion towards my career development, I would have known and my experience would have been richer. Overall, I have no recollection of what happened next except for that the buttons of my school jersey were all broken and hung loosely by the threads to capture the aftermath.

I am also not sure how I completed that year at school or how I progressed with subsequent lessons in that subject but I know no one at home or any school authority figure got to know about the incident. Yet the memory is so vivid, indicative of internalised psychological scarring due to the then legal corporal punishment that got abolished in SA after the democratic dispensation as explained in the DBE (2013b) and by (Mokate, n.d.). Evidently, if home circumstances were lax, I probably would have quit school to avoid the punishment I was so certain awaited me. Also, the naivety that accompanied my assumption that dodging the subject lessons was enough corresponded with my 15 years of age at the time. Clearly, the highlighted experiences capture broader socioeconomic complexities and the narrated family circumstances provided a holistic representation of similar difficulties that were inextricable from career processes as further illustrated in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 3

I never played *izwipi*[5] as I wasn't good at it and there wasn't enough play-time for me in general, although it could be due to the huge scar on my leg I earned from the wrath of my mom for over-playing one day when I was about eight years old. It was standard practice to make tea for her first thing when she got back home while she also soaked her swollen feet in lukewarm water to unwind from the pressures of the day after work. On that particular day I didn't see her arriving till I noticed that it was getting very dark outside and I quickly ran to the house to check if she was home already or not. As I tiptoed into the house, I wasn't aware that one of my elder brothers had already picked the strongest branch from the apricot tree in the garden and it was hidden behind the kitchen door, placed as a whip to be used on me for when I got inside the house.

I was shocked to find that my mom was already in her bedroom and I quickly grabbed the teapot, emptied it by the drain outside the house and rinsed it to make fresh tea for her. Unfortunately, the tea I poured into the drain was fresh tea, already made by my brother and was stood by the side of the stove to brew properly for when my mom would come to the kitchen to enjoy it. Even more unfortunate was that the tea-leaves my brother used to brew that tea were the last lot available in the house. I am sure anyone can imagine the fury that accompanied that hiding. I still bear a permanent scar as evidence of that incident and interestingly, that was the first and the last time for my mom to beat me up for the rest of my life…Luckily, all this didn't disturb my school performance as I breezed through primary to high school in record time. It helped not being preoccupied with my circumstances in that I had very little awareness of how impoverished I was. I just went on with the business of being a school child with no conscious realisation of poverty's impact on my life (Appendix D, pp. 356 – 357).

Furthermore, I argued in the body of the thesis about the atypical complexities that framed both my life and career context and foregoing discussions indicated the passivity with which I pursued schooling processes as well as how little awareness I had of the poverty that surrounded my existence. Evident still are indications of how ripe I was for career directed encouragement given the highlighted early maturity and insight while I was at lower primary school before age 10. However, I regarded these as part of a maturational pattern that showed readiness for increased stimulation from educational social systems which was not evident in my experiences.

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[5] *Izwipi* is a game whereby a coin would be spun around on the ground by the thumb and index fingers, and the gathered group of children would have to guess the top side, whether head-or-tail. They used to bet with their coins which were then collected as the loot by the spinner when the answer was wrong.

Accordingly, the emphasised interpretations support the importance of an education system that stimulates learners' latent abilities towards foundational career awareness imperatives that also form part of scholars' core contentions (see Bordin, 1994; Ellery & Baxen, 2015; Hsien & Huang, 2014; J. Maree, 2015; T. Mbeki, 2002a; Mokoena, 2006; Mokgele & Rothman, 2014; Uy et al., 2015; Watson et al., 2011). As a whole, undesirable socioeconomic impediments are well documented due to their widespread and pervasive character in SA's inequality scales as explicated by Netshitenzhe (2013), Soudien (2015), Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) particularly among the black half of the economic divide as stated by T. Mbeki (2002a) and Gama-Chawana (2013a, 2014). Hence, the fundamental tenets of SA's latest socioeconomic policy framework (NPC, 2012) are directed at possible strategies to extricate affected individuals from the entrapping and persistent circumstances of their birth especially considering their hindering effects on career achievement as reasoned in the entire thesis.

Nevertheless, similar circumstances were a norm under apartheid SA, a political system during which I had the misfortune of being born as it was vigorously being enforced. Or, perhaps a fortunate era given that in all probability, it gave birth to this study as explained in its conceptualisation. It is a study that came about due to theoretically established chance factors that are included as process influences in the STF by Patton and McMahon (1999, 2006, 2014) as also indicated in autoethnographic findings. Essentially, the element of chance was discernible from my home environment when I started reading my elder brother's very engaging and comical writings that kindled my love for the stated pastime that also seemed to have been a coping strategy among my siblings. This chance expanded to include a friendship with a peer who knew about libraries when both of us started our high school education at age 13. She came from a better than mine (by a fraction) socioeconomic environment in that her father was better educated than both my parents put together, and there were only two of them as siblings in her household compared to my culturally very wholesome seven siblings. The above reflection brought to mind the book I was reading to unwind from the thesis demands: *David & Goliath: Underdogs, misfits and the art of battling giants* (Gladwell, 2013) in which the author illustrates how disadvantages are actually undiscovered advantages.

The resonance with the accidental experience or even the entire lived-career experience was uncanny. So, peers had a far significant influence than the classroom confines in my career processes in that we all walked home as a group after school. Simultaneously, the walks also stimulated survival strategies as I could then save the three cents bus fare which accumulated and enabled me to buy *Sunlight soap*. It was an affordable detergent to wash with my school uniform during the week in that more costly products like *Omo Powder Soap* were strictly reserved for whole family laundry on Saturdays. Being a girl and having to cope with natural developmental processes amidst such family circumstances posed unutterable dilemmas which still continue to haunt the youth of this day as referenced in one personal communication with one of my students in my role as an academic, M. Mpini (pseudonym) in Section 5.2.2 below. Additionally and post the 1976 uprisings in Soweto, my family found my younger sister and me a school in Natal, one province in the old demarcations of SA.

Circumstances at our newfound home in Natal drew me towards a friend I seemed to share a natural desire with to want to work harder in our school work. It was that combined desire that saw me through my matric year in that I selflessly shared my understanding of the school work with fellow students. This sharing clearly enhanced my own understanding of the school work, hence I was lucky to be among the six out of 62 students who passed with matric exemption which then qualified me for university entry in degree studies. Such a pass corresponded with accreditation criteria by the historical Joint Matriculation Board (South African Vice-Chancellors Association, 2001) in my final year of school. This was a great achievement for me in that in my class, we had teachers for only two of the seven Higher Grade subjects we were enrolled for and to pass, a learner was required to pass at least six subjects, four of which were to have been registered and written on Higher Grade. Furthermore, it was my love of debate during school extramural activities that brought on a bit of light in my realisation that I wanted to pursue law degree studies at university, for which I had applied and was provisionally accepted by the University of Zululand [UNIZUL]. On hindsight, I realise that the chosen field of study itself was stimulated by political circumstances in the country and a desire to fight for justice was probably the primary motivation.

It was a glimmer of light that had no prospect to sparkle in that my elder sister, who was in all respects not just a sister but more of a parent, had already decided that law degree studies were not suitable for me. Her objections related to that: for as far as I can remember, and in the context of the *present-absence* of my parents, she was responsible for all my wellbeing, including financially in that my first university year studies came about after she graduated as a social worker from Fort Hare University. Since I eventually got accepted at UNIZUL, it turned out that she too had already decided that Library and Information Science degree studies were a better choice. Retrospectively, it seems that it was a line of reasoning I can associate with CHE's (2010) findings that individuals from a lower social class are pressured into decisions as influenced by prevailing circumstances, such as choosing the cheapest programme of study instead of what one would wish to pursue. Such instances are also commonly maintained among scholars as influential in career development processes (see Bhana & Bachoo, 2011; Blustein et al., 2002; Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005; Hsieh & Huang, 2014; Tchombe et al., 2012).

Upon reflection though, I realised that her decisions were also underpinned by connectedness in career processes within cultural value orientations (Mkhize, 2005, 2011, 2013a, 2013b). Such orientations view individuals' career processes as part of a cultural group's way of living, hence my conceptualisations of the constructs of career, career development and management constructs: as entangled with my family, community and society as explained in Chapter 2. Accordingly, my elder sister's involvement was due to our family's immersion into the stated cultural orientation, similarly as to when one of my peers handed me down her school tunic when it became too small for her. She had observed me getting punished regularly for not having correct school uniform. Again, my elder sister's love and care for me influenced her choice for a 'safer' degree qualification in that most law students didn't complete their studies due to victimisation by the police for their heightened sensitization to political issues of injustice. Often, they got arrested, were killed or they skipped the country into exile, a fate I believe my sister was protecting me from, similarly to how the 11 year old peer protected me from the teachers' beatings for not having the school tunic. Consistent with family involvement in career decisions, I noted too that my mother had her own career path for me in that she planned for me to pursue nursing as a career when I completed Form 3 (Grade 10).

It was a career path I got diverted away from by the intervention of a husband and wife community members who were close family friends from church. I surmised that the learned family noted my inherent abilities and applied for a bursary for me that was duly awarded when I was in Form 2 (1974) even though the opportunity eventually got 'burned' to ashes along with everything else that was destroyed during the 1976 uprisings. These political upheavals then led to the subsequent full assumption of my education needs by my elder sister. These experiences exemplify the arguments that in collectivistic cultural communities the final career decisions do not rest solely with the individual (McMahon & Watson, 2009; Mkhize, 2005; 2011) but bear with them benefits for the collective. Notably, I was also already benefiting from my elder sister's career success! Overall, I believe that my eventual career trajectory is a testimony underpinning my view that culturally, older family members' decisions are (or is it were?) regarded with greater respect associated with wisdom and are (or is it were?) rarely challenged.

Indeed, there was not a whimper of dissent (or is it back-chatting?) from my side regarding the path that was chosen for me although I know I silently resolved to still follow law studies once I was able to fund my own education, which never happened as after that derailment, I seemed to just drift along in the career realm. Accordingly, it became bothersome not to find a career theory that tapped adequately on all the presented findings, interpretations and discussions. Hence, the insistence that such knowledge will remain unknown for as long as researchers refrain from asking culturally embedded questions as stated by Fitzgerald and Betz (1994). The insistence inspired me to then pose research questions that sought for indigenous explanations of my lived-career experiences resulting in this study. As such, prior to the intentional yet retrospective review of my lived-career management experiences, I attributed to loads of luck all the completely negotiated hurdles as created by the argued complexities along the way. However, a magnified scrutiny illuminated the profound yet obscure influence of spirituality which Patton and McMahon (2014) consider esoteric, and Bhana and Bachoo (2011) associate with coping strategies among low to middle income families. It was so obscure till it got spelled out in Biko's (2008b) writings as one unique gift from Africa to Western scholarship, which the author acclaims as what defines Africans as people closer to nature.

Such a definition got expanded in Mkhize's (2013a) representations of our connectedness across the "elements in the hierarchy of beings" (p. 4 – 17). Still and in autoethnographic findings, my attributions to spirituality hooped above the hierarchy directly to God, at least in Biblical terms (Maxwell, 2007). However, Mkhize (2013a) considers God as "rarely invoked directly" (p. 4 – 17) which, in a sense, still places me among the lucky few who have had, and still has, that rare direct access. Accordingly, spirituality was corroborated and witnessed by family member *Participant 9* thus: *"consistency, persistence and spirituality"* when explaining strategies I used to navigate career processes. I captured this influence in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 4

4.10. "At the core of it all" (Kohl, Meela & Kohl, 2013, p. 116)

I could not have formulated it any better than the foregoing quotation to capture the essence of this last part whereby the lingering question could be:

What exactly comprised the spine of this life-career journey as narrated thus far? *First* of it all, I know that God led my every move as I yielded to being a puppet on His strings, and just be obliging. Much later in life, I seemed to have my own life-career goals but ended up at different destinations than I had intended (Appendix D, p. 423).

Accordingly, it was explained in Chapter 2 that in career literature, spirituality is framed as meaning or purpose (Pryor & Bright, 2004) but surfaces as an area that needs greater attention in the career field (Huntley, 1997; Savickas, 1997) especially in practice where differing understandings and interpretations may be problematic. A point in case related to the vignette: *"at some point I decided to pull off the road to pray for some cheer"* which depicted the depths of my spirituality as a personal system influence. Yet, at that point in time the prayer itself was significant in bolstering my mood state within Robbins and Judge's (2009) descriptions of the state. To contextualise: I had struggled for just over 5years to secure an organisation I could be accepted at for an accessible internship opportunity to be able to register as a psychologist according to the requirements of the Professional Board for Psychology [PBP], within the regulations of the Health Professions Council of SA (HPCSA, n.d.).

Apart from the scarcity of such opportunities and in one instance, as I was completing administration processes to commence after an offer from one very large organisation, the HPCSA ruled that my academic curriculum needed three additional modules before they could register me as an intern. That meant a year's delay as I then had to register for the said modules but for non-degree purposes. Needless to say, the opportunity lapsed in a strange twist of fate in that the offering organisation itself got involved in a shaky merger and takeover that rendered the opportunity abortive. At that point in my life, I was ready to quit my permanent job as a teacher in 1999 towards a fulltime internship programme although my own personal circumstances were precarious which progressively reduced my chances of quitting my job. Another opportunity came by when one organisation had four vacancies in 2005 and I was sure to be selected after being shortlisted among the top seven applicants. Unfortunately, I fell among the three rejected candidates, which was one very bitter pill to swallow at that point in my career life as the next excerpt attests:

Excerpt 5

> Soon after the (higher learning institutions) merger, I applied for one opportunity in a company that had four vacancies and I was so sure I would secure at least one of them when I got shortlisted. My optimism was short-lived when the director of the company phoned after final interviews and said that I was not appointed for any of the four spots. I received the crushing phone call just as I was preparing to attend our department's Christmas lunch (at work) and I was about to put on my well-chosen attire. After that phone call, I had no appetite for festivities or desire to socialise or to face my colleagues or my family. All I could do was to take two biographies I had bought earlier and decided to lock myself in one of the rooms in the house where I alternated mental states between sobbing and reading. I read Marley and Jones' (2005) book on the life and times of Bob Marley which resonated with the miserable state of my personal life at the time, while McGregor's (2005) on the life and times of Khabzela opened my eyes to the extents of the of HIV/AIDS scourge in my community (Appendix D, p. 404).

Then followed two or three other opportunities that required me to quit my job at a time when personal circumstances were impossible for me to do so till this one opportunity that offered great flexibility between the internship programme and my work roles as an academic. As such, I was headed to this opportunity when the referred to prayer (spirituality) by the roadside became my only source of strength. I needed to present myself enthusiastically towards securing the opportunity as may have been available at the destination I was headed to.

This observation has implications for the career field of practice in that had I presented myself to a counsellor and related my story as narrated in autoethnographic findings, any emphasis in interpretation could have influenced the process of counselling and outcome in many possible ways. Thus, it is my view that indigenous career experiences embody immense cultural wealth from which the missing elements in career theory can be discerned, particularly the influence of spirituality. Till such knowledge is purposely tapped, Krumboltz's (1994) criteria of accurate, responsible, comprehensive, integrative, and adaptive dimensions in a career theory will remain elusive. Furthermore, several narrative strings were extracted to populate the cited Tables in foregoing discussions. Briefly, they all provided reference to luck that exposed me to the twists of life and career in that I tasted the world of work as a domestic helper on weekends at the age of 13 and I progressed to work as a *casual* shop assistant just after completing matric. The holiday job got reserved for me when I started with studies at UNIZUL and I always got back to it during university recesses for all the four years of studies in Library and Information Science.

In between, I also worked at the university library as a student library assistant till I completed my degree studies. All these strategies enabled the evolution of what I describe as a career simply from not stopping but just kept on moving forward against all cited complexities. After traversing the terrain with the highlighted strategies, I was able to finally exhilarate as in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 6

> Then on the 7th July 2008 I happened to go to campus even though it was still during winter recess and I had a terrible sore throat. Still, and out of habit, I checked the emails first and got greeted by an email from the HPCSA which I was certain contained my (board) exam results. The corridors on SWC were empty, with neither academic staff member nor a soul of any student in the vicinity. I steeled myself and clicked to open the email. My eyes raced up and down the page looking for a *pass or fail*. I couldn't believe my eyes when I finally saw the *pass* as well as the final 71 marks I had obtained. With no one nearby to share the news with, I stormed out of my office only to notice the emptiness in the corridors again. I then went back to the office and grabbed my cell-phone to make calls to anyone I knew was holding their breath along with me in anticipation of the final outcome.

> All I could *scream* to people on the receiver's end was that: '*I am a psychologist*' in the highest possible pitched-voice in total disregard of my indisposed condition at the time. The screamed announcement of my results was followed by uncontrollable laughter and indescribable joy due to that successful result (Appendix D, p. 413).

However, due to the design of the study, it was mandatory to include other voices, particularly three members of my family as witnesses to my story which necessitated prior inquisitions on *career management* as the phenomenon of inquiry in this study. Such inquisitions were important in that none of the three family participants have knowledge of the phenomenon apart from associating it with their own individual career processes. Riessman (2000) considers sensitizing inquisitions as a means of allowing participants to cognitively dwell in the researcher's field during data collection. Also, in this study in particular, it heightened my awareness on each participant's understanding of the phenomenon so that conversations could be correctly delimited towards the goals of the study. The said goals also embraced the imperative to tap into participants' brains (Facione & Facione, 2007) towards also developing knowledge (Moerdyk, 2009; Nieuwenhuis, 2010c). Accordingly, family members' narratives on the phenomenon are captured in *Appendix Table F.1a.* Briefly: *Participant 8* employed the concept of development to describe the phenomenon; *Participant 9* simply explained it "*as managing your career.*" *Participant 10* regarded career management as "*a game plan for your life…not a three year thing…your entire life…what you will start with…what you will do to build on that…knowing from point to point…not necessarily a destination...getting all the tools you need to get there.*" From these views I realised that they had sufficient understanding of the phenomenon and therefore, the strategies or approaches they observed to witness my lived-career management processes were captured as follows:

Family member *Participant 8* who is about seven years younger than me

- "you take your career very seriously and do not take short cuts" family member *Participant 8*
- "you are a focused type of a person…you don't want to let external things interfere with your goals" family member - *Participant 8*
- "you are a go-getter…you push…you don't quit easily…you are a visionary type of a person…you've got a vision in terms of what you want" family member - *Participant 8*
- "those things are factors that may have propelled you towards maintaining or developing your career" family member - *Participant 8*

Family member *Participant 9* who is about five years older than me

o "Consistency, persistence and spirituality" family member - *Participant 9*
o "you became aware that education is the only weapon you need to free yourself" family member - *Participant 9*
o "you became a teacher, a parent as well as their friend…you always cared to help wherever you can" family member - *Participant 9*

Family member *Participant 10* who is about 32 years younger than me

o "throughout life there have been personal challenges that you faced which wear (down) a person…you still needed to go down, regroup and then regenerate…things that hindered your career management" family member - *Participant 10*
o "going to an Afrikaner University as an African and a black person, must have posed a few obstacles…transitioning and adapting and studying in an environment that is different…could (have) serve(d) as an obstacle to your career management" family member - *Participant 10*
o "setting goals for yourself…equipping yourself with knowledge by going to school…associating yourself with people in similar profession to get a holistic understanding of the profession" family member - *Participant 10*

Taken together, family members witnessed a focused, persistent and a resilient approach to career demands which implied a persevering attitude in the face of accompanying environmental and life turmoil or challenges. Seemingly, the identified challenges were (are) similarly sustained by spirituality that appeared to have also connected me in communal relationships particularly in the identified role as a teacher. *Participant 9's* reference to 'being aware' corresponded with my interpretation of reactive career inclinations in that such awareness did not result in any evident career plan although *Participant 8* and *10* seemed to have observed better proactivity which I attributed to their being much younger than me. Therefore, these elements were elaborated in discussions pertaining to research question three and four as elements that can then be gleaned for indigenous career knowledge development as well as recommendations for consideration in career education policy reformulation processes as respective objectives in both research questions. Summarily, the chaotic but unceasing lifelong learning as a 'persistent' approach formed the spine of my life-career story. It underpinned all strategies to career development and management processes and rendered autoethnographic findings credible through the reflected personal agency and goal-setting, particularly in my late life-career processes.

The stated experiences further corresponded with the concepts of recursiveness and change over time as explained by Arthur and McMahon (2005) as well as by Patton and McMahon (1999, 2006, 2014) which also related to constructivism as an overarching philosophical perspective in career stories as reasoned by Hartung, (2013), Savickas (2011b), Stead and Bakker (2012) as well as by Young and Collin (2004). Given the foregoing substantiation of the observed theoretical gap in the career field on which the first research question was based, it remained critical to conclude discussions of autoethnographic findings by reverting to the STF as a metatheoretical framework to evaluate those influences which were discernible. In that regard, the framework's representation of influences as *dominant* (Arthur & McMahon, 2005; Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006, 2014) posed a contradiction in relation to autoethnographic findings in that discerned influences did not manifest as 'dominant' to result in any career behaviour. As such, my view was that the cited example (Patton & McMahon, 2014, pp. 266 – 276) whereby all influences are illustrated as present in the individual's life, but their prominence graded as *more* or *less* requires refinement towards better application in other instances as in the present study.

Conceding that the degree of influences vary over time (McMahon et al., 2012), interpretation of the influences such as *gender* within the intrapersonal system is one example in that I may not be more or less female at any of my developmental phases. This example corresponds with the women's stories in Bimrose et al. (2015) whereby the narrated career experiences focused primarily on their gender as an influence that either propelled or hindered their career outcomes. In this instance, the direction and the extent to which being a woman impacted on the women's career outcomes could be stated but without concrete quantification to qualify the direction of the influence. To argue this view further, one can refer to poverty as an element within the socioeconomic contextual system but the fluidity of the element renders it a subjective factor, whereby its quantification can only be measured against an established criteria. I may have regarded myself as poor in my childhood, a state that I may still be finding myself in regardless of my developmental stage because poverty is a subjective socioeconomic condition that is not necessarily obvious or obscured. Hence, recursiveness and change over time are essentially processual influences but clearly not measurable unless in a differently focussed study.

As such, the reason for suggesting refinement was based on that my interpretation of *presence* relating to any influence should be evaluated in relation to realised outcomes in the life-career experience(s) of the individual. Therefore, the influences' representation as 'less or more dominant' emphasises their presence when in fact it should be the eventual career behaviour that should be interpreted as the desired outcome or not. Perhaps the stated understanding was due to interpreting the framework on applications of autoethnographic findings which were on the self, wherein I have better insight into the examined life-career experiences. However, a possibility exists that similar interpretations in career practice could prevail and should thus be treated with caution and not in haste to establish the influences' theoretical presence. Doing so might result in unintended and compromised counselling practices, as much as their weighting could be confusing particularly within qualitative designs.

The stated reasoning is congruent with Stead and Bakker's (2010) description of influences as *embeddedness* instead of dominant although for interpretation purposes in this study, I regarded them as discernible influences. Eventually, these were then depicted in the following adaptations as in Figure 5.1; Figure 5.2; Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4 through lived-career management experiences: respectively at school leaving age; then 10, 20 and 30 years after leaving school as in the cited example (Patton & McMahon, 2014, pp. pp. 266 – 276). It was remarkable that the depicted influences remained consistent across the phases. It was a confirmation of Watson's (2015) interpretation of Ovambo people's proverb that a "woman is a basket" (p. 202) in that "women are resilient, resourceful and adaptable to the changing (*sometimes unchanging*) environments that they live and work in…women constantly have to engage with their environment as they load and unload a variety of *ongoing* influences that affect their lives" (Ibid, italics added for emphasis). Accordingly, highlighted influences (in pink) remained largely undeveloped but were discernible across transitional phases with the exception of *aptitude*, (which, in my understanding, connoted a quantified outcome of skill or ability), *disability* and *health* within intrapersonal system level influences. Also not discerned was *globalisation* within environmental-social system level influences. The influence of *spirituality* has already been evident and explained.

Again, the also emerged *psychosocial* influence within individual's social and environmental systems was interpreted within contextualised discussions under research question three (i.e. Section 5.2.3) of this chapter.
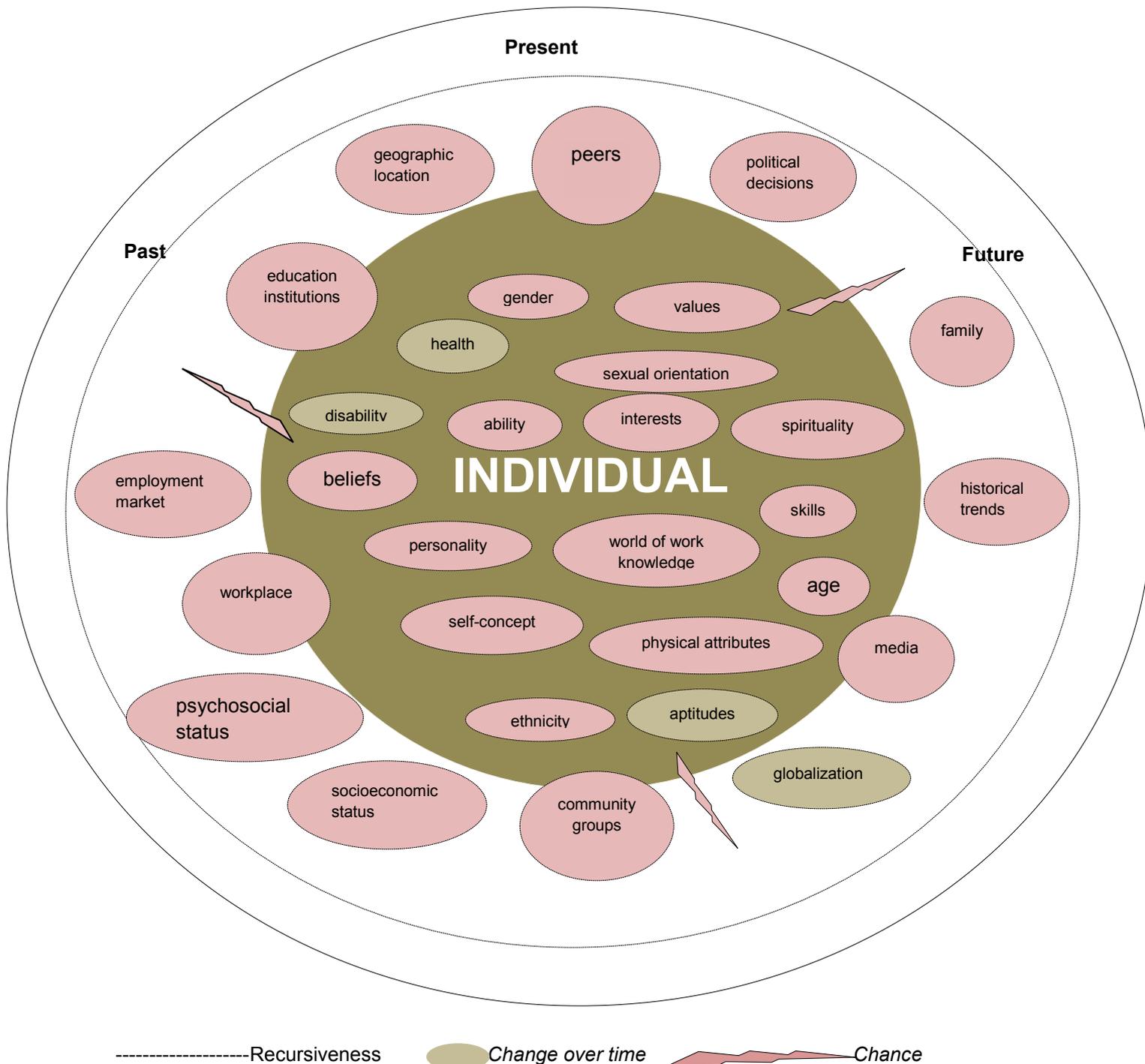
Figure 5.1 Discernible influences at school leaving age. Adapted from: Patton & McMahon, 2014, p. 268, Career development and systems theory: Connecting theory and practice (3rd ed.). AW Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense.
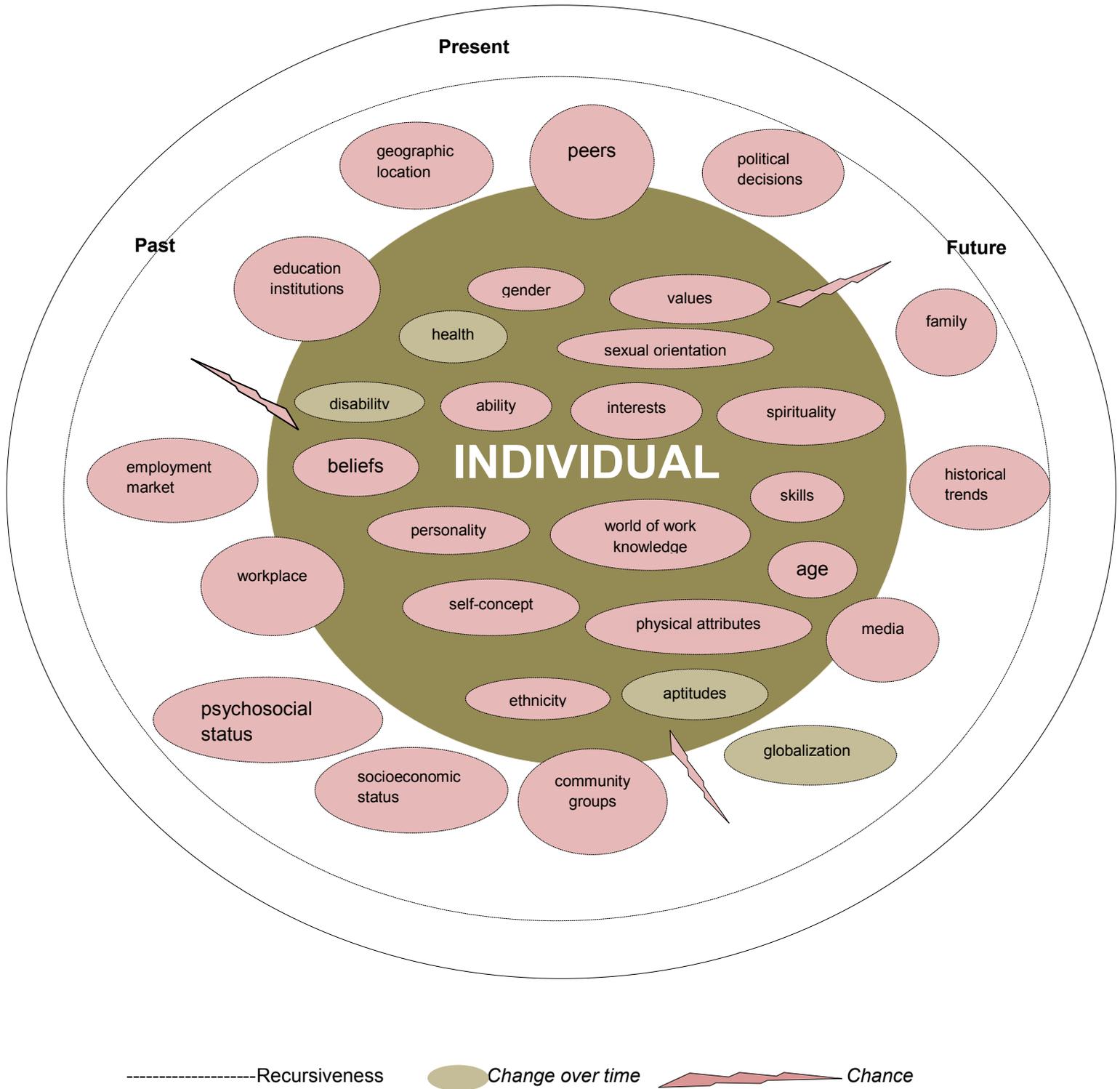
Figure 5.2 Discernible influences 10 years after leaving school. Adapted from: Patton & McMahon, 2014, p. 269, Career development and systems theory: Connecting theory and practice (3rd ed.). AW Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense.
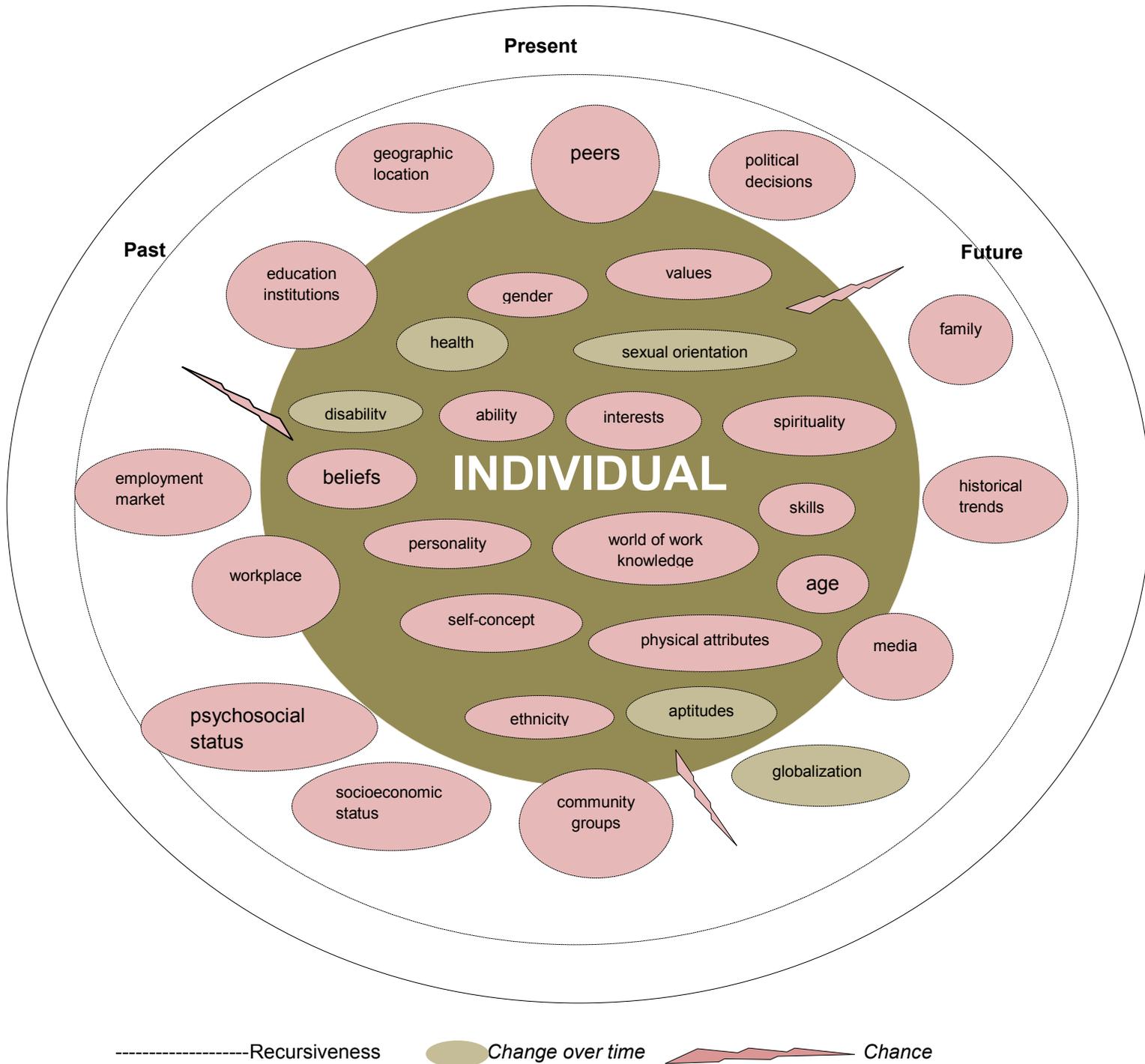
Figure 5.3 Discernible influences 20 years after leaving school. Adapted from: Patton & McMahon, 2014, p. 270, Career development and systems theory: Connecting theory and practice (3ʳᵈ ed.). AW Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense.
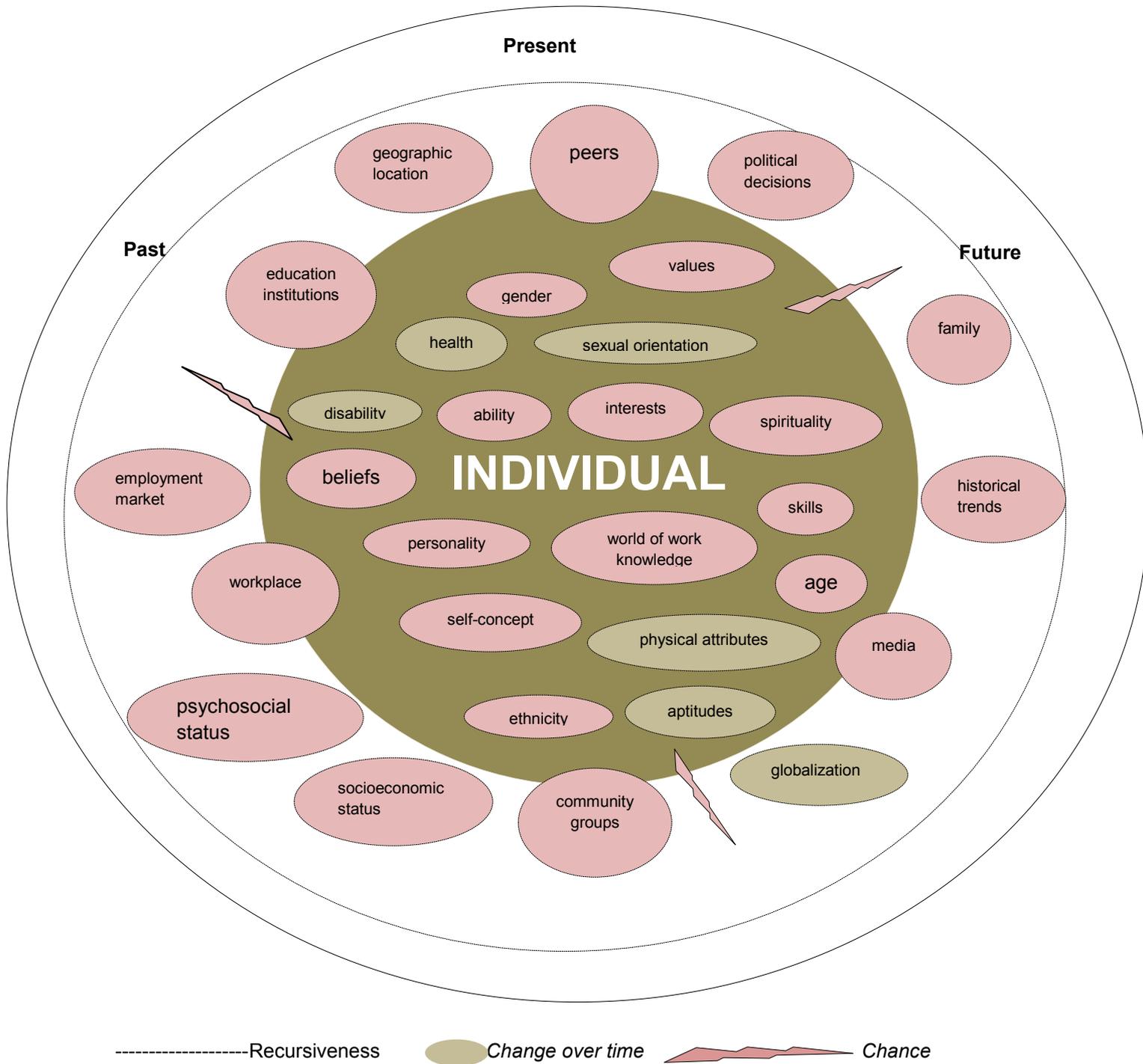
Figure 5.4 Discernible influences 30 years after leaving school. Adapted from: Patton & McMahon, 2014, p. 271, Career development and systems theory: Connecting theory and practice (3rd ed.). AW Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense.

The foregoing depictions illustrated discerned influences as explained but overall, their fluidity rendered them intertwined (as embodied in an individual), which supported my preference to regard them as discernible at least for interpretations and probably for the field of practice as well. Seemingly, the interplay in attributing meaning to the influences was what illuminated the STF as a framework and a flexible means of understanding individuals' career processes across career theories in clear congruence with McMahon et al.'s (2012) view that "it is not so much the descriptions of the influences that are important but the meaning…of the influences…the recursiveness between the individual and influences that is revealed through the stories" (p. 130). Consequently, the second research question pertained to observed persistent complexities in SA resulting in economic underperformance, increasing crime, unemployment, corruption, diseases, poverty, despondent and constrained living that still sees only a few productively exploiting their systems to develop and manage careers. I thus discussed findings in relation to these concerns in the next section.

5.2.2. Prevalent contextual complexities constraining career management processes in SA's post-apartheid era

This section captured discussion of findings on the second research question through which I argued that little has changed in the career education processes of individuals when comparing my lived-career experiences with those of the younger generation in post-apartheid South Africa. The arguments were based on the prevailing socioeconomic career environment that is characterised by persistent poverty, poor education system, slow economic growth and high unemployment levels especially among the youth resulting in adverse consequences for career outcomes. Since the research process of evaluating the extent of change relied on the multiple voices along with those of family members, it was part of due consideration to then also ensure clearly demarcated conversations according to participants' understandings of the *career management* phenomenon. They comprised of three recent graduates, two peers, three self-proclaimed inxiles and two additional participants. Their comprehensive views were captured in Appendix Table F.1b to Appendix Table F.1e forming part of *Appendix F*.

Briefly and on career management: recent graduates *Participants 1, 2 and 3* cited mostly the components of development, management, planning and self-knowledge; my peers *Participants 6* and *12* emphasised interests, abilities and goals, whereas self-proclaimed inxiles *Participants 4, 5* and *11* highlighted the importance of choice as an individual's domain. The intergenerational *Participant 13* emphasised proactive and reactive factors and the other additional youngest *Participant 14* highlighted indecision that was framed as open-mindedness. None of the participants made reference to the importance of knowing about the world of work and only two (i.e. interests and ability) of the 17 intrapersonal influences in the STF (Patton & McMahon, 2014) were mentioned. Also, the connectedness explained in Mkhize's (2000, 2005, 2011) description of career processes within collectivistic value orientations was not mentioned or inferred, as well as the role of counsellors (at school or in private practice) was not mentioned. However, all participants emphasised the phenomenon as an individual's obligation whereby other family members and sponsoring organisations were only mentioned to minimise their influence in career processes.

Overall, the emerged formulations aligned with descriptions in career literature which was enough to show that the phenomenon was well understood by all which then permitted further exploration of the second research question encompassing any significant changes in SA's political, educational and socioeconomic complexities that impact on career processes. Related and comprehensive responses were captured in *Appendix F* as Appendix Table $F.3b_1$ (family members' responses); Appendix Table $F.3b_2$ (recent graduates' responses); Appendix Table $F.3b_3$ (my peers' responses) as well as Appendix Table $F.3b_4$ (self-proclaimed inxiles' responses). To recap, it was argued in the study that the idiosyncratic SA complexities have minimally changed and still constrain individuals' career management processes in similar fashion as I was impacted on under the apartheid regime. Participants' narratives are presented below capturing their viewpoints on the complexities, especially on their persistent prevalence. These were individually interpreted and discussed in relation to the second research question as follows:

Recent graduate *Participant 1's* narrative

> If I did not put (create) an enabling environment to become a student assistant, able to pay (for my) university tuition fees I wouldn't have acquired my degree…I would have been a drop out…(Vista University) was a previously disadvantaged institution…the number of strikes that took place…talks to close the university…rumours that the degree I was going to acquire was inferior…to be recognised by private corporates in Africa you still had to go and upgrade that degree in the likes of Wits and RAU At the same time…people without formal education are being appointed into very strategic and senior positions….sometimes you feel our government isn't for formal education.

Participant 1's narrative captured personal and educational complexities where his family's socioeconomic status necessitated him to work as a student assistant so that he could pay for his education. These experiences are similar to how I held holiday work soon after matric and during university recesses and throughout the university semesters as a student library assistant over a four year period. Without such supplemental income, I cannot imagine how hard it would have been even though I had a full bursary for tuition and boarding fees over the duration of my studies. Even the learning institution (Vista) that *Participant 1* attended was regarded as inferior due to the rationale for establishing eight campuses across the country's townships in 1981 as a means to keep black students from attending other racially determined universities in SA (Ogude, 2005). Similarly, Vista was established to pursue discriminatory educational ends like UNIZUL even though *Participant 1* entered university around 2004, 10 years after SA achieved democratic government dispensations. The noted inferiority denoted well-entrenched socio-political and educational deprivation as argued in the study. However he entered university at the same time as when the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (RSA, 1997) was being implemented which led to the incorporation of Vista (Soweto & East Rand Campuses) into the Rand Afrikaans University along with the resulting entity's merger with the Technikon Witwatersrand that together were renamed the University of Johannesburg (Chawane, 2004). He also inferred societal complexities when pointing out corruption in government through nepotism as well as the education system that is in permanent crisis as also explained in the study.

Recent graduate *Participant 2's* narrative

> I was not knowledgeable about tertiary education…what it is…what I can study…the influence was (still) from my parents…they wanted me to have a job that brings in money…they selected for me quickly saying these are your options…these are the ones that will give you money…I believe that the education system fails the children…you need to own your education career… 30 percent then you pass? I haven't managed my career too well…in high school during Life Orientation they prompted us to display what we'd like to do…that was when you've had to research. I used my interests to drive me…to keep assessing this interest whether it is something I would like to do long term or not…you must have a goal…I took initiative to explore myself properly…wanted to see where I can fit in.

Participant 2's narrative pointed to exposure to Life Orientation as a contentious subject according to its reviews in Chapter 2 also supported by Jacobs (2011), Oosthuizen (2014) and Rulashe (2004). Evident too were parental decisions in the career choice she was advised to pursue which were directly linked with her future earning potential even though both her parents are professionals and she is an only child. Such familial pressure resonated with experiences in autoethnographic findings which then showed little change even after the introduction of LO as a subject in SA schools. Thus, substantiating the views that the substance and focus on career education has minimally changed in that "in the past and present cultural context of South Africa, there is considerable pressure within previously disadvantaged communities for adolescents to choose careers that gain parental approval" (McMahon & Watson, 2013, p. 282). However, she had insight to realise the imperative to pursue her interests although it wasn't clear whether her interests corresponded with her parents' wishes. Illustrated in the narrative was the connectedness dimension of career as a family decision as argued by Mkhize (2000, 2005, 2011) as well as by J. Maree and du Toit (2011) although it was not determinable whether the intended financial wellbeing was in her good future interests or that of the family's.

Recent graduate *Participant 3's* narrative

> I feel like the LO thing, they've dropped the standard for them to just enter varsities…get there…can't cope in their first year…they don't prepare them with relevant knowledge…I went into the university thinking it's a three year degree…honours is your choice…masters is your choice…the fact that I had nothing…no information…so I think we don't have programmes in high school that will try to give you all the information.

If I had enough money I think I would have finished earlier, I am sure I would be a professor by now…(at work) there was a programme…you have a supervisor that helps you manage your career…they have to know where you want to go…then they give you courses that would relate to whatever you want…they gave me HR courses...but it was not what I wanted…I would still go for the course…but I still felt that no, let me pay for my fees then I can have exactly what I want…(the) unemployment rate (is high)…because when I finished (school) I had to go and look for a job…as young as I was I didn't get a job that was actually in line with my degree Some people choose to go to work, like my friend if I can bring in his story because the family couldn't help…he couldn't study going for masters and honours (The family said) we are dying here please go bring food. There are scholarships and bursaries…opening ways for people who want to study…when you have a bursary you already have a job…that means you already have a plan with your career…the government is trying…the NSFAS…I feel like its a way of motivating people to show them that careers are important…I am not sure if the bursaries and scholarships are enough…there's something at teaching…they even get money while they study…that's the motivation now for people to get something or a career…you'll have to make sure you work hard…there's competition… remember to always have high grades…because its not everybody that gets it.

Participant 3's family background consisted of at least two family members with professional qualifications yet she still exited high school with no information regarding educational demands at tertiary level even though she also had exposure to the LO subject. Her reference to it as the <u>LO thing</u> was telling in its low regard together with the generally lowered pass mark of 30 percent in school subjects. She struggled to get a job immediately after degree studies but finally secured one where her then employer had the means to evaluate her career orientation but failed to go deeper towards exploring and satisfying her career aspirations. She then resolved to engage in self-development when she could afford it. She highlighted unemployment as a major socioeconomic impediment but also noted the better availability of financial assistance through bursaries and the NSFAS. She emphasised the importance for individuals to work harder in view of limited resources that need to be competed for. Her comment about her 'being a professor' struck a chord in me in that my own age-mates particularly among other SA race groups who have educationally laboured on their careers as much as I have, are now highly achieved professors. Nevertheless, her better socioeconomic environment still did not prepare her adequately for career processes till she took it upon herself to manage her career according to her aspirations. Hence, my view that recent graduates still suffer a relatable fate in their career processes as had confronted me.

Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 4's* narrative

> Do you think promising students will want to listen to what is happening in parliament? Its disgraceful!

Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 4's* relevant narrative was summed up in one evocative utterance that captured less than pleasing scenes in SA's parliament.

These could be associated with ongoing haggling in parliament also related to government's wastefulness with indications that nearly R30 billion is lost to corruption in SA (City Press Says, 2015). The lack of SA government's financial prudence renders poverty, joblessness, poor health systems and the recurrent educational crisis legitimate grievances that perpetuate all argued complexities.

Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 5's* narrative

> Today children are affected by their parent's lack of education…we are still unable to advance children…that is where self-discipline should come to play…until we get a push from that poverty trap…exacerbated by HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 5* associated the complexities to parent's educational background due to their exposure to Bantu Education, a system that has already been explained as not providing much in modelling what is required towards career imperatives, also associated with the social class impact on career development as explained by Bhana and Bachoo (2011). He expressed the view that individuals need to respond better to the resulting complexities, as also argued in this study. He further noted the HIV/AIDS epidemic that is regularly reported as very high especially in Sub-Saharan countries as also established by Dalton-Greyling and Baur (2012, 2013) on SA as a developing economy. Accordingly, historical trends, personal, familial and societal complexities were inferable from the narrative.

My peer *Participant 6's* narrative

> We still do not have people…who are career guidance teachers or psychologists…today they call them LO teachers…I don't see our learners gaining anything from that…with regards to careers in particular they still make the same mistakes that we made…pursuing something else because of this Funza Lushaka (SA Government Bursary Scheme for educators)…they could not be admitted in what they wanted to pursue…all flock to that…whether they love teaching is another thing…they are not even interested in it like myself.

> I see graduates loitering… sometimes you get that in the newspaper when they write about South Africa being compared to other countries…even those North of Limpopo you see us failing badly…I want to believe there is something that other countries are doing (right) that we don't do…that we are failing at.

My peer *Participant 6* highlighted the deprived educational competence of LO teachers as was explained in Chapter 2 along with congruent findings in already cited literature under *Participant 2's* narrative. Being my peer, she identified the resulting compromised career outcomes for learners who end up pursuing unsuitable careers which all pointed to educational complexities, eventually becoming statistics among unemployable graduates. She noted the government's bursary scheme for those wishing to train as teachers but it seems its attraction is linked with socioeconomic reasons as explained in similar findings by the CHE (2010) which then keeps the cycle of deprivation in motion within educational complexities. She further highlighted extremely poor literacy outcomes among SA learners in comparison to those in other Sub-Saharan countries, indeed even in "international assessment tests, in terms of which 65% of school leavers…are functionally illiterate" (Sayed, 2007, p. 8, as cited in Badat, 2010, p. 35) which minimises SA's perceived better affluence in the continent and thus a developing economy characteristic.

Family member *Participant 8's* narrative

> Poverty…is a daily experience…even children at school get feeding schemes because at home there is no food…children today are not channelled properly on careers they are choosing…not suitable for them…find themselves wrongly placed career-wise…a lot of potential is lost through lack of funding…lots of individuals cannot access higher education…or gain skills because of lack of funds.

Participant 8 inferred all argued dire socioeconomic conditions which prompted SA government to even have the feeding scheme, also cited by Dieltiens and Meny-Gibert (2008/2009) as part of the education policy (Education Policy, n.d.). This observation indicated the large scale impact of poverty on accessing education and logically on career outcomes as a result. Clearly, career education was described as in shambles that greatly affected the inseparable career success and economic success of all concerned.

Again, the widely reported ongoing crisis in the country's higher education sector (Cele, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2016; Habib, 2015; Masondo, 2015a; Pillay, 2016; Sibeko, 2015) are no longer symptomatic of all societal ills but point to near collapse conditions of the country in its democratic era. The large scale destruction of academic resources such as burning of libraries and deference of funds to advanced security measures to protect property and staff, cease being only of scholarly pursuit. I now decry in unison with the rest of the nation about the terror that threatens to take the country back into the terrible 1980s where teargas, gunshots and fire punctuated ends to life, and presently, many careers hang in the balance in similar fashion to threats on my own career over the span of the lived experience.

Family member *Participant 9's* narrative

> You saw it all from the beginning to where we are today…from apartheid to the new dispensation…you have been the victim of everything that happened…it was difficult for you to do…people have begun to doubt the aims of the present government.

Participant 9 provided a lifelong perspective on all the argued complexities and corroborated my lived-career experience in a few utterances to give credibility to the conceptualisation of the study, its findings as well as accurate interpretations that pointed to insights of the only surviving family member participant who is presently older than me in our family. His observations condensed my experiences through a reflective yet profound link between the era of my birth and the one presently dimmed by the argued strangleholds explained as multipronged complexities.

Family member *Participant 10's* narrative

> Look at different schools…you can see the type of support-structures certain schools offer to children from a young age and the pool of knowledge that certain individuals are exposed to…there's lack of resources…other schools only start discussing career choices and career development at high school…a child needs to be cultivated from the beginning…its not urgent…there's no sense of urgency in terms of career management…its emphasised that education is important but then the bigger picture and the end in mind are not kept…the whole mind-set of the apartheid era was to suppress black people…to manipulate them using the most powerful weapon which is their minds.

Participant 10's profile aligned with that of recent graduates and provided ample contrast on societal inequalities as stated by Wilkinson and Pickett (2010), Netshitenzhe (2013) and the NDP 2030 (NPC, 2012) that impact on education. She noted the urgent but under-emphasis on career imperatives in particular. Her narrative captured recommendations on corrective measures to deal with the resultant scourge of apartheid on black people. Clearly such observations were only profound to younger participants due to the pervasiveness of complexities as argued in the entire study. Accordingly, the view that very little has changed towards influencing positive career outcomes in SA was supported.

Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 11's* narrative

> Our political situation in South Africa does not seem like they are giving education a priority…in our context the economy is not growing…the underperformance of our economy has stifled career development.

Participant 11's narrative reiterated recent graduate *Participant 1's* views and he drew a parallel between SA's economic performance and individuals' career outcomes. A parallel in that there is little that shows unity of purpose that should serve articulated, synergised and intended outcomes which then pointed to developing economy characteristics where prioritisation of resource utilization seemed unconsidered. Accordingly, societal complexities were pronounced in the narrative which also explained poor competitive economic performance on a global scale for the country as argued in the study and cited as adequately measured in continental and global indices (WEF, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015).

My peer *Participant 12's* narrative

> (Today) poverty is the main thing that is disturbing children to learn…illiteracy from the parents…because my general observation is that young girls…children…seem not to have values from home that would guide them to take education very seriously…girls…end up being pregnant at a very early age.

Similar to *Participant 9's* views on poverty strangleholds in the educational sphere - that were associated with familial complexities due to socioeconomic impediments, the outcomes are severe consequences especially for the youth, particularly girls.

It seems the youth remain a vulnerable cohort of concern in career studies as expositioned by Gama (1984) for the youth of Soweto and I believe the used sample in 1984 exemplify ongoing deprivation across the entire country's youth. Consequently, the foregoing interpretations resonated with the heart of the entire study's conceptualisations as expositioned in previous chapters. Such findings corresponded with autoethnographic findings which undoubtedly did not deviate from experiences of my peers, fellow inxiles as also observed by recent graduates. Accordingly, it is proving harder to eradicate the impacts of apartheid especially on the education front as shown in explanations by Laher and Cockcroft (2013b) as well as by Mlambo-Ngcuka (2006). The persistence of the discussed complexities overshadows the positive efforts which seem miniscule in comparison.

The young ones who have to go through the education system which highly educated and influential elders in society regard as rubbish (J. Jansen, 2015), stinking (Mamphele, 2012) or those who report that "no one takes us" (Masondo, 2014a, p. 10) due to shrunk job opportunities point to deepening psychological harm especially among the youth on who SA's future economic success rests. It is difficult to imagine how individuals can achieve career success except through an empowering education system that must stimulate survival strategies. All three recent graduates narrated instances where they themselves have had to twist the arm of fate towards their own desired career outcomes but such tenacity may not be perceptible for most of the youth to realise on their own as at times the strangleholds may seem too overwhelming. I noted in an earlier discussion a reference to how I regularly got confronted by discouraging conditions in my own work experience as a teacher and an academic where I have witnessed severe poverty levels among learners and students. In the earlier reference, I primed on one conversation with M. Mpini (Personal communication, March 13, 2015 – pseudonym used), where the orphaned, third year black female student unwittingly shared that she was using the contraceptive pill (which is given freely at community health centres) in order to stop her monthly ovulation cycle because she couldn't afford sanitary towels. The strategy was to get for free what she could, to deal with a naturally occurring situation that required her to have money to cope with. Oftentimes, she went for days without food when her supplies were finished because she survived primarily through the food-bursary paid for by the National Students Financial Aid Scheme [NSFAS].

South Africa, what kind of a nation are we for young women to interfere with their reproductive systems, at huge risks to their health and future feminine wellbeing to fulfil career imperatives while also dealing with severe poverty? Sadly, I know of several colleagues who part with their own personal resources to help students who accidentally let slip on their circumstances – but the need is far greater than meets the eye! Indeed, what does our field do as the custodian body of psychological wellbeing of our citizens because our collective silence, as Pillay (2016) points out, is deafening as was also observed by *Participant 5.* Even non-psychologists are alarmed in that "there is no doubt that there are many people walking around with untreated post-traumatic stress…our country has made no attempt at all to address these issues" (Mangena, 2015, p. 168). Clearly, it was apparent that multifaceted strangleholds undermine SA's progress overwhelmingly. However, Mashaba (2014a) shared his views during an annual conference at the University of Stellenbosch where he declared "I am going to talk about how I believe South Africa can best advance the welfare of their citizens" (p. 1). The address resonated with his other presentation (2014b) to the Executive Development of the same university held in honour of young graduates during the Annual Award Certificate Ceremony on 08 December, where he stated:

> As you receive your certificates, ready to lead our country as senior managers, be in the private or public sectors, I need you to recognise that you have the responsibility to inspire the nation and facilitate the creation of a platform for growth, peace and prosperity by applying the rule of law in your respective positions (p. 1).

Mashaba's (2014a, 2014b) message to the young graduates evinces the imperative for broad based change which I believe can be ameliorated by focused career education to stop the country from further economic downward slide as consistently reported in economic indices (WEF, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015). Consequently, it was rationalised in the study's introduction the imperative for all South Africans to work towards envisioned change as expressed in the NDP 2030 (NPC, 2012). In that regard, the third research question and objective attempted to draw from the collective voice of participants regarding insights discernible from lived-career management experiences of South African inxiles that can enrich career knowledge in SA.

The question echoed inquisitions posed to the field relating to what SA career theory could be based on, and whether the dominant theories adequately cover cultural, socio-economic and social conditions (Nicholas et al., 2006). Nicholas et al.'s question resonated with Netshitenzhe's (2015, 2016a) which emphasised the role of knowledge development through scholarship. Both inquisitions were congruent with the study's third research question and objective as discussed below along with related findings.

5.2.3. Insights from SA inxiles' lived-career management experiences for enhanced SA career theories

It was highlighted in Chapter 2 that the broader career field is engaged in ongoing scholarship focusing on establishing coherence in theoretical formulations that would advance the field, also for purposes of better theory based practice. As a result, the untenable theoretical coherence especially for application purposes in this study, necessitated utilisation of the STF (Patton & McMahon, 2014) as a metatheoretical approach that was developed from dominant career theories. Again, the imperative for indigenous and locally derived representations of career inclinations served as the rationale and motivation that underpinned the objective to investigate the phenomenon from a hindsight perspective. To enhance readability in this part of the chapter, I condensed the steps followed in the discussions below as follows:

o Broader related findings are reflected in *Appendix F*.
o The hermeneutic influence became more pronounced within each participant's narrative especially in parts of research questions two and three.
o Therefore, all corresponding findings in Appendix Tables (i.e. Appendix Table F.3a to Appendix Table F.4c$_4$) were inferred from to discern central elements that seemed to have had influence on lived-career management experiences of inxiles, and thus resulting in derived conceptual meanings.
o Interpretation of these elements yielded fluidly theming threads (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a) which gained contextualised meanings from participants' utterances (Mkhize, 2013b) as the sources of inference (Rapley, 2001; Riessman, 2000).
o Such interpretations accentuated the themes' indigenous embeddedness in a manner that dispelled *exotic* notions as cautioned by Stead and Watson (2006).

- o Prioritisation was given to conceptual than theoretical constructs according to qualitative studies' character as aligned with views by Halfpenny (1979), Hosking and Morley (2004) as well as by Denzin and Lincoln (2008b). However, where possible, the theming threads were also aligned with the STF structure.
- o Such an approach broadened and enriched further the synchronisation of constructs as presented in Table 4.7.
- o As far as possible, supportive literature was cited as in the body of the thesis.

Accordingly, the insights emerged as theming threads from which the indigenous perspective of knowledge was emphasised in each theme as discussed below.

Theming thread one – values: clustering around *ubuntu*

The *first* theming thread corresponded with **values** that crystallised the construct of *ubuntu* within collectivistic value orientations and communal interdependence as explained by Mkhize (2005, 2011, 2013a, 2013b). Given that values form part of various career theories as individuals' intrapersonal level content influence (Patton & McMahon, 2014; Sharf, 2013), the constructivist perspective of careers (Patton, 2011; Savickas, n.d., 2005, 2011a; Stead, 2004; Young & Collin, 2004) subsumes indigenous conceptualisation of values, expressed as *ubuntu* in collectivistic cultures. In relation to constructivism, values implied culturally embedded formulations for infusion in sensitized career knowledge creation endeavours. As an example, studies such as that by Reeves et al. (2015) as well as that by Walker (2015) support the view that individuals who possess wider capability sets <u>should know</u> their obligations to others. Such knowledge helps in minimising injustice and inequality in the world which, notably, speaks of communal sharing as espoused within the *ubuntu* value. In my lived-career experiences, when the neighbour's child handed down to me her school tunic that had become small for her, she demonstrated that she <u>knew</u> my struggles as she realised the regular punishment I suffered unfairly for not having the correct school uniform. It was an extension of communal living that acknowledged our common heritage even though we were both about 11 years old at that time. If such value orientations are promoted in career scholarship it has potential to influence practice as further emphasised and recommended in Chapter 6.

Furthermore, the following excerpt from autoethnographic findings illustrated the consequences of going against the values through discipline which I believe my father was doing:

Excerpt 7

> Another vivid memory of when I was about 10 years old was when one Thursday morning my father gave me four cents to share with my three brothers at school as he used to get paid on Thursdays. During that particular time, the school was using the platoon[6] system and my classes were in the afternoon. I must have reasoned that my brothers wouldn't know about their pocket money, because it was a rare privilege. I went on to buy a full-house of *ikota*[7] which was every child's delight at school. On that particular day I must have thought lady-luck had smiled on me as for once, I could stroll with other children from the nearby shop to buy and feast on the *kota*. The *kota* itself was too much food for me to finish in one eating and I kept the remainder for after school, which I happily munched on my way home. Little did I know that first thing on Saturday morning, my father would notice that none of my brothers had come to him to express gratitude and show appreciation for the pocket-money.
>
> I am not sure how exactly it all turned out but I remember him summoning me while he stood in the middle of the kitchen, where he then asked what happened to the money he had given me for my brothers. I am also not sure of my response but I know that the next minute I was flung across the kitchen floor by the force of a really hot face slap which remains memorable to this day. Notably, this was the only time my father ever physically punished me in my entire life. I am not sure of events after that moment but I know it was a very good lesson that served to plant the seed of integrity[8] (Barnard, 2008) towards instilling character by nipping petty theft in the bud in the household. However, in my Zulu culture, it is often said that *ligotshwa lisemanzi*, loosely translated to imply that a child needs to be disciplined from an early age, much like in bending a tree-branch to desired shape while it is still supple. Of course, in retrospect I think it was reprehensible for him to punish me like that but four cents was a lot of money which he probably weighed in relation to his earnings, only for me to use it for my selfish needs without considering those of my brothers. But then again, I was only 10 years old! (Appendix D, pp. 355 – 356).

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[6] The platoon system involved resource sharing by schools whereby groups would be split in such a way that one would have classes from 08:00 – 11:00 and the next from 12:00 – 15:00 or thereabout.

[7] *Ikota* is the modern day 'bunny chow' made from a quarter of white bread, with the soft bread part scooped out and filled with curried mashed potatoes, oil drenched mango atchar, slice of polony and a slice of cheese.

[8] I regard integrity to refer to morally right things we engage in in our private spaces. In the cited incident, i failed dismally. Barnard (2008, p. 4) captures the "construct specific competency model of integrity". Even on this indicator, my conduct showed poor self-discipline, lack of honesty and fairness towards others

The lesson I learned from the cited incident was profound and in my present reflections, I am grateful that my father stopped selfishness that could have sprouted in me: to match or exceed the current SA's corruption levels. Similarly, participants in this study expressed their lived-career experiences in clear resonance with the stated value:

- "looking at your background…ubuntu" family member - *Participant 8*
- "we've always been a close community…you would have other family members…wanting to know how you are doing at school…you felt supported" my peer - *Participant 6*
- "breathing the air of South Africa, my child would be a neighbour's child" my peer - Participant 6
- "not having anything to buy during lunch breaks but it did not bother me…I would rely on my friends" my peer - *Participant 12*
- "our teachers…even if the standard was low they were showing so much commitment as far as students are concerned" my peer - *Participant 12*
- "support from family…the community in general" my peer - *Participant 12*
- "your parents have certain wishes" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*
- "he (State President Jacob Zuma) has to be respected irrespective of what he has done" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*
- "I had to leave home to live with my uncle for a year…then I went to live with my grandmother" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- "inxiles had social support from parents and extended family…accepted in the community…your friends are around you…it was easier to study" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- "we had a good role model (our elder sister)…to this day…she never let us down…you wouldn't be where you are had it not been for her" family members *Participant 9; Participant 10*
- "my first contact with community involvement" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- "1977 lots of young students were roaming in the streets of Soweto…I was asked to help with lecturing them" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- "my love for assisting the community (members) that could not assist themselves came to the fore" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- "at (this organisation) I was asked to mentor young blacks who came after me" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

The foregoing descriptions of the value of *ubuntu* also had familial imperatives embedded within it which seemed deserving of separate discussions as done below.

Theming thread two – familial imperatives

The study argued strongly for *complexity at familial* level as a vital individual's social system influence that was also adequately covered in literature (see Blustein, 1994; Crossland, 2006; Gama, 1984; Watson, 2013; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010) in recognition of family as a significant influence that is also covered in the metatheoretical framework (Patton & McMahon, 2014). Due to historical complexities, most black parents struggle with how to prepare their children for complexities due to their own historical deprivation. However, parental passion and selflessness towards their children's success was/is only possible as a result of the connectedness within constructivist career propositions (Mkhize, 2011; Watson et al., 2011). I benefited a lot from my sister as the older child in the family in that instead of looking ahead into her career needs, she looked back into how she could secure my wellbeing. The interconnectedness that bonded us together was an accurate reflection of familial imperatives as described (Mkhize, 2005, 2011, 2013a).

Indeed, familial imperatives go beyond the family structures and Singh (2016) captures the notion of family as a "network of community based resources" (p. 71) in support of my earlier statement on how one peer handed me down her school tunic. I wore it with pride especially in that her act of *ubuntu* rescued me from regular punishment. It's a value that shaped my own orientation as a teacher whereby I believe that "*what really kept me going over the years was my love for the learners with who I had one of the best relationships in my teaching career*". I recognised their general lack and travelled with them in my car for debate competitions. Naturally, I wouldn't eat without them eating too in that these engagements happened after school hours, without any compensation from the school. As such, individuals are inseparable from others in their career processes (Mkhize, 2005 2013a; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000; Patton, 2005; Stead & Bakker, 2012). Therefore, a family environment should not necessarily imply a conventional family structure with 'a father and a mother'. My own lived-career life would have come to nought in that my elder sister shouldered my parents' responsibilities. Without, or is it within such a family structure I elaborate in the excerpt below as follows:

Excerpt 8

> In retrospect, I realise that my elder sister never really had a childhood as she was the second in command while my mother toiled away from home…the actual active parenting role fell on the shoulders of my sister who was herself barely in her teens (Appendix D, p. 349). Her personal sacrifices instilled in me empathy, compassion, selflessness, love and a generous attitude. These qualities have shaped me into being highly protective of all those I hold dear in my heart and *I realise just how much she made me* (Appendix D, p. 424).

Hence, socioeconomically and culturally, conventional family structures are essential but cannot be guaranteed or theoretically enforced. Yet, career imperatives remain cardinal regardless. The implication for the field is for sensitized approaches that go beyond traditional formulations in individuals' systems of influence and to rather emphasise any and/or all prevailing support structures. In that regard, this study proposed similarly embedded definitions of career, career development and career management constructs to reflect the inextricable sociocultural relatedness of the individual to his/her significant others including the family as was also reflected in participants' observations and experiences as in the utterances below:

- o "in the family we had a strong leader in a sister…you always looked up to her for guidance" family member - *Participant 9*
- o "the parents…we had pushed us" family member *Participant 9*
- o "even parents…were trying their level best…saw the importance of education because of their own background" my peer - *Participant 6*
- o "my mom valued education" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 12*
- o "my late father intervened…pleaded with me to finish my studies" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- o "the divorce rate is high in South Africa…most children are catered for by grandparents who are ill-prepared because they apply old disciplinary measures…they lose track because there are no parents" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

Theming thread three – spirituality in career processes

The *third* theming thread resonated with the element of **spirituality** whereby it seemed my lived-career experiences were propelled by divine intervention and resulted in career inclinations instead of the theoretically established notion of career behaviour. I acknowledged God's presence throughout the career processes where He saved me from a life as a domestic helper at the age of 13, through the 1976 upheavals as well as through university when the career nearly derailed.

God seemed to walk with me even in the world of work till I attained the goal of being a psychologist. This kind of spiritual depth was captured in Excerpt 4 and witnessed in my life by family member *Participant 9* as well as corroborated by the self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 5* due to the proximal relations we hold. However, it is a downplayed influence in dominant career theory literature that truncated its representation in the STF as well (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006, 2014). My view is that the stated truncation challenges constructivist perspectives in that my understanding of Biko's (2008b) explanations that: fundamentally, Africans are spiritual beings resonates with interconnectedness as explained by Mkhize (2013a). The thread's emergence and significant role in autoethnographic findings offered a lived perspective of spirituality as a strong and all-encompassing influence in my career outcomes. The influence was neither probed in the research questions nor through reflexivity during conversations with participants hence, its non-emergence from their experiences. Accordingly, it's explained role related to connectedness indicated salience in defining individuals' relationships with others in the career realm, rendering it pivotal in indigenous knowledge scholarship. However, one noted point of possible refinement was on Mkhize's (2013a) view of spirituality within the pecking order that linked created elements with God at the highest end of the hierarchy, and stated as often not invoked directly. My view as expressed in my lived-career experiences, inferred the Biblical (Maxwell, 2007) notion of God in spirituality as always directly invoked. Naturally, I yearn for more and deeper understandings of the cited view as part of my continued learning. As a fundamental influence in my experiences, spirituality commanded additional justification for inclusion in future research areas as further elaborated in Chapter 6.

Theming thread four – psychosocial status as a contextual influence

This particular thread was newly derived from the elements of **violence, crime and trauma** that have not been highlighted in career literature, hence its presumed absence in the STF as a metatheoretical framework (Patton & McMahon, 2014). I interpreted these elements as overlooked contextual influences within the social system in that they emerged prominently in both *Phase 1 autoethnographic* and *Phase 2 findings* from participants. Given the well-entrenched yet subliminal influence of this theme, I justified it as yet another distinctive contribution of this study and thus a pertinent area of future research in Chapter 6.

The alluded uniqueness of the element was captured in the vignettes that were also elaborated to give more contextual background:

***Phase 1 autoethnographic findings*:**

o "I was always the first to run to the class where punishment was meted out to all learners who were not in proper school uniform. I got the beating each time even though to my mother's knowledge the tunic matter was a problem solved ages ago"

In the aforementioned instance I illustrated one instance among many, the extent of deprivation during my school years whereby my parents couldn't afford the required school uniform when I got to higher primary school at age 10. My mother must have found scraps of material that were not even a good match to the school colours to sew me what was supposed to be a school tunic. Teachers remarked that it was not good enough and I had to join the other children to receive punishment (violence for poverty) on each of the supposed tunic days at school. It would not have helped to put on the black and white uniform in that I would still have been in wrong attire for the tunic days and I still would have gotten punished. I noted in *Appendix D* that my mother ever punished me only once, at age eight and in the same way that my father did at age 10. In both instances the punishments were corrective and aimed at character building. To realise that my primary caregivers yielded single memorable instances of punishment yet the education system physically punished me in an uncountable number of times – mainly for being poor. It was a very sad reflection in my memory. I do not have a recollection of praise for correct achievement of the learning content which I believe was of credit to me and to the teachers themselves. However, the beatings internalised the pain to conditioned proportions given my instinctive reaction to run to the venue for undeserved punishment. I believe it instilled an understanding that our society was and still is very violent. In retrospect and noting that the schools I attended were for blacks, and in the township, and the teachers too were all black whereby their uncaring attitude was punctuated by instances as in the following narrative:

Excerpt 9

One of the teachers spotted underneath the tunic collar what was supposed to be a vest, which my mom had sewn with very thick white jersey-material.

It must have been very dirty as well and the teacher, who I had approached to mark my classwork while standing at the front of class, suddenly swung me around in great irritation. And announced to the class to have a look at what I was wearing. I must have been 10 years old at the time and I still have a vivid picture of that moment including what the teacher was wearing and exactly where I was standing in front of the class (Appendix D, p. 355).

Evidently, it didn't matter that weather conditions required that I keep warm in that I never had the required school jersey till my elder sister bought me a full school uniform a few years later with her first pay-check after completing her matric. The teachers' attitudes were *unAfrican* – a common phrase I tend to use when blacks behave contrarily to the ethos of *ubuntu*, and they provide me with a testimony to how apartheid taught us a great measure of self-hatred from which the nation needs extensive psychological healing. The next vignette below expands the violence for poverty experiences at schools during my schooling days:

o   "I was so defenceless and my silent screams went on without mercy"

The foregoing utterance relates to the incident cited in Excerpt 2 to emphasise how corporal punishment ingrained violence among children from the historical education system. In retrospect, I believe I was a diligent student and generally attempted to abide by school requirements to never be on the wrong side of the rules. As I reminiscence, I couldn't help it but shed loads of tears just realising how I was always punished violently and so unfairly especially by <u>black male</u> teachers who are culturally looked up to as protective figures in their esteemed roles as fathers or uncles! None of the beating incidents related to any failure to perform well in my school work or defiance of school rules or even in considerations for my future career wellbeing. Also, none of the physical punishment was meted out by women teachers except for the incident of my dirty vest and I salute them (female teachers) for their 'mothering' role in accordance to societal expectations. I read with a lump of both sadness and pride the tributes to *Umama* (Keim, 2009) by a wide range of women who celebrate significant and influential *izimbokodo* (referring to mothers as unshakeable rocks) in their lives. I sadly regretted not having penned a piece in my own tributes to my mother, and my sisters of course! My elder sister is prominent in this study for elucidated reasons as condensed in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 10

> We loved each other very deeply but she had a position of authority in my life which made it not easy at times for me to reach her. In retrospect, I feel that she was more of:
>
> o   a provider for all my needs than a sibling
> o   a parent than a sister
> o   a support structure than a nurturer
> o   a yardstick for my conduct that was character shaping, than a role model
> o   an enabler than a mentor or a coach (Appendix D, p. 424).

My younger sister's presence in the lived-career story was unarticulated due to space limitations which prohibited greater indulgence. However, she taught me a lot about the notion of sibling rivalry and she pushed me to live up to my being older than her in so many beautifully lived-career experiences. She was my rock and not a quitter which made it deeply saddening to look back. All the same, I was still at the same high school – where the male teacher punished me violently – when one thug was fetched from a nearby shebeen by school boys one morning after assembly. The thug got severely beaten to near death in the school yard following his terror antics on a school girl during one educational tour the school had undertaken. Still in the same high school, another teacher was beaten by classmates when his corporal punishment method was more savagery than corrective for not doing homework by some learners. All these incidents happened even before the 1976 Soweto uprisings, a sign of how sick our schooling system and nation had always been under apartheid. It is not surprising that learner drop-out rates from SA schools increases correspondingly with increase in their age and many careers get scuppered even before they begin. Most importantly, the drop-out rate does not stop at school level as stated by Dieltiens and Meny-Gibert (2008/2009), but even at tertiary level as Botha (2014) and the CHE (2010, 2014) have noted, whereby all expositioned complexities manifest at tertiary level institutions such as due to xenophobia (Dominguez-Whitehead & Sing, 2015), extreme poverty (Machika & Johnson, 2015) and due to academic underperformance (Silbert et al., 2015). Interestingly, I also did drop out at PhD level during my first attempt (the current study being a second attempt) when the supervising personnel showed inexplicable attitudes towards the study process at the time. I got dumped into a dark hole resembling Joseph's Biblical deep pit (Maxwell, 2007, Genesis 37: 19 – 24) that was also "empty" (p. 45).

I remained in the pit for over four years as I was trying to put together the study's proposal. A startling wake-up call was when the supervising personnel responded with puzzling indignation thus: "*I give you five minutes in my office*" when I entered his office to request for feedback after uncountable delays in the course of the years. It was a humiliating final encounter that left me psychologically harmed but at that point, I finally got the message and an indescribable kind of peace descended on my consciousness as the excerpt below bemoans:

Excerpt 11

> My other major preoccupation was on attempts to pursue PhD studies, a goal that also seemed impossible as captured within the summarised timelines (2005 – 2010) in Appendix D (pp. 402 – 404). Needless to say, at the time a go-ahead was given to register, I had already taken mental strides to move on and I was engrossed in efforts to reconcile myself with the loss (of opportunity) towards inner peace. Largely, I was still puzzled about why it was so difficult for me to put together an acceptable proposal after almost five years of intense effort towards that goal Complex factors that compounded my understanding were *firstly* that my lecturing role had expanded to include sitting on research panels where research proposals were presented, almost weekly and my input was always praised. I had gone through several proposals in this role and I thought I had acquired sufficient learning on what was required but perhaps I was wrong. *Secondly*, one of the subjects I loved teaching was *research methods,* and it was one subject in which I had performed quite well in the past. But again, the level of demand was greater at the PhD level compared to honours and masters levels. Perhaps I wasn't that well prepared after all. *Finally,* I had functioned as a reviewer of manuscripts submitted for possible publishing…in…accredited journals (Appendix D, pp. 404 - 407).

Indeed, one of the PhD participants in Backhouse et al.'s (2015) study "recounted that she had spent five years trying and gave up. She could not understand what her supervisor wanted from her" (p. 28). However, the authors support the view that "nationally (and internationally) there are concerns about the need to improve the quality of supervision" (Backhouse et al., 2015, p. 23) but on my side:

Excerpt 12

> Not being able to apply the knowledge acquired through all the prior learning confused me. The consistently positive feedback added to the confusion in that the intended destination seemed correct but the map with directions to get there seemed thoroughly scrambled (Appendix D, p. 407).

Was the map scrambled or was my work among those Teferra (2015) argues about attesting to excellent or mediocre Doctoral education in SA? I wonder similarly as Y. Waghid (2015), whether doctoral supervision practices especially in SA pose any risk to SA universities' capacity to be producing 5000 PhDs annually by the year 2030 towards realisation of the National Development Plan (NPC, 2012) targets. However:

Excerpt 13

> I still do not know what was in the mix: was the research proposal truly inadequate or was it politics in academia that were at play? However, I felt that the statement *I give you five minutes in my office* trivialised my deep concerns for lack of progress. It left me feeling demeaned. My time and effort as well as my career needs seemed insignificant….I had already resolved to start all over again one day in the future, with hope that it was going to be possible. Importantly, I realised that it had taken just over four years to be able to put together an acceptable research proposal. I honestly felt that if the inner peace I was yearning for included salvaging the study-leading relationship, then I should brace myself for four decades to complete the study itself. That option didn't seem intelligent at all and I chose to walk away from the study, its topic, the relationship and the supervising institution (Appendix D, pp. 407- 408).

The desired transformation in higher learning institutions in SA (Pillay, 2016) goes deeper than just political-apartheid-democracy discourse. Individuals too need to change at a much deeper level for any transformation to happen in all societal spheres (Chawane, van Vuuren & Roodt, 2003). I believe that as a nation, we are already blessed with the compass pointing to what direction we need to change towards: in the African value of *ubuntu* in its deeper essence especially within the career field. I reasoned the value of *ubuntu* as a blessing in that careers are lived experiences and go side by side with economic imperatives (Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 11*) as amply supported in cited literature in the entire body of this thesis. In academia:

Excerpt 14

> I agree fully with Backhouse, Ungadi and Cross (2015) that in SA, the PhD "generally follows the learning by doing model with a student working closely with a single supervisor…the relationship…becomes a key element in the learning experience" (p. 16) especially "the most powerful…aspect" (Ibid, p. 19) of giving feedback.

Notably, the study reported by Backhouse et al. (2015) accentuates sampled PhD students' negative supervision experiences around seven key themes[9] and interestingly, none of these capture mine although knowing that the career-debilitating experiences are a universal phenomenon was enlightening to some extent (Appendix D, p. 407).

Another traumatic incident related to events following my family's effort to remove me from Soweto during the very tense countrywide political conditions after the widely reported June 16, 1976 uprisings as also explained by Mangena (2015), Ndlela (2013) and Ndlovu (1998). My family believed St Augustine's High School in Nquthu, near Dundee, in the former province of Natal would be a quieter learning environment than in Soweto for my younger sister and me so that I could complete my matric (Grade 12). Because colonialism and later apartheid enforcements are reported as having been brutal and violent political systems in SA (see AAP, 2009, 2011; Duncan, N., et al., 2014; Krog et al., 2008), the entire fibre of society was and still is very violent. The utterance below punctuated the violence as follows:

o   "The boys caught up with him (teacher) and stabbed him to death"

To explain the captured utterance: there was a school rule at St Augustine's High that forbade any form of communication between school boys and girls except in the classroom which the said teacher may have enforced more vigorously than other authorities. His extreme strictness may have caused him to be the target of the school boys' frustration at the boarding school. His murder created criminals in otherwise presumed innocent school boys, and it was extremely violent but very consistent with the tense atmosphere in the country subsequent to the 1976 uprisings where overt violence was the means of communicating any dissatisfaction. Generally, most children in black families grew up understanding that our country is violent and force needed to be used to express it covertly as in the vignette below:

o   "very scary and traumatic because my father worked a night shift all my childhood and young adult life"

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[9] These include: 1. Purpose of supervision; 2. Level of proposal complexity; 3. Modes of interaction; 4. Feedback and advice; 5. Requirements and expectations; 6. Academic writing; 7. Involvement in scholarly activities (Backhouse et al., 2015. pp. 24 – 25).

Implied in the above vignette was that my six siblings and I grew up with my mother as a sole nurturer and caretaker while my father was away eking out a living overnight at a bakery. The narrated trauma related to regular police arrival deep into the night in search of *illegal* dwellers in my home because often, my extended family outside of Johannesburg would visit to search for jobs in the economic hub of the country. Although no one was ever found or arrested in these nightly raids, it meant that adults knew not to stay for long in one place as they anticipated the invasion from the apartheid police force. My mother had to always produce what was referred to as a *house-permit* where all *legitimate* house dwellers were listed according to gender and date of birth. Torches would be shone on our scared faces to verify contents of the house-permit. Needless to say, to us as children and obviously to my mother too, such attacks were terrifying and emotionally scaring especially in that we all still needed to be well rested for school in the mornings.

I doubt that there is any SA black child of my age at least, who was spared such nightly terror in the country. The well-known story of Winnie Mandela, wife to the late SA former state president, Nelson Mandela and how she was extremely brutalised with two young babies captures to varying degrees the political conditions on how most South Africans lived during the struggle days (Madikizela-Mandela, 2013; D. Roodt, n.d.). My father was away at work and due back home every morning but for some children, their fathers worked away from home for more extended periods, some as migrant workers mostly in Johannesburg, others were in prison, others were killed during the struggle while others were in exile. Overall, the phenomenon of absent fathers even in the democratic SA is at crisis proportions and I believe it is rooted in the country's past political arrangements. Sadly, I believe that the results have left the entire nation variously traumatised as Mangena (2015) has lamented and Nicholas (2014) observed. At times the trauma is due to domestic violence or sexual molestation and most careers perish even before they begin. Clearly, the excerpt below has compelling implications in relation to lost lives and careers!

Excerpt 15

> We later got to know that five male students were cornered and killed in various parts of their residence….on Sunday morning we went to the men's residence to witness blood splattering on walls and floors as hallmarks of the aftermath.

> One male student was found by the IFP men (who obviously couldn't differentiate between picketing students and those who were studying quietly in their rooms)…and smashed his head with a nail-prickled assegai…it was the saddest day of our lives at UNIZUL (Appendix D, p. 376).

The recounted event happened in 1983 and threatened my studies and those of fellow students seriously (Violence breaks out at the University of Zululand, 1983) as I was a final year student at UNIZUL at the time. Fast forward to 2016 and 33 years later, we still have countrywide students' protests against stringent socioeconomic study conditions but mainly the crippling university education costs (Cele, 2016). The violence that now accompanies the protests will be psychological scars that the students will carry with them for a long time to come. Accordingly, hundreds of careers are burning down together with property destruction in various higher learning institutions across the country. The 2016 matriculants have started with their final school year examinations but it is clear that few of them will perform optimally.

The poor performance is inferable from the probable matriculants' anxiety from not knowing what will happen to their tertiary level applications for 2017 post-school studies and future careers. Ironically, SA universities are reported as the best in Africa and are highly sought after by fellow Africans from other countries in the continent, yet incidents of xenophobia against the same Africans (Dominguez-Whitehead & Sing, 2015) is a shameful truth to swallow that belies our value of *ubuntu* as also averred by Mandela (2010b). The culture of violence is well entrenched in SA as the incident below further illustrates:

o   "The violence of her murder was hard to swallow"

In relation to the foregoing scenarios on our violent society, my elder sister was shot dead early one Sunday morning after church and the circumstances of her murder remain a mystery. Yes, my nurturer, my hero and my everything – a woman, at the age of 63! It was a very traumatic personal experience especially in that it happened just as I had resigned my fulltime job to focus fulltime on this study. Having experienced violent upheavals nearly all my career management life, it was a remarkable tragedy that stalled my progress for a considerable amount of time while I regrouped towards the study's completion.

As I observe the daily televised students' protests in 2016, I wonder whether by the time the study is complete, will UKZN still be functioning or it will be a heap of ashes? Will the supervising personnel still be able to help me under the prevailing difficult working conditions? Such uncertainties are definitely not unique to me but are a countrywide concern for every citizen as we all value stability and progress. Moreover, all students across the education levels are exposed and untold psychological harm is not hard to imagine as corroborated in participants' lived-career experiences below:

Phase 2 findings related to the psychosocial status capturing violence and trauma

o "I was exposed to violence in the township where I grew up" recent graduate - *Participant 1*

The recent graduate *Participant 1* grew up in Soweto during the most ferocious political violence that engulfed the country in the late 1980s. The uncontainable violence led to the collapse of the apartheid government in the early 1990s. At that point, the country had reached the greatest extremities especially the killing by burning with a petrol-soaked tyre on anyone suspected of working with the police who were the agents of the apartheid system. The case of one of the victims was widely reported in the media and was repeatedly televised on the 20 July 1985 (Dawson, n.d.; Staff Reporter, 1996; Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1997). It was one of the most gruesome pictures that were seen by children, young and old citizens across the globe and its effects are probably etched in the memory of all who got exposed. For South Africans, it was just one of many such representations of violence in the nation and its collective memory. *Participant 1's* career was carved in the middle of all this political havoc and now practices as a *Human Resources Partner* within one large academic institution in the country.

o "I got arrested in that year…police said they saw me in front but I never saw me in front…we were thrown in jail" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

The narrative refers to an incident when the self-proclaimed inxile – *Participant 5* was a student at the University of the North, popularly known as Turfloop, and one of the so-called *bush* universities.

The bush universities' reference emanated from their rural locations and tribal and/or racialized designation of who could attend which university under apartheid (Edwards, 2015; Mangena, 2015; Mashaba, 2012). He was arrested with a mob of other students despite the fact that he claimed not to have participated in any stone-throwing during the 1976 uprisings which spread across the country and into universities as well. He was later released on the grounds of having a *chiskop* (SA slang referring to a cleanly shaved head) in an era when thick black afro hair were associated with militancy among black youth. He was subsequently expelled from the university and lost his bursary in the process, but his studies and career got salvaged a few years later when his father insisted that he saves money from the odd jobs he did after his expulsion and go back to complete his studies, which he did successfully. Today he boasts a number of academic accomplishments including a Master of Business Administration from Wits University and is a privately practising auditor amidst several entrepreneurial adventures. He is passionate about community upliftment particularly that of the youth. He funds the education of a number of needy children even though oftentimes he has no family relations with them. Each time he recognises potential among those lucky few who cross paths with him, he does all he can to ensure that the potential gets exploited to the benefit of the individual. To me, he lives according to the value of *ubuntu* and among all the participants, he is the only one who felt that exiles contributed more to the liberation of SA as in his utterance below:

o "they were under threat…always on the run…many were bombed because they were followed" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

In the above instance the self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5* was drawing comparison of career management experiences between those who went into exile and those who remained in the country as *inxiles*. The endless list of references to these lived-experiences is adequately cited but for the gist of such, I would recommend Manganyi's (2013, 2016); Mangena's (2015), Morrow et al.'s (2004) as well as Ndlela's (2013) sources. Summing up this theming thread, Stevens, Seedat and van Niekerk (2013) state that "the particular form of violence and expression of contemporary South African society has undoubtedly been influenced and shaped by its violent history of racism and oppression" (p. 13 – 1).

Moreover, and in view of the foregoing snippets that punctuated violence in SA, it is evident that the field requires to develop sensitized theories that take into consideration the peculiarity as influenced by contextual psychosocial sequelae in career processes. As such, the recounted experiences are the proverbial tip of the iceberg in terms of the "traumatised society" (J. Maree, 2015a, p. 401).

Theming thread five – authenticity as a trait within personality

The construct of *personality* as a broader domain is central in dominant career theories and forms part of the STF (Patton & McMahon, 2014). However, its emergence in autoethnographic findings emphasised the element of **authenticity** as a character trait that I regarded as truthfulness in conceptions of self as in the vignette: *"university education had potential to shape me differently to my view and role of myself in the community"* which showed how I embraced the truthful view of myself with its commanding obligations to my community. The interpretation of authenticity as a character trait within the personality construct emanates from descriptions by Bergh (2005) in agreement with G. Roodt (2009) that it refers to externally definable predispositions that are consistently stable across an individual's lifespan as related in the utterances below:

o "you want the authenticity of your career to be as pure as possible" family member *Participant 8*
o "you want to be as genuine as possible in what you are doing" family member - *Participant 8*

In relation to the research question, the sense of it was that authenticity is a valued character trait within personality that should predominate in career counselling spaces as also expressed in career theories. This is necessitated by our divided past as a nation whereby trusting relationships were harmed (see as examples AAP, 2009, 2011; Bing, 2009; N. Duncan et al., 2014; Durrheim et al., 2011; Krog et al., 2008; Stengel, 2010; Stevens et al., 2013). However, efforts towards nation building and social cohesion forming part of national discourse are ongoing (MISTRA, 2014). Understandably, individuals present themselves with heightened vulnerability particularly in career counseling spaces and when authenticity predominates in career theory formulations it would enhance ameliorative preconditions that would then be sensitized to the need for authentic professional representations.

Overall, such knowledge would resonate with indigenous knowledge representations that enhance the already explained value of *ubuntu* without which the field will remain deficient.

Theming thread six – serendipity as a trait within personality

Given that *serendipity* denotes the "natural ability to find interesting or valuable things which one is not looking for" (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1978, p. 1014), it is a construct that is encouraged and advocated for by Krumboltz (1998) and E. Williams et al. (1998). Related to the research question and in my interpretations of the findings I regarded the construct as an attitudinal element of personality as a broader domain and was expressed in that sense in autoethnographic findings: "*it was a great joy to taste having neatly covered* (school) *books for once in a lifetime*". Such an interpretation emanated from the view of personality as a construct that develops from heredity and from the environment. In heredity, we inherit abilities which are cognitive elements similarly as attitudes which also have cognitive origins (Theron, 2005). Given the definition of serendipity and the reaction (attitude) I displayed to an unexpected windfall of learning material (I was not expecting), it was my attitude and/or my reaction to the material that I found valuable (serendipitous) in that I was not expecting the books. I showed this by expressing joy when I finally covered all the books neatly to indicate that I valued them. The experience related to when I was unexpectedly offered a bursary by the then community based *Rand Bursary Fund* upon intervening assistance by the learned community members / family friends. They had become aware of my potential that was threatened by socioeconomic conditions in my early high school years prior to the 1976 Soweto uprisings. Accordingly, indigenous career formulations need to accentuate attitudes of always framing unexpected but gainful opportunities into positive career outcomes. Participants related similar experiences as in the following single narratives:

o   "you were a librarian…you switched into teaching" family member - *Participant 9*

The foregoing observation by family member *Participant 9* related to my nomadic career journey which happened unguided/serendipitously whereby I seemed to be building on prevailing gainful opportunities towards career outcomes.

I referred to this wandering as just drifting along till I found my career home as an academic and a psychologist. There was corroboration of the given interpretation in the utterance below:

o "I changed careers because it was like I was floating around" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

The self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 4's* experiences indicated similar yet serendipitous roaming around or *floating* along in the direction of beneficial career outcomes without allowing stagnation to hinder his goals even in their undefined state. He started as an aspirant civil engineer but got derailed due to politics in the education of his era, went into teaching, then marketing, then into sales and finally an entrepreneur who owns a construction company. Again, his experiences reflect those as in the utterance below:

o "I was trying to undo what we were taught by apartheid…hatred is a bad thing…rather love one another" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

Similarly, *self-proclaimed inxile Participant 5* drifted along from being an accounting student, got expelled from university, worked as a clerk at a local hospital, experienced minimal challenge in the clerk role that made him see himself as wasted. He opted to do voluntary teaching to the youth of Soweto that was roaming the streets in the aftermath of the 1976 uprisings before finally returning back to university after insistence by his father. His restlessness in an unchallenging but paying work environment, and still choosing to rather volunteer without pay resonated with experiences that were viewed and converted into gainful career outcomes. The next theming thread resembles serendipity but differs in that occurences happen when some kind of a plan is in place and I explain below.

Theming thread seven – planned happenstance as a trait within personality

The identified theming thread reflected the construct of *planned happenstance* which I regarded as embodied in the cognitive dimension of personality as a broader domain which **in my lived-experience emerged as luck** expressed thus: *"I was really lucky to have had the foresight of anticipated failure".*

The stated kind of interpretation was congruent with Krumboltz and Levine's (2013) as well as Mitchell et al.'s (1999) descriptions of planned happenstance as foresightedness. It relates to developing plans with an attitude of readiness to take advantage of arising outcomes in a given situation that eventually become beneficial although these were not part of the initial plan. This was when I succumbed to the culture of missing scheduled lectures in one subject at UNIZUL simply because it was scheduled at a time I regarded as too early (07:00) and disturbed my circadian rhythm as explained by Paffenbarger (2009). The professor who lectured the subject concerned was familiar with such students' tendencies and seemed to punish absentees by withholding marks especially in the infringing student's final examinations of the subject. I became a victim of this practice and it threatened to impede my career progress at university but I considered seriously the warning rumours about the professor's antics and took precautionary (foresighted) steps to jump over the hurdle he posed before it scuppered my studies. Therefore, I planned beforehand for possible outcomes which could have been beneficial or not in my career process, which eventually were not. However, the chance I created through planned happenstance ensured that overall, career processes were not compromised. Accordingly, it is imperative to infuse such alertness in indigenous knowledge formulations to heighten awareness of its significance in negotiating unpredictable career processes. Participants agreed by uttering congruent observations as follows:

o   "you are resourceful…you will not be defeated by a situation" family member - *Participant 10*
o   "I had to fund my own education" recent graduate - *Participant 1*
o   "you hungered for more knowledge…and ways to better yourself and the situation that you were in…kept you grounded and focused…on what you wanted…it reminded you why you were doing it" family member – *Participant 10*
o   "successful people are not one type of person…there's more of that evident" family member - *Participant 10*
o   "self-advocacy" recent graduate - *Participant 1*
o   "If I had (achieved) best marks…you have variety of things to select from" recent graduate - *Participant 2*
o   "now I strive for the drive…the thing that pushes you…that do or die…I think not having it is a disadvantage" recent graduate - *Participant 2*
o   "that pressure that a person studying in exile would have…would be a great advantage for me" recent graduate - *Participant 2*
o   "actually not giving up on my career" recent graduate - *Participant 3*

- o "they (exiles) are able to adapt" recent graduate - *Participant 3*
- o "for me to survive I had to get more information from other people" my peer - *Participant 6*
- o "things I enjoy the most" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*
- o "the guy who did medicine…started his own little surgery…started counting pennies" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*
- o "but those that remained here are steadfast because you've got to live" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*
- o "I was going to lose direction…needed discipline and guidance as a teenager but I was basically guiding myself" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- o "it was a battle…a matter of adapt or die" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- o "whether sent home or not I would still study privately…from 1976" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- o "I was very meticulous…within a month they could see the difference" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- o "felt underemployed everyday by midday my work was finished…did part time studies" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- o "went into entrepreneurship still to address challenges facing South Africa" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- o "you must do it yourself" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*
- o "my business experience over the last 30 years has been hands-on because I've never really gone for formal training" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

Theming thread eight – reawakened awareness

The *eighth* theming thread was captured as **reawakened awareness** which also seemed to correspond with the aforementioned construct of planned happenstance within personality that reflects a *cognitive* element. Individuals need to realise the importance of heightened mental readiness to optimise any prevailing opportunity. The element is captured in a long list of concerned scholars who conceptualise it variously in relation to prevalent and hindering sociocultural conditions. As examples, Biko (2008a) encouraged black students through his utterance that they were on their own, therefore, to ignore that there is/was no one compelled to be another's rescuer was a defeatist attitude towards one's future. Another example is that given by T. Mbeki (2002a) where he implores Africans to define themselves because when one defines one's self then one is likely to realise one's shortcomings and then work towards self-improvement. It is an imploration that corresponds with J. Maree's (2015a) urging of individuals to ask themselves the question: Who am I?

Similarly to when Bordin (1994) highlights that the times we live in defy Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Implied is that individuals cannot wait to have basic, safety, belongingness and esteem needs before they achieve self-actualisation or fulfilment in the career realm which often is temporary in that one achievement creates hunger for the next achievement in a cycle of lifelong learning. Therefore, all citations point to a need for individuals to embrace self-advocacy and emphasise the importance for individuals to *wake up* – for lack of a better expression. Given this study's criticism of the current policy document in SA (NPC, 2012), the desired reawakening was consistent with findings explained below in Section 5.2.4.1 of this chapter, whereby the pertinent role of the individual's agency to oneself was further addressed. I believe that when I looked for a job after completing my studies at high school, I was alerted by my socioeconomic circumstances that surrounded me at every turn. I was aware that my elder sister was shouldering a burden to see me through further studies. I ensured that I retained a good name for myself at the employing company that responded by securing the job for me to work during the university holidays each time till I completed my degree studies. It was not enough in that I still worked at the university library as a student assistant to supplement the bursaries I managed to have awarded through hard work and better performance in my studies.

Such realisations changed the course of my life and softened the difficult career development years at university and also helped me to relieve my elder sister to be able to still look after the rest of my family. As though Tshabalala (n.d.) the SA's *kwaito* music icon (Livermon, 2016) was echoing my agitation, he quizzed to excite the youth in the song *Uzoyithola kanjani uhleli ekhoneni* (lyrics were earlier explained in Chapter 2 and translated as inquisitions on how one hoped to achieve while saddled at the corner). The song's lyrics included the encouraging line: *vuka emaqandeni mpintshi yami* (loosely translated to mean an imploration to one's friend to wake up). Accordingly, no one told me or forced me to find these temporary employment opportunities but my circumstances were glaring enough to prompt constructive awakening on how best to respond. Therefore, indigenous knowledge scholarship has gained a vital resource in my career story and its possible use was explained in Chapter 6 under contributions and future research areas. Below are some resonant vignettes from participants:

- o "I've done African Politics…I loved it so much…but where was I to use it for interest sake and to amass my knowledge" my peer - *Participant 6*
- o "enabling environment the government has created for black people" recent graduate - *Participant 1*
- o "lack of knowledge (exposure) in as far as what one needs to pursue is number 1 (stumbling block)" my peer - *Participant 6*
- o "university management called me…to say we believe you can do well in MBA…promised financial assistance" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

It was remarkable that the three preceding constructs are interrelated although it seemed Arthur and McMahon (2005) as well as Patton and McMahon (1999, 2006, 2014) labelled these as the influence of chance to describe the role of unplanned circumstances which eventually yield career outcomes. Therefore, chance as an element seemed deserving of separate discussions as also done below:

Theming thread nine – chance

The *ninth* theming thread resonated with **chance** that also forms part the STF as a process element (Patton & McMahon, 2014) and acknowledged as a **random influence** in determining individuals' career trajectories. Considering that chance in itself is a fluid construct, its influence was discernible in relation to all system's factors forming part of the individual's context, which Bujold (2004) asserts can only be determined through constructivist perspectives of career explanations as also stated by Stead (2004) as well as by Young and Collin (2004). Such explanations relate to storied or narrated life experiences wherein transitions can be retrospectively reconstructed, understood and related across the individual's systems to discern varying career meanings especially in counseling encounters (Sliep & Kotze, 2011). Chance factors further relate to Mkhize and Frizelle's (2000) contention that such narratives basically enquire about linkages within the reconstructions towards establishing "meanings that people attach to their experiences" (p. 4) as also framed within sociocultural spaces (Cohen et al., 2004; Patton, 2011; Watson, 2011; Winslade, 2005).

Furthermore, Blustein (2015) highlights that the compendium by Bimrose et al. (2015) "describes events that are far out of reach of volitional and planful behaviour" that then accentuates "a need to infuse thoughtful means of accounting for chance…in our understanding of work and careers" especially because each of the recounted career experiences are "rooted in their cultural and historical period" (Bluestein, 2015, p. 224). In essence, Blustein argues for career theories to consider the element of chance thus entailing remarkable support of this element in this study's findings. The overall emphasis is on the imperative to incorporate unique cultural meaning within individuals' experiences as explained by Muncey (2004) in alignment with constructivist career propositions encompassing serendipity, planned happenstance and reawakened awareness as described in the context of this study. Such instances in their unpredictability were narrated by participants as follows:

o "fortunately for me this way I was influenced unlike other people that never had an opportunity to come and live three weeks with a white family" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

o "life happened to me all the time…I had to navigate life…its difficult to plan in advance" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

o "I became a business person by pure chance and not something I ever had in my upbringing...it was farfetched" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

o "life happened to me and I just responded accordingly" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

Theming thread ten – enriched capabilities

The *tenth* theming thread resonated with **enriched capabilities** as part of an individual's *intrapersonal system* level influence which I related to the notion of globalising workplaces and careers according to the authors' formulations (see Dominguez-Whitehead & Sing, 2015; Mayrhofer et al., 2007; Obi, 2015; F. Williams, 2008). Apart from the increasingly pervasive demands of diverse skills-sets, our economy is globalising and individuals who can adapt are those who have an expanded set of skills forming part of Savickas' (n.d., 2011b, 2013) notion of adaptability. I didn't know this when I took up *preliminary French* at university in my first year but as a future librarian and information science expert, I regarded it important that such diverse knowledge base would open opportunities for me in that I could have found a job in any library in the country. I viewed it as offering me a degree of competitive edge even though I had no globe-trotting prospects at the time but the novel learning experience was worth the effort.

SA's basic education ministry recognised the potential benefit when it announced the introduction of Mandarin in SA's public schools (Nkosi, 2015). Perhaps the long-term view is in potentially increased career opportunities and/or economic links with China in the Brazil-India-China-South Africa [BRICS] trade agreements (Netshitenzhe, 2016a; Omar, 2013). However, the envisaged potential remains slim considering reported teacher shortages in the country (Bernstein, 2011). As a theoretical construct for consideration within the third wave of career knowledge (Hartung, 2013), the indigenous quest would be enriched by encouraging multilingualism. For *self-proclaimed inxile, Participant 5*, the skill manifested as in the vignettes below thus:

o "my background in languages also helped me (during conflict resolution at work)…had to speak to blacks in their own languages…go to whites and speak their own languages" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

o "(inxiles) had a challenge to adapt to new language before you could study…imagine if you were in Russia and had to study in Russian" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

Theming thread eleven – context

The *eleventh* and final theming thread corresponded with **environmental societal systems** relating to the SA context in which career processes are enacted. Labelling the thread as *context* exemplifies privileging deference to emerging conceptual than to established theoretical constructs as a key feature in qualitative studies as recommended by Halfpenny (1979), Hosking and Morley (2004) as well as by Denzin and Lincoln (2008b). Also, literature on SA accentuating the influence, such as that by Chinyamurindi (2016) highlight contextual factors and the MISTRA (2014) expresses social cohesion as contextual imperatives in the country. Accordingly, the entire thesis as well as the set of autoethnographic data capture SA's historical career context with noted corrective efforts after the 1994 democratic government elections. Relevant to the study were the SA Constitution of 1996 which intended to reverse the contextual impacts of apartheid, the Equity Act of 1998 which intended to promote equity within employment context, the Skills Development Act of 1998 which encouraged partnership with SA's businesses in the promotion of further education and upskilling of individuals.

The Schools Act of 1996 which urged utilisation of schools as infrastructures for human development together with the SA Higher Education Act of 1997 which encouraged resource sharing among institutions of higher learning that resulted in several mergers and one such merger is described in Chawane (2004) and led to the formation of the University of Johannesburg in 2005. Nevertheless, career theories were criticized mainly for their lack of representation of lived-career experiences among South Africans within a field that is similarly criticized for its emphasis on Western formulations of career knowledge (see Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006; Arthur & McMahon, 2005; Laher & Cockcroft, 2014; Naidoo & Pretorius, 2006; Nicholas et al., 2006; Stead & Watson, 2006). The implication for indigenous knowledge development is for its sensitization and foregrounding in topical discourse to acquire relevance in desired career behaviour, also in the field of practice. Therefore, cited elements from the foregoing findings would enrich the field towards the whole which Patton and McMahon (2014) consider as "not yet specified" (p. 209) in that although the study focused on SA experiences, it bears within it potential for global career knowledge development. Accordingly, sensitized career contexts were discerned in findings as follows:

o "teachers and nurses were sent to boarding schools (colleges) for mahala (at no cost)" self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 4*

Notably, the observation by self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 4* corroborates autoethnographic findings as follows:

Excerpt 16

> When I got into my second year at high school in Form 2 (Grade 9), my mother was planning for me to start training as a *nurse* at the Baragwanath Academic Hospital after completing Form 3, a career that I think she had decided on out of necessity in that the academic hospital was quite accessible from home and there were no fees to be paid but trainees were paid a stipend with which I could start contributing to the family income. Also, it was obvious that there wouldn't be any funds to further my studies since my sister was furthering her own at Fort Hare University at that stage (Appendix D, p. 359).

Indeed, under apartheid and in the new dispensation nurses and police trainees still enjoy the benefit of receiving stipends for the duration of their study programmes.

Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 4's* suggestion implied similar approaches should be considered to create focused career contexts where possible in view of the generally harmed SA environment. However, nation building discourse towards a better environment and societal cohesion preoccupies intellectual discursive spaces as already mentioned (see MISTRA, 2014, 2016; Netshitenzhe, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016a, 2016b). Furthermore, other views were narrated as follows:

o "improve rural life where people don't speak accommodation (or raise issues/protest for service delivery related to housing/accommodation)" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

o "take all these big universities and education centres to the rural areas" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

o "people should just forget about coming to the urban areas because (even there) there is no growth in any industry" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

o "change the environment of a human being" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

o "to pull us out of (the mentality) of being employees and become employers" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

o "I am involved with a lot of entrepreneurship development with the belief that we can have better resources to better manage our careers" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

o "we have a constitution that is protecting every one of us…I think it supports people in their career management" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

o "for people to grow…the economy has to grow…I think the underperformance is a result of our political decisions" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

o "people and careers don't develop in isolation…its part and parcel of the economic machine" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

In the next section I discussed findings pertaining to the last research question focusing on insightful inputs that were rationalised as having potential to enrich the SA career education system through policy reformulation processes.

5.2.4. Critical inputs discerned from participants' lived-career management experiences for enriching the SA career education system

Accordingly, I observed and argued about the importance for SA individuals' needs to own their career development and management processes as a critical but absent factor in the National Development Plan [NDP] 2030 (NPC, 2012) as the latest policy formulations. The observation became this study's other rationalised basis for investigation and one has to only Google the 'NDP 2030 critique' to find several varying viewpoints which highlight the shortcomings of SA's latest policy document.

Among these are misgivings about the government's aspiration to meet the NDP 2030 target to be producing 5000 PhDs annually from SA universities by the year 2030 (Dominguez-Whitehead & Sing, 2015; Masondo, 2014b; Teferra, 2015; Y. Waghid, 2015). For these reasons, *Phase 1* autoethnographic findings emphasised the imperative for the individual to self-manage which also emerged from *Phase 2* findings whereby several participants echoed congruent viewpoints. Briefly, autoethnographic findings indicated that I was nearly forced to quit school at the age of 13 when I worked on weekends as a domestic worker for a local family. Notably, the employing family in question was the idealised *mother and father with two children* kind and both parents were highly educated school inspectors of note in those days. Their family profile sharply contrasted my own working class and typically African family with seven children, Thabile being child number five. My parents befriended them at our local church and were later advised to send my elder sister to a boarding school where their two sons attended. The displayed connectedness exposed the class differentiation between the two families although my mother was a very hardworking and ambitious person in the desire for her children's success in school and in life. I am not sure how it came about but when I turned 13 years old, I was told to go and assist the family with house chores on Saturdays. I don't remember ever getting paid in cash for the work but I remember the family's food leftovers being packed for me to take home after each work day. I also remember that from that year onwards, the family bought my younger sister and me two items each for the Christmas and New Year days' festivities. I don't think this arrangement lasted very long in that my younger sister later took over the domestic work role without anyone explaining the reasons.

Since my younger sister was almost three years younger than me, it is a possibility that my mother struggled to cope at home and it was reasoned that I could be of better help at home since our Saturday laundry was quite a huge pile given our large family size compared to the couple's as their children were older and at a boarding school. My three elder brothers did help with some house chores at home but I think my mother held strong views about gendered traditional roles because she was so obvious about greater adoration of her boys since she grew up without brothers (explained below).

She probably felt that they could sweep and scrub our house floors but getting them to hand-wash the pile of laundry was probably emasculating especially because doing laundry was among her duties as she herself worked as a domestic worker for more than one white family in the Johannesburg suburbs. She carried to and from work most of the additional laundry which then got washed in the evenings after her day's work obviously for extra income. I think she silently resented this particular task in that it encroached onto family time and thus eroded any chance for connecting with her children but she had no choice except to persevere. Therefore, she probably detested having her role identification with that particular task transferred onto her precious sons, hence the subsequent withdrawal of my help for my younger sister to then take over. Notably, without any change in *benefits* from the learned family! Such extents of hard labour speak of the resilience of my mother under dire socioeconomic circumstances of my childhood: a developmental phase I think I never really had and was probably lost to many black children in the country. In retrospect and in similar conditions as of the learned family, I don't think I would have worked so hard a 13 or 10 year old child, with or without tangible rewards regardless of circumstances. It was exploitation but I think my mother would disagree given our general lack at the time.

However, I strongly believe that had their friendship roles been reversed, she would not have used child labour as was done to us. Still, the lived-experience impressed on me the view of work as a process for one to transition through in that even at Sales House, my next holiday job from age 19 after passing matric till I completed the four year degree studies at UNIZUL, was quite mundane. The store manager detested to see anyone not doing anything. I often polished the clothing rails and picked up the pins from the carpets just to keep busy when there were no shoppers to assist as I progressively got to work at the point of sale. The weekly wages of R45 was a windfall that really got me used to having my own money with which I relieved my elder sister of the burdens of my education in that I also worked part time for R90 a month as a student library assistant at UNIZUL over the course of the years. Furthermore, I recounted how I started reading: an activity I believe was for leisure. It was kindled by my brother's fictional writings which I stumbled upon accidentally and I read these from the time I could string together alphabets to make sense of what was written.

My mother brought from her domestic work old newspapers, magazines and comic books primarily to use for starting fire in the coal stove we had at home. My brothers rescued all these and read them, an activity I copied which meant that we exhausted the material before it became useful for its real intended purpose. As they grew up, they exchanged novels among their friends which we referred to as the *James Hardly Chase* books. I picked up to read these as soon as they put them down and it became a question of who got to it first. When I got to Musi High School, I was lucky to befriend a bookwork who exposed me to a nearby library that we patronised regularly mainly for romantic stories that were consistent with accompanying curiosity of our age at the time. After the 1976 Soweto uprisings, a new dawn of consciousness befell me and I started reading from the *African Writers' Series* which helped in moulding my African identity. At that point in my life, my elder sister assisted in finding a school for me in the former province of Natal so that I could complete my matric. To concretise my awakening, I ditched my English names (Angeline, Joyce) and registered at the new school in my African name: Thabile. I am not aware how I got the name Angeline but I got to know that Joyce was a namesake of my mother's best friend at work. As for the African name, I believe that my birth brought joy in the family in that Thabile means being happy in isiZulu, Setswana and in Sesotho.

I understand my name as explained in that I embarked on this study 19 years after my parents had passed on and when I started with the study, my elder sister who was still alive at the time, had no clue why I was given this name. However, since my father came from a family of four sons only and my mother from a family of four daughters only, it seems my father was happy to have another girl child after my elder sister's birth was followed by three sons – hail my army of brothers! Again, my mother was probably content in having another daughter seeing that the male-gender-deficit she suffered with her siblings was significantly narrowed with three of her very own sons. Therefore, it was a win-win situation for everyone including my elder sister who I believe had no clue what the joy in that *live doll* meant in terms of her later life parenting burdens! The narrated positive attribution of the name is important to me in that it makes me feel that I was received with joy and love.

The foregoing position is a congruent ascription that resonates with Ngubane and Thabethe's (2013) explanation that, personal naming is an important part of the Zulu culture which is not detached from the socio-cultural environment. Therefore, names are often given according to prevailing family circumstances or according to broader socio-political or historical events. Ngubane and Thabethe's (2013) explanation further indicates that the English names related to what were the Christian names given to Africans according to the colonisation order into the apartheid era during which I was born. This practice resulted in the African names' diminished regard as *amagama asekhaya* (referring to names to be used at home only). Although all the three names I was given have positive meanings, my reawakening meant that I regarded the English names as *slave names* as that was how my friends and me, at least, ditched them. The resulting self-identity became the basis for increased effort in my school work which similarly commanded (from me as a person) performance with a sense of pride. True to the authors' assertions though, none of our children in my family now carries an English name, which reflects the new political context in our country.

Furthermore, I never lost the passion for reading. I believe I have learned a lot about life, outside of the classroom or lecture hall in all my career life. It is a passion and an activity that has sustained my energies towards completing this study. It was in Mangena's (2015) book recounting his own lived experiences that I found documented comfort on why I read what modern day parents would regard as trash instead of the politically awakening books he got exposed to upon arrival in exile (Botswana), such as those by "Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao Zedong…and other radical writers and revolutionaries….Coming from Suid-Afrika, where such books were prohibited and scarce" (p. 20). His excited reaction invoked imagery as he captured his exclamations thus: "Oh my gosh! When will I finish (reading) these?" (Ibid, added word in brackets). Illustrated above was the imperative for one to follow natural inclinations towards fulfilment of one's career destinies in that I am more than certain that without reading as a constant companion, my career would have stalled a long time ago. Importantly, I had an opportunity for higher learning which didn't enhance my career needs and interests at the time but I valued highly both the opportunity and the sacrifice my family was making, and I made the most of it till I was able to be the engine, navigator and driver of self-development as alluded to above.

I never stopped learning. I would not have secured the bursaries that came my way had I stopped working hard. The fact that I am now still working on this thesis is sufficient testimony to the self-imposed value of lifelong learning. Clearly, successful career management includes ongoing construction of one's aspirations. These are underpinned within personal needs according to prevailing contextual variations whereby individuals then prioritise their responses as explained by Cohen et al. (2004) in congruence with J. Maree's (2015a) and Watson's (2013) views. Accordingly, Akhurst and Mkhize's (2006) assertion that career educational opportunities, though minimal (Dominguez-Whitehead & Sing, 2015) within a better enabling socioeconomic and political context, have to be learner centred. The presently enabling and highlighted factors in SA included child social grants, feeding schemes, Adult Basic Education and Training, Further Education and Training Colleges, National Students Financial Aid Schemes, bursaries, scholarships, role-models and Non-Government Organisations which can be accessed for career related "rebuilding" (Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006, p. 148) strategies to also make up for any lost opportunity where possible. Indeed and realistically, all are not adequate resources but can be used as a stepping stone in spite of the pressing complexities. Therefore, while the country is in transition, wrestling oneself from the argued complexities remains the first option, hence Aurelius (as cited in Badenhorst, 2009, p. 35) incites thus: "dig inside; inside is the fountain of good, and it will forever flow, if you forever dig". Encouraged, I covered below discerned insights on how individuals can optimise their deeper senses of selfhood in an equally provoking "processual nature of being" (Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000, p. 2) in relation to individuals' lives and careers in that we never stop becoming!

5.2.4.1 Emphasis on the pertinent role of the individual to one's self

At this point in the study one can infer that the majority of South Africans enter inadequately equipped educational spaces, hence the alarming dropout rates at all educational levels. Notably, even the minority that makes it to tertiary levels, more than half still fail to graduate as noted by Brenner (2015), CHE (2014), Dominguez-Whitehead and Sing (2015) as well as by Liccardo et al. (2015). In the light of imperatives for optimised selfhood, Walker (2015) opines that:

> Students could learn to deliberate about the possibilities for a life well lived, and develop insight and self-awareness about choosing lives of meaning and accountability…reflect and deliberate on the reasons and values upholding their agency; develop a sense of self-efficacy that *action for change is possible*; and question and reassess prevailing norms and values that hold inequalities (Walker, 2015, p. 292, added italics for emphasis).

Such viewpoints acknowledge existing inequalities and presenting infrastructural deficiencies but still place a measure of demand on the individual to work towards bringing about change at least for oneself as a start. According to Merino and Aucock's (2015) case study, the demand is expressed as a need to work harder thus: "this was a wake-up call and got me to work harder" (p. 169) after a drop in school grades of the cited participant. However, Merino and Aucock (2015) explain the attitudinal change as an individual's ability to self-regulate, indicative of skills attainable within learning to learn lifelong endeavours. Its an indication that corresponds with Matope and Badroodien's (2015) idea of individuals' realisation of the need "to push themselves and to exert the necessary effort to succeed and achieve" (p. 59). My view is that since time immemorial and due to our global connectedness, we are surrounded by technological advances which create inescapable awareness of how different each of our circumstances is. They presuppose within us a natural desire to aspire for the better. This natural desire relates to resilience (Bhana & Bachoo, 2011) as an inborn capacity for all individuals to strive towards self- improvement according to an aspirational capital (Nkambule, 2014) within cultural wealth expanses. These views correspond with Biko's (2008b) rally to black students to fight for their place under the sun through the acclaimed adage: "Black man, you are on your own" (p. 100) forming part of his Black Consciousness philosophy towards self-advocacy. It was a rally that intended to impassion individuals to respond with deeper conviction to life demands as inquired in the question: Who am I? To demonstrate the foregoing suggestions, I related them to my instinctive initiatives to assist junior grade students in the Geography subject during my high school years from when I was in Standard 9 (Grade 11), citing from autoethnographic findings, thus congruent with Merino and Aucock's (2015) case study that encouraged hard-work as a self-empowering attitude as follows:

Excerpt 17

> I suppose the decision to work hard at school with my friend was in retaliation for the hostility surrounding our presence then, as well as the *fish* name we had by then acquired as part of teasing we received for bathing in the dam. As a strategy, we decided to cover our books beautifully to ensure that they stood-out, which paid off quicker than expected for me as I got top marks in class for our first Geography Test in the first term of the school (Appendix D, p. 367).

Again, the narrative corresponds with Walker's (2015) opinion that "action for change is possible" (p. 292) among individuals to influence their fate differently, as exhibited below:

Excerpt 18

> I got the recognition I wished for and soon, I was asked to help other learners in our Geography lessons and was occasionally requested to also help learners in lower grades, which all earned me some respect all round at the school. I recall one lesson where I took the Form 2 class to the soccer field where I instinctively knelt down and started forming various shapes of sand dunes to demonstrate a part of the lesson on that. The group was highly impressed as I continued to explain this, they were all satisfied and we went back to class. The adoration felt very good but the accompanying luck almost ran out as fast as it came when the schools reopened for the second term in that my younger sister and I found space in the school hostel (Appendix D, pp. 367 – 368).

Then schooling got disrupted in the earlier cited incident that led to the murder of one of our teachers leading to our expulsion from school and subsequent decision by my family that they could afford to send back to school only one of us. Following that:

Excerpt 19

> My lucky streak resurfaced in that I became an established Geography assistant teacher because the subject teacher didn't come back after the murder of the male teacher. Having lost that one teacher, we also didn't have teachers for Biology and History. One boy who was good in history took on the responsibility to lead us in assistive teaching of the subject. Our isiZulu teacher doubled as the Afrikaans teacher and our English teacher looked still very young and remained at the school probably because he understood the boys' grievances (Appendix D, p. 369).

In a demonstration of self-regulation as described by Merino and Aucock (2015) we persevered on our own without teachers in the subjects mentioned in typical example of the earlier cited Matope and Badroodien's (2015) need for greater self-exertion in difficult circumstances as demonstrated below:

Excerpt 20

> For some reason, I had also become fond of debate during our English lessons and I soon got established as the last speaker during competitions, internally and against visiting schools. The school hall had wooden floors which sounded hollow when stomped on during the debate celebratory moments. This practice was intensified to intimidate visiting schools with intention to scare them, and so it was on this one particular occasion when I stepped forward to argue in conclusion as the last speaker from my team. That measure of confidence marked the point at which I decided I would want to pursue law studies as a career, an imminent goal that seemed possible as my performance at school remained satisfactory (Appendix D, pp. 369 - 370).

Interestingly, the foregoing excerpt further illustrates Liccardo et al.'s (2015) earlier explained distinction between the constructs of *knowledge that* (emphasis on learning content) and *knowledge how* (emphasis on opportunities for practical application of what has been learned) which I think I managed to practice in an unlikely educational environment. Evidently, no teacher motivated us, and our study sessions were unsupervised, and we didn't have any clearly crystallised career goals but Biko's (2008b) plea kindled itself in our collective recognition that we were on our own! Eventually:

o "There were 62 learners in the two Form 5 classes in 1979 at the school, but only six of us managed to pass with full exemption and only three of us enrolled for our first year at university the following year".

I am aware that individuals differ and it is impossible for everyone to have similar responses to the same pressing circumstances as clearly shown by a six out of 62 pass by matriculants in my final school year under the described conditions. Hence, it is such instances that remain baffling in: What contributes to skewed outcomes among similarly challenged individuals? Which I believe has contributed to the desire to exposition the argued complexities as in this study. Furthermore, Blustein (1994) argues that it is in knowing oneself that one can engender heightened understandings of the "interpersonal, social and cultural aspects of identify formation in the career realm" (p. 147).

Simply, J. Maree (2015a) associates it with the also earlier stated inquisition: Who am I? Mkhize (2005, 2011, 2013a; Mkhize & Frizelle, 2000) ascribes similar probes to connectedness within constructivism tenets. Such episteme towards richer selfhood were embedded within participants' narratives as follows:

o "desire transformation (in self)…if you think you can do it, you probably can and will…don't give up…perseverance…self-efficacy" recent graduate - *Participant 1*

o "I studied very hard to ensure that I remained in the top five" self-proclaimed inxile - Participant 5

o "be(ing) focused…knowing what you want…working tirelessly on a goal…(having) a sense of research about everything you aim for…fearlessness/boldness…fail and stand up again…be loyal (to yourself) and flexible" inter-generational - *Participant 13*

o "encourage self-awareness, self-consciousness…give yourself a chance to reflect on who you are…what you are about (as a person)" additional inter-generational - *Participant 13*

o "sense of responsibility for yourself…determination…drive/passion/idea that (a goal) is possible…remove blinkers and established conditioning to viewing life and careers…look beyond…outside of the blinkers…gasp and get some fresh air" additional inter-generational - *Participant 13*

o "being brainwashed by apartheid…and being robbed of self-confidence…the belief that we can't achieve anything…can't face challenges…we feel useless…lots of stereotyping…apartheid was the mother of all evil…reverse that" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

o "there should be a place where people can get information…but obviously career management is up to yourself" recent graduate - *Participant 2*

o "I am not a victim of apartheid…I've never been throughout my life…I've always rejected it…that's why I am not a prisoner of my past…that's why in 1984 at age 24/25 I could invite a white partner because I realised the value of this particular individual to get me moving to the next level…I was always future focused…always concerned about claiming the future…my survival is on one thing: tomorrow is coming…the responsibility is mine to say how am I going to survive tomorrow"

o "I managed my career by my own initiatives…doing things on my own" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

Resonating between cited literature and participants' insightful viewpoints are imperatives for self-advocacy and self-management whereby all emerging needs are the individuals' primary obligation in contrast to the Maslovian hierarchical perspective earlier cited as argued by Bordin (1994). Hence, Biko's (2008b) view that "the corner-stone of society is man himself – not just his welfare, not his material wellbeing but just man himself with all his ramifications" (p. 51), along with aspirations for personhood (Mkhize, 2000) were all relatable among participants.

Such ramifications also include: "knowledge, skills, attributes and other characteristics" (M. Coetzee & Schreuder, 2010, p. 92) particularly in the world of work which Uy et al. (2015) consider as career metacompetencies. And, not excluding aspirations for personhood (Mkhize, 2000)! Moreover and in principle, SA has a willing government as captured in the committing statement: "we envisage schools that provide all learners with an excellent education, especially in literacy, mathematics and science" (NPC, 2012, p. 264) which is globally recognised as implying amenability to transparency regarding policy review (WEF, 2013, 2014, 2015). Yet the similarly derived indices on SA quality of education remain consistently poor and thus, Akhurst and Mkhize (2006) highlight the contradiction between government's commitment and prevailing reality within school programmes. Therefore, the government's policy review processes should also consider existing and continuously changing careers in its quest for what it should regard as *excellent education*. Related to the need for the government's mission for excellent education, below are participants' collective voice on what they consider could also comprise the best in education – shared mainly as critical inputs into the education system.

5.2.4.2. Perceived greater emphasis on maths and science is challenged

Historically, exposure to mathematics and science subjects was restricted for blacks in SA due to racialized education provision in the country (Liccardo et al., 2015). Mangena (2015) as the former SA's Minister of Science and Technology from 2004 to 2008 accounts adequately for the rationale to refocus emphasis on these subjects. He explains how the DBE's (2013a) DINALEDI project was conceptualised towards deliberate strategies to improve access and performance in mathematics and life sciences. However, the good intentions to reverse the apartheid deprivation in maths and science was perceived as lopsided in that this study's participants as well as the learners who participated in Jacobs'(2011) study regarded the emphasis on the two subjects as greater in comparison to other learning areas. The stated outcomes are unfortunate in that the two subjects cannot be prioritised for the same number of years as they were denied under apartheid towards achieving equity, and then normalise emphasis in all learning areas afterwards. There seemed to be a need for reconsideration on this focus in that the slant seems unfair as captured in the following insightful inputs:

- o "so many people are not made for academic part of schooling...not excelling in that one thing put on a pedestal...maths and science...there's so many dimensions to life...explore different avenues...there are multiple possibilities" family member - *Participant 10*
- o "I feel like the education system...their priority is on science and maths...if they can do that on other fields I think I would know more...not everybody knows science and maths...what about social work...people that love history" recent graduate - *Participant 3*
- o "even the USA is asking why the focus on maths and science...Canada as well" additional inter-generational *Participant 13*
- o "there are technical subjects too" additional youngest - *Participant 14*

The embedded imperative was for the education system policy review processes to acknowledge that individuals differ and respective differences require fairly distributed opportunities for exploration. Ideally and had it not been for the now repealed Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953 (SA History Online, n.d.) an equitable approach would logically be aligned with the country's legislated guidelines whereby the Preamble of the SA Constitution of 1996 aspires to 'improve the quality of life of all citizens and free potential of each person'. Also, the Preamble to the SA Schools Act of 1996 aims 'to provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities' as well as the Preamble of the SA Higher Education Act 1997 which seeks 'to restructure and transform programmes and institutions to respond better to the human resource, economic and development needs of the Republic; pursue excellence, promote the full realisation of the potential of every student and employee, tolerance of ideas and appreciation of diversity' among others. As things stand, the human rights enshrined in the country's legislation remain awesome on paper with no practical realisation for the majority of SA individuals, a view that resonated similarly among all participants. Therefore, the government needs to broaden improvements as much as possible especially through education provision.

5.2.4.3. Emphasis on early educationally enriched learning environment

There was recurrent consensus among all participants on the need for early childhood intervention that emphasised career awareness as follows:

- o "the education department cares about students when they are in matric...focus more when the child is still at primary phase and build on the 11 years preceding matric" additional youngest *Participant 14*

- o "career counselling should be done at a younger age…compulsory for all South Africans…because people change…repeat it…in high school you choose compulsory subjects…its already late…children are not aware of their strengths and their goals" recent graduate - *Participant 2*

- o "because we live to work…it should be instilled at a young age that you are going to be working for the rest of your life" recent graduate - *Participant 2*

- o "invest in young people having to understand themselves and having to choose their careers according to what it is they are good at…having access to that information would be great for all South Africans" recent graduate - *Participant 2*

- o "kids as old as 10years will tell you I want to be a social worker…a doctor…at that early stage…at high school you already know how to drink…smoke…you've probably lost track of who you are" recent graduate - *Participant 3*

- o "change their mind-set…building their character…because they come from different communities…take them on one year after matric give them the correct conducive environment…those are my wishes" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

- o "children should be assessed to guide them as to which careers they will prefer…education should not be in isolation…there should be an alignment between industry and education…what we are teaching should be ploughed back into the economy" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

- o "education should give an opportunity for practicals…it should be a condition during holidays" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

The need and emphasis for early interventions along with well-rounded educational experiences were unequivocally advocated for. Crossland's (2006) and Jacobs' (2011) findings on policy guidelines regarding actual time spent on career guidance within LO career education, deserve vigorous consideration towards moving LO from the peripheral to the centre of educational experiences. I recalled that it was common among community elders to always banter with young children what their future career aspirations were as a signal to the child that career imperatives are impending. On the basis of these inquisitions, career inclinations should be regarded as serious imperatives from entry till exit educational levels while they are monitored and managed throughout the entire educational pipeline, that is, from home environments till exit levels of schooling. Focus should be on developing the whole person.

5.2.4.4. Emphasis on properly qualified educators for career guidance / counselling / development and management

Startlingly, the Centre for Development and Enterprise found in their 2015 report on the supply and demand of teachers that a "qualified teacher is not necessarily a good teacher" (Hofmeyr & Draper, 2015, p. 1). However, concerns relating to the general calibre of SA teachers are widespread in the country. Oosthuizen (2014) states that Life Orientation in particular, has always been taught by untrained or poorly trained educators hence the finding that only 28 percent of the subject teachers expressed enjoyment in its teaching. Compounding the problem are Khoza's (2015) findings that disgruntlement exists even among the best teachers. One remark related particularly to the strictly regimented approach of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement [CAPS] which "prevented them from giving the best of what they studied in the implementation of CAPS" (Khoza, 2015, p. 191). Additionally, the displeasure related to school disruptions due to *Union* meetings that are often held during school hours along with corruption associated with upward career mobility within the education sector where individuals have to bribe or get murdered for senior positions. Still, such teaching conditions do not quell the call for a better calibre of teachers about which Singh (2016) concludes thus: "despite the numerous studies that have highlighted the deficiencies in the teaching of LO, not much has changed in the policy or the delivery of the subject" (p. 88). Accordingly, the emphasis was regarded as recurrent in scholarship (see Akhurst & Mkhize, 2006; Andrews & Osman, 2015; Crossland, 2006; Jacobs, 2011; Laher & Cockcroft, 2013b; J. Maree, 2015a; Taylor, 2013) to cite a few. However, one can only hope in agreement with ED: NSTF (2016) that the current and ongoing career guidance policy initiatives (DHET, 2015a, 2016, 2017) will eventually yield desired outcomes through empowering competency guidelines for LO teachers as well. As such, participants concurred as follows:

o   "putting a lot of money into training good teachers…for after-school programmes…creating flexible opportunities for life skills development" additional inter-generational - *Participant 13*
o   "teachers should be assisted to improve themselves" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
o   "it starts at school…we need teachers who know what they are doing…well conversant with what they are supposed to put across…(be trained on) curriculum" my peer - *Participant 6*

o "I am reminded that just before NCS was introduced…Professor Jansen said you can't have a hit and run kind of situation…(let) teachers go back to school for three years…we took advantage of the fact that parents did not know (what was best)" my peer - *Participant 6*

o "they were howling saying how could a whole professor say learners should be without teachers for (such) a long time…but having gone through the crash-course, I still maintain that had that happened, there would be better understanding…we would be doing better putting across what was in the NCS" my peer - *Participant 6*

o "availability of professionals…(in) the career that one wants to pursue…readily available and accessible" family member - *Participant 9*

o "should be versatile (all must be career guidance specialists in their subjects)…our approach is not there yet…we need people that can identify children's abilities…with vast experiences of careers" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

o "Groom career experts…create a curriculum for career guidance specialists…it should be an ancillary subject to teaching for all teachers…should be able to identify students' (abilities)" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

o "workshop (career management) as a specific topic…have career management seminars…your thesis should be used as a guideline towards development of career guidance…it should be a course on its own…it will create specialists…more children can be directed…it should be a policy…because even at third year level students are still not sure of what they have chosen…they are just studying for the sake of getting a degree" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

Clearly, participants' input resonated with existing recommendations in the field which made the findings veracious particularly the viewpoint in the example: that an Economics teacher would know how to link the subject with possible career streams and employment prospects in the knowledge area. Localising the vast career knowledge in one LO teacher seems to reinforce functioning from a limited position of strength, regardless of how well qualified one may be. Essentially, the emphasis was on that educators need to be assisted in their own upskilling to ensure personnel that are better knowledgeable. Their training and knowledge should be based on researched and clear guidelines to supplement initiatives such as the recently gazetted SA competency framework for career development practitioners (DHET, 2015a, 2017).

5.2.4.5. Emphasis on envisaged improved educational outcomes

The relationship between education-spend and economic-output (Bridgstock, 2009) as an important factor in career management towards economic success was inferred in the following utterances:

o "if you acquire good formal education you can become…a subject matter expert…get a good job…you are able to contribute…must be remunerated accordingly…you pay tax…that tax goes toward development of roads…that's how the economy grows" recent graduate – *Participant 1*

o "it gives you self-actualisation…I've reached where I want to be…not even realising that I am contributing…you feel the need to be noticed, acknowledged…I can help reduce HIV and poverty…start a business…create jobs…employ people…help other people get to where I am…leading to economic wellbeing" recent graduate – *Participant 3*

o "career management helps you know your niche…you are an expert in your field…productive employees are happy employees…they've got networks where they would be able to work in other countries and create jobs" recent graduate – *Participant 3*

Thus, the resonant view was that education policy guidelines should note the eventual returns in the form of economic outcomes which have potential to benefit the country in the medium to long-term.

5.2.4.6. Emphasis on the imperative to grow the economy

Seeing that all life-career effort intends to uplift individuals towards their growth and development which can only happen within an economically growing country, participants shared the imperative that:

o "Sometimes you get that in the newspaper when they write about South Africa being compared to other countries…even those North of Limpopo you see us failing badly…for instance literacy and maths…are the backbone of the economy…there has not been much difference from where we come from" my peer – *Participant 6*

o "the first thing that I believe we should do is to improve economic performance…an economy that is growing…progressive (attracts) foreign direct investment…international companies will invest in our country…local South Africans will get an opportunity to be trained outside like in Japan, Germany, USA and so forth" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

o "important for our country to be part of the global economy…its an opportunity to exchange skills…I am a full blown capitalist" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

o "spend more money efficiently strengthening our education system" self-proclaimed inxile – *Participant 11*

- o "every township and village (should have facilities) for our kids to be measured at an early age…at childhood centres…that's where we need the biggest investment as a country…we've got the money…there's no point intervening at university…its already too late" self-proclaimed inxile – *Participant 11*

- o *"*I believe this country is missing a big point...our political leadership is not really interested with education and improvement of black children…we need the best educationalists…starting from there (young age)" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

- o "our performance can't really happen in isolation…it can't happen overnight…start aggressively at a young age of development…by the time they go to matric and varsity and employment level…their foundation would already be solidified" self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 11*

- o "if South Africa is doing well (because of careers that are managed well) then we should do well globally…put into practice (the career guidance opportunity) for a year then gauge the results … that will have greater influence" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

- o "focus and vision…we need to check on these…we need to be specific because we want economic growth…once there's a success story… by the time you turn around, the economy shall have changed" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

- o "(career management must begin) from the onset…from basic education…teach children (that) you are going to create your own employment…financial management should be taught from an early age" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

- o "protect our environment…what are we leaving for future generations?" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

Essentially, all participants repetitively requested the government to nurture economic growth through career education. It must allow implemented policy changes to take root before discontinuing them and must consider skills exchange between countries for enriched infusion of different knowledge while also protecting the environment.

5.2.4.7. Emphasis on vital lessons from the past

Acknowledging the important role of the archive (AAP, 2009, 2011; Cooper, 2014; N. Duncan, et al., 2014; Durrheim et al., 2011) for lessons learned in retrospect, participants stated that:

- o "give us a chance to start on a new slate…something fresh to show that this is the rainbow nation…democracy" additional youngest *Participant 14*

Participant 14's voice nearly drowned in the pertinent lessons from lived-career experiences where it was noted that:

o "in the past people owned their education…because they wanted to be out of the struggle…education was the way to go…now people are just stuck…they need to know that you not just in a job…its a career" recent graduate - *Participant 2*

o "I grew up believing that education is the key for success…where I grew up things were not well and I always told myself that I need education…I've done everything to make sure that I get my education…studying very hard…I am not gifted…I am a hard-worked…I am an average student" my peer – *Participant 12*

o "I have realised that if I don't give it my whole attention I may not make it…I go overboard…when I was studying for my masters I struggled with statistics…three of my colleagues dropped (out)…there was this young lady at Vista and she understood statistics…I tried by all means to come closer to her…most of my Saturdays I was sleeping on the floor at her place…she offered me the bed but I said no, I will sleep on the carpet…for almost one year…that was the extra mile" my peer - *Participant 12*

o "I am not ashamed to go to lecturers after class and tell them that I did not understand … sometimes I would feel embarrassed because they would explain and I will find myself not understanding but that did not derail me to stop because I've got the belief that at the end I will get what I want…I believe that what I want will come as long as I focus on what I believe in…always go an extra mile to see to it that my career becomes what I want it to be today…getting help from whatever source" my peer - *Participant 12*

o "I believe that there's someone out there who can help me and knows better around my needs…someone more knowledgeable…but first thing is that I must go out and look for help…research around (my need)" my peer - *Participant 12*

To demonstrate the need to get out of the proverbial box, the self-proclaimed inxiles Participant 11 and Participant 4 recollected that:

o "to complement me I actually invited a white business partner in 1984, having equal shareholding…this white partner could bring technical expertise that I needed for doing my business…to help me with official issues…you don't just go into business blindly because you've recognised an opportunity…you need to put the fundamentals right…those are some of the things I feel so grateful for…I recognised the need from a strategic point of view" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

o "life is also about strategic thinking…being smart in what you do…hard work alone is not enough…if you fail to attract the attention of other people…its not their fault…look at yourself…every time something happens, look within yourself for answers…for me its always easy to find answers whenever I've got issues" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

- "I often hear black kids complaining that they've got to work two or three times harder than their white counterparts for them to succeed…what's wrong with that?" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

- "If that's the case, work 20 times harder than the next person because life is about competition…its not just here in South Africa between black and white or black and black" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

- "win the war for you to succeed in life…be prepared to put in more than the next guy if you want to be better than him" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

- "I've influenced my own children…my daughter has an environment-management organisation…it's a body that controls all the building professionals…they need mentors…practically do the work…show the guy how to fit tiles, manufacture cupboards…that way we are creating entrepreneurs…more careers (through which they) will be making money…its all laborious work…dedication" self-proclaimed inxile – *Participant 4*

- "focus on those industries that create a lot of careers…I keep boasting about my construction business…it can change (a lot of people's lives)…architects, structural engineers" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

Expressed as key towards policy reformulation was the need to move away from the past which was shared only by the additional youngest *Participant 14* but she was advised to gain exposure in SA historical monuments such as the *Apartheid Museum, Constitution Hill* and the *Hector Peterson Memorial* to understand the atrocities of the past. Interestingly, the advice came from the recent graduate *Participant 2*, whose viewpoint was bolstered in what became a brief lesson in history from the inter-generational additional *Participant 13* as much as from the eldest self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 5*. Thus, the imperative for the past to be forgotten was contested and education was noted by all as an opportunity that should be made available for all who desire to learn. It was also noted that policy reformulation should recognise that not all individuals are supposed to pursue academic education streams. There needs to be room for others with differing aspirations whose self-confidence should be nurtured and not made to feel less worthy for not pursuing academic programmes. Those that may be entrepreneurial need correct guidance regarding what it takes to start and run a business towards success. Mentoring should be tapped on as a resource to help all up-and-coming individuals in the educational and careers pipeline.

5.2.4.8. Emphasis on the role of key stakeholders

Expectedly, the government's role was regarded as pivotal while that of other stakeholders was also emphasised as follows:

o "the government must create internships in order for people to acquire experience…corporate South Africa needs to come up with mentoring and succession planning" recent graduate - *Participant 1*

o "hard work must be rewarded…political connectedness must be taken away…you will get a job because of…credentials and competencies…lose favouritism" recent graduate - *Participant 1*

o "today the government is pro-education…lowering the pass-mark is well intended but at the end of the day it has negative outcomes…quality (output) is not good…the will to have everybody educated is there" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

o "even up to today I spend so much of my time and money ensuring that I can give to others, particularly black South Africans an opportunity…encourage them to not take education for granted" self-proclaimed inxile – *Participant 11*

o "without education we stand no chance…it's a biggest weakness (for us as a black race) we are not treating education in the kind of manner it requires…much more than just going to school…it needs a long-term commitment…for us as black people…internationally…to a large extent I think we are failing to capitalise on education…I hope that one day we will have the political leadership that can respond to such challenges…understand that its important to provide proper education…right now its quite sad" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

o "the government, business community has to look into financing education in South Africa…give education a priority…even a child who grows up in rural South Africa must be able to access that…just the way they are doing with this grant thing" my peer - *Participant 12*

o "if they can give it attention that each and every child who wants to develop his career must not be limited because of finances" my peer - *Participant 12*

o "South Africa is a developing country…skills from outside can be integrated…experiences from outside can be used to steer the country in the right direction" family member - *Participant 9*

The expressed imperative was for all key stakeholders to join hands by encouraging business and successful individuals to plough back by establishing more internship opportunities, mentoring and succession planning. Policy should enshrine the importance of education and life-long learning while also providing empowering legislation for individuals and the economy to succeed.

5.2.4.9. Emphasis on policy reformulation and implementation

The DHET's (2015a) observation that "we are not short on policy development in South Africa, in general, but we are demonstrably short on effective implementation of such policy" (p. 17) resonated amply with participants' views that this study has potential to influence policy review outcomes although also fully in agreement with the DHET's stated concern on implementation. Accordingly, the participants emphasised as follows:

- "the value (of the study is that) when policy is drafted, it will take into account social economic background of those who want to better their careers post 1994" self-proclaimed *Participant - 5*
- "it will teach the government not to relax…not be complacent…and take things for granted" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- "current government needs to produce quality students if they are to win the battle against unemployment and poverty…a lot has to be done to reverse the situation" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- "all those young mothers who are given free support (through grants) should one way or the other be retrained and re-educated for them to be contributors to the economy…they must be forced to equip themselves because (the grant) is not sustainable" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*
- "Government…to make followup…(on) policies…it looks like policies are made but there is no followup" family member - *Participant 9*
- "the curriculum…the approach is the problem…run it for at least 10 years … then review" self-proclaimed inxile – *Participant 4*
- "our government…will they…should they (incorporate study findings in policy reformulation)…lets go to church and pray about this" self-proclaimed inxile – *Participant 11*
- "my own personal feeling is that there is no commitment to the development of the country…I don't judge people by what they say…but on what they do…based on what they say…they are committed…what they do…is totally different" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

The study's foci were regarded as comprehensive to enable the government a socio-economic and cultural perspective when reviewing policy impact over intervening years after democracy was birthed. Though the child social grant was commended, its lack of sustainability prompted career recycling views (Greenhaus et al., 2006; 2010) drawing from the cited rebuilding resources to revive derailed careers as explained by Akhurst and Mkhize (2006). Another point was for the government not to hasten implementing regular changes, which pointed to a reactive rather than a proactive approach to policy review processes.

It thus needs to make careful consideration of viewpoints from all possible angles and then run the changes for enough time during which it would be possible to draw substantially qualitative reviews. Since it seemed the government was perceived as not having a monitoring or follow-up mechanism on designed policies, it was emphasised for it to reinforce existing oversight measures or to review their effectiveness. This last emphasis raised doubts about the governments' commitment to consider fresh input from studies such as this one, whereby the self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11* humorously felt a need for us all to go to church and pray!

5.2.4.10. Emphasis on the value-adding contribution of the study

Interestingly, the DHET's (2015a) policy guideline on career development services enquires whether within:

> The academic literature (,) is there any substantive evidence of research that has been undertaken in order to evaluate career services provision in South Africa. Thus, while negative perceptions exist about the status quo of South African career service delivery, such perceptions are seldom backed by research findings (DHET, 2015a, p. 17).

Therefore, it was my view that the lived-career management narrative on which this study's academic research process was based offers empirically established findings which thus responds with the benefit of hindsight and foresight to DHET's foregoing inquisition. Also, participants' voices also got heard in relation to evaluating the intended value of the study and were noted as follows:

o "case studies are important learning tools / instruments…that's how we learn…from the American, Japanese, Zimbabwean experiences…it will be good for Zimbabweans to write (about themselves) what really happened…I am sure there will be good things about South Africa that other countries can emulate…we learn from others as well" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

o "the (study's) findings are intended to be published…they may reach the Minister of Education … it will help those who write policies to improve their policy" self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 5*

o "The current government should be receptive to positive suggestions…it will be good for this government to think outside the box" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

o "come up with an education policy that will help us out of this position of no employment…they have to open up and listen to such ideas" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

o "I believe this study can help so much…improving…adding into the policy…the study is about research obviously they will use the findings in order to improve conditions…of careers in South Africa…improve whatever is lacking in as far as career management is concerned in our country" my peer - *Participant 12*

- o "the study can be used as a wakeup call…it's a reminder because some of these things…are easily forgotten" family member - *Participant 8*
- o "if there were no studies like these people in government…or high positions would always think that they are doing something right" family member - *Participant 9*
- o "they (developed economies) can learn…they come across…carry themselves like people who know it all but if…they look at it (the study) they can learn something out of it" family member – *Participant 9*
- o "incorporate the findings…if there are no studies for our own improvement…people in education don't reflect and say where did we go wrong…how can we improve our education…they are not on the ground so its very important for us as a country to be able to reflect … say where did we go right…even on that we can improve" my peer - *Participant 6*
- o "if we are going to take everything as negative and being critical we won't go anywhere …studies are there to correct…nobody can write something just to criticize…for what good reason? Don't view the study as an attack on the government or education system…we are doing an introspection as a country…where are we failing…where do we need to improve…let us go to the people on the ground to find out how they see us going forward…that can benefit us as a country" my peer - *Participant 6*
- o "your research must be practical" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*
- o "I think it can also add value to ordinary South Africans…not just the policy side but (to) a person if they were to read it…they can know the importance of managing their careers" recent graduate - *Participant 2*
- o "it doesn't have to wait for South African policy processes because that would be slow…we don't have to depend on the government…start a movement of having to manage your career properly…my heart is with the children…we start there and plough but obviously we would have to build our way up ourselves" recent graduate - *Participant 2*

The methodology of the study was deemed as relevant particularly as related to case studies which are regarded as tools for imparting learning through lived experiences. The resounding recommendation was that the study's findings should be regarded in a positive light, a necessary wake-up call from introspective perspectives which is important for lessons to be noted and used for further improvement. Developed economies were also seen as potential beneficiaries of the study in that knowledge is organic and infinite whereby no one can ever really claim to know everything there is to know in a given subject. Furthermore and apart from infusing insight into policy reformulation, the study was regarded as relatable to ordinary South Africans who can also learn (read the thesis) by themselves about career management imperatives without government's prompting. Moreover, the value of the study was that it was a result of research and its findings should be regarded with credibility.

5.3. Evaluating findings from the inxile-exile perspective

It was evident at the conceptualisation of the study that its foci were retrospective in approach and the inxile coinage similarly indicated that SA and its past to present political history provided the context. Accordingly, the inxile coinage became the lens from which the study progressed which then nuanced discursive processes particularly during data collection. At that phase of the study, the inxile-exile dichotomy framed conversations as were held with participants in relation to the study's phenomenon of inquiry. The inevitable emergence of this dimension is noted by Hosking and Morley (2004) as consistent with that interpretation of lived experiences often tends to be from a specific and opinionated viewpoint. Still, I believe that in-depth scholarly scrutiny of inxiles' and exiles' life-career experiences was beyond the demarcated parameters of this study. However, the obvious contrast in the dichotomy is also evident in Mangena's (2015), Kani's (2008), Odhoji's (n.d.), J. Brown's (2008) and Mda's (2008) as well as Schleicher's (2011) writings. Therefore, related and clearly formulated future research questions are covered in Chapter 6.

Overall, narratives relating to the inxile-exile dichotomy were informed by evoked worldviews which was evident even among the recent graduates' versions of their accounts. This was largely because fathoming the basis of a narrative is vital in that individuals are characters within enduring stories that existed long before they were born, as pointed out by McMahon and Watson (2013). Clearly, Pillay's (2016) observation that "all aspects of life are conditioned by political forces - so palpable and profound in the current South African context that it almost goes without saying that psychology and politics should be a happily married couple" (p. 157). Accordingly, such framed narratives were presented in the broad *Appendix F* as Appendix Table F.3b$_1$ (family members), Appendix Table F.3b$_2$ (recent graduates), Appendix Table F.3b$_3$ (my peers) and Appendix Table F.3b$_4$ (self-proclaimed inxiles) and some of these utterances are:

Family members:

o "you have been exposed to the country as far as possible…you know the ins and outs of the happenings…you will have those limitations…you won't compare with somebody who has been in other places" family member - *Participant 8*

- o "people in the country…always believe that elsewhere in the world life is just a bed of roses, its nice" family member - *Participant 9*
- o "being inxile you were exposed…you were at home…able to draw from that…as opposed to being in exile where things are probably different in terms of the way you will see the world" family member - *Participant 10*
- o "the approach would have been…inxiles are more fight as opposed to flight. The principle is going to school and working towards something…that is still the same…its the way one chose to react towards that situation…others chose to fight others chose to flight…the principle of career management remains the same" family member - *Participant 10*

Recent graduates:

- o "those that went to exile…are entitled…even though some of them don't have formal education…Nelson Mandela said himself that exiles will get preferential treatment…I feel they get preferential treatment" recent graduate - *Participant 1*
- o "I don't think there are differences regarding that matter (exiles/inxiles)…I imagine…that I am home and everything I need is here…they have different goals and different career choices…they would always remember about home…because you miss home…there would be a different environment" recent graduate - *Participant 2*
- o "exposed to different cultures that would influence the way you manage your career…I don't have such influences…but career is not about home…its not such a big factor…that person could have managed their career as much as myself…but I think it would be more vigorous on their side" recent graduate - *Participant 2*
- o "I think I had better education unlike them (exiles)…I could have been so exposed…maybe more advanced than them…I think there were not enough bursaries…I feel about exiles…it was tough then" recent graduate - *Participant 3*

My peers:

- o "the negative is that I pursued something I was not that much cut out to do…being here at home with your parents…can't be a disadvantage…the disadvantage can be that you were always reminded…being politically aware of what is happening around you…other people have family members abroad…uprooted…killed…we felt what other people were going through…but bottom line is that home is home…it can't be a disadvantage" my peer - *Participant 6*
- o "those that went to exile had more support from other countries that were against apartheid…structures were set even financially…regarding developing their careers…unlike us here…we struggled to get resources…they were very scarce" my peer - *Participant 12*

Self-proclaimed inxiles:

- o "the advantage of managing my career in the country…its my home…support from family…the community in general…its better than to be in a foreign country…ya, they were supported but sometimes I believe there were obstacles because they were not home" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 4*

- o "inxiles had social support from parents and extended family…accepted in the community…your friends are around you…it was easier to study…you had to be very exceptional to achieve what (exiles) achieved…they depended on scholarships from outside the country" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

- o "I suppose they lived stressful lives…not knowing if one day they will be coming home" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 5*

- o "the whole disadvantage was apartheid that made it difficult for us to fully exploit our talent as South Africans…exiles contributed more to the collapse of apartheid…at the beginning I used to say unfortunately my contacts did not get me out of the country…I was an angry young black man that really wanted to make a difference…now I look (around) and say to myself: I was really fortunate that I stayed around" self-proclaimed inxile - *Participant 11*

The viewpoints highlighted difficulties on all fronts and also hinted on career trajectories determined by preferential treatment in some instances based on the dichotomy. The now evidently corroborated and prevalent complexities have far reaching implications and unpleasant offshoots such as unemployment, crime, diseases, poverty and corruption which have an impact on career development and management processes of SA individuals. Therefore, as we march forward, we cannot allow ourselves to forget because in everyone's experience within family, community or society, the archive is invaluable because memory is the fabric of identity (Crwys-Williams, 2010). Even if we wanted to forget, how can we when what resonates so loudly with persistent complexities is echoed as in Ndlela's (2013, p. 138) lamentations? Thus:

> The values for which they stood and tirelessly fought for are in danger of being forgotten. We are now busy accumulating material wealth in a country where the gap between the rich and the poor is ever increasing. We seem to feel no shame. If we continue in this way, we risk becoming the only nation in the world that disrespects its people and its national heroes and heroines. This book is my small contribution towards closing some of the gaps in our national memory (Ndlela, 2013, p. 138).

Consequently, the study's findings were presented, interpreted, substantiated and discussed towards responding to the posed research questions as well as the accompanying objectives which were adequately addressed. The collectively shared lived-career management experiences were hard to revisit particularly among the peers, self-proclaimed inxiles and the eldest family member *Participant 9* who identified strongly with the experiences of the researcher.

Recent graduate participants related to the lived-career management experiences of the older generation more as children born within the struggle mostly at the death-point of apartheid in the country. They witnessed the suffering through recounted limitations expressed by their family members, neighbours, community members and through exposure to the media as well as from preserved memorial sites. For purposes of this study, the witnessing and corroboration remained powerful means of quality assurance criteria relating to truthfulness, resonance, coherence, transparency and reflexivity as emphasised in literature (see Durrheim & Wassenaar, 1999; Ellis et al., 2011; Guba & Lincoln, 2001; Hayano, 1979; Lincoln, 2001; McIlveen, 2008; Muncey, 2010; Speedy, 2008). Hence, the others' voices accentuated stated judgement criteria towards conclusions in the next chapter although the immediate imperative was to also draw a summary of discussions as covered in the following paragraph.

5.4.   Concluding chapter summary

Chapter 5 began with a brief recap of preceding chapters whereby conceptualisation, research questions, accompanying objectives, cited literature and theoretical coverage of the subject of inquiry preceded discussions of preferred methodology that enabled the study to be investigated. Again, this chapter noted the emergent concretisation and synchronisation of conceptual and metatheoretical constructs as framing guidelines for the study from previous chapters. The intention was to clarify the basis for interpretation as well as the approach eventually derived for correctly framed discussions. Clarifying how the chapter was approached accounted for how the intended discussions were to be understood as coherently as possible towards ensuring all identified dimensions of the study were adequately communicated. Consistent with the foregoing brief introduction to this chapter, interpretations and discussions flowed from the four broad research questions that also encompassed related objectives. These were responded to through gathered data that after analysis, yielded corresponding *Phase 1 autoethnographic* and *Phase 2 findings* respectively from the narrated lived-career management story as well as from the collective voice of the participants. It was consistently highlighted which Tables were referenced in *Appendix F* so that the findings' contextual meaningfulness could readily be ascertained where the need arose.

Thus, the narrated *Phase 1 autoethnographic findings* showed that indeed, career behaviour was actually career inclination that was passively enacted in a reactive mode which justified perceptions of career theories' minimal explanation of the experience. It thus also confirmed the absence of indigenous knowledge in the field with which the experience could have been aligned, analysed and interpreted within relevant and indigenously established theoretical tenets. Accordingly, it seemed that the lived-career management experiences consisted of career inclinations instead of career behaviours in interpretations of what eventually became the fate of the examined career story. The STF and accompanying diagrammatic representations of individuals' systems of influence enabled visual representation within which discernment of lived-career management experiences were presented from the demarcated metatheoretical framework.

It further enabled clear identification of newly emphasised influences at personal level (spirituality) and at social system level (psychosocial status) as well as those that did not have any evident influence such as disability, health and aptitude. The latter influence carried quantified connotations that did not seem to express experiences within the explained career inclinations. Such interpretations underpinned the imperative for indigenous knowledge base which captures local career development and management experiences as part of scholarship that would also enrich the career field. For the interpretations to have veracity, *Phase 1 findings* were subjected to corroboration through sought witnessing by three family members whose voices formed part of the sample. Resonance between the lived-career management story and family members' narrated responses to the probing questions was established to render the findings credible and truthful. The STF as a metatheoretical framework ensured scholarly and theoretical alignment of findings as also supported through the emergent conceptual constructs. These enabled localisation of utterances as cultural elements within indigenous knowledge development imperatives in the field and in accordance with the study's objectives. Furthermore, *Phase 2 findings* ensured sensitivity by first inviting participants to inhabit the field of careers. That way, their apparent understanding of the phenomenon of inquiry was ascertained for purposes of locating views within the field so that findings could be interpreted in alignment with the objectives of the study.

Importantly, participants' understanding was consistent with how the phenomenon is conceptualised in the field. Examples of utterances attesting to the stated participants' understanding of the phenomenon were incorporated in discussions as a means to indicate truthfulness. From this understanding, participants' views on the research questions were interpreted whereby firstly, they corroborated the rationalised minimal change in career education within an education system that was regarded as far from being among the best. The negative effects of the conceptualised complexities were regarded as pervasive in impinging career management processes of SA individuals, historically and up to the present democratic establishments in the country. Improvement efforts such as the introduction of the LO subject within which career education resides, was noted although there was consensus about its poor impact.

The view on LO was supported by the regularly reported increase in the number of unemployable graduates who could neither influence economic development in the country nor utilise the knowledge and skills into entrepreneurial careers. Again, supportive utterances were extracted to ensure credibility of findings. Furthermore, there were elements that were observed as strategies that the inxiles seem to have employed to navigate their career processes from which threads could be extracted for career knowledge enrichment in alignment with the indigenous knowledge development objectives of the study. The stated elements included values that cluster around *ubuntu*, familial imperatives, spirituality in career processes, psychosocial status as a contextual influence, authenticity as a trait, serendipity as a trait, planned happenstance as a trait, reawakened awareness, chance, enriched capabilities and context. Therefore, indigenous knowledge formulations can be sensitized according to the identified elements towards ensuring locally based theoretical explanations of the phenomenon. Again, these elements were extracted from participants' utterances as truthful accounts of the findings. Additionally, the important role of individual's prerogative to self-development emerged strongly within autoethnographic findings which was similarly emphasised by all participants. This was accompanied by emphasis on the need for the education department to strengthen the entire education experience and not only limit it to maths and science, the imperative to grow the economy, enriching the educational environment towards growing the whole person, ensuring properly qualified career educators.

Also emphasised was the imperative to recognise that educational expenditure is an investment towards economic improvement for the country, learning from the past and ensuring participation of key stakeholders such as the government. The private sector and other successful individuals were also noted as key stakeholders expected to act as support structures in line with collectivistic value orientations. These insights were regarded as helpful prompts in career education policy reformulation that should ensure incorporation of oversight structures to monitor processes till successful implementation. Overall, the study was regarded positively as a great case study comprising introspective reviews of our career education as a country towards identifying areas of improvement for individuals' career success that could impact on SA's economic success. Once again, all views were foregrounded on participants' utterances towards credible representations of findings. In accordance with the study's retrospective perspective that drew from the archive of lived-career management experiences of one inxile along with several others' voices, it was inevitable for the inxile-exile dichotomy to have a nuanced presence that coloured the findings. Interestingly, the shared experiences resonated among the different cohorts of participants in a manner that belied generational differences. It was an advantage in that the voices harmonised consistently with the cultural and socio-political archive of experiences which then enhanced the quality of findings in response to research questions whereby all the study's objectives were addressed. The next final Chapter 6 concluded by summarising the study and also highlighted its contributions, recommendations, future research and limitations as well as the finale.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION – *THE MATCH*

CONTRIBUTIONS | RECOMMENDATIONS | FUTURE RESEARCH | LIMITATIONS

6.1. Introduction

To conclude the study I highlighted in this chapter overarching aspects which enabled an exposition of findings from my lived-career management experiences along with the corroborative ones through participants' voices that together, crystallized distinctive contributions, recommendations, future research areas and limitations of the study. As a whole, these aspects preceded the study's finale that metaphorically wrapped up the game of tennis and I summarised all these in the section below.

6.2. Summary of the study

Firstly, I accentuated my cultural background alongside a historical, political, educational and socioeconomic contextual framework to position the study and to foreground related discussions. The overriding goal was to substantiate the perceived gap in career theories towards justifying the importance of indigenous knowledge scholarship. To achieve this goal I drew comparison between the apartheid and democratic eras in South Africa [SA] with particular reference to career education as a demarcated area of focus within the field of career psychology. As a mirror from which to reflect the drawn comparison, I conceptualised five core constraining strangleholds that seemed clearly embedded in reviewed literature but were then coalesced to accentuate them as peculiar to SA covering: personal, familial, educational, societal and global complexities. Again, the overlooked imperative for individuals to also strive for career related self-extrication at least within the appeals documented for the nation in the National Development Plan 2030 (NPC, 2012) as a policy framework were viewed as unfortunate. Therefore, both SA's career field and the policy framework provided relevant rationales and strong motivations for undertaking the study. Accordingly, the researcher's lived-career management experiences were examined through autoethnography as the preferred methodology which also enabled a multi-voiced and corroborated approach.

Within the approach, the constructivist perspective that underpinned all aspects of the study yielded a uniquely focused yet broadly substantiated body of indigenous knowledge in the field of careers. Secondly, I summed up key findings according to each of the four research questions whereby the first research question and related objective found support in the literature and from findings. Therein, it was established that indeed, instead of the theoretically based career behaviour, career inclinations existed within autoethnographic findings as well as substantiation that no theoretical formulation could explain in full how the experiences were enacted. This finding provided justification for the noted gap in the career field as well as the imperative for continued scholarship in indigenous knowledge development. Also, the strategic yet methodologically consistent inclusion of three family members as participating witnesses to my career story corroborated the argued absence of theoretical alignment with my experiences which then provided credibility, dependability and confirmability of related findings. From these findings, contextualised interpretations were formulated to yield meaningful conclusions related to the first research question and in that way, addressed the related objective of the study. For a more pointed summation, Table 6.1 below represents all Systems Theory Framework influences which largely remained undeveloped but were discernible in my lived-career management experiences. Those that are bolded in italics were newly derived from findings whereas those bolded with asterisks had no discernible influence.

Table 6.1 Individual and contextual influences in Systems Theory Framework: Discerned, undiscerned and emergent influences

	CONTENT INFLUENCES		PROCESS INFLUENCES
Intrapersonal System	Social System	Environmental Societal System	
- Ability **Aptitudes*** - Interests - Gender - Age - Skills - Ethnicity - Sexual orientation - Beliefs **Health*** **Disability*** - Values - World of work knowledge - Personality - Self-concept - Physical attributes ***Spirituality***	- Family - Peers - Community groups - Education institutions - Media - Workplace	- Political decisions - Historical trends - Employment market - Geographic location - Socio-economic status **Globalisation*** ***Psychosocial status***	- Recursiveness - Change over time - Chance

Furthermore, findings from the second research question and related objective corroborated the perceived minimal change in the provision of career education from SA's apartheid era to the current post-apartheid era. Importantly, these findings were drawn from very few participants including three recent graduates, two peers, three self-proclaimed inxiles, one additional intergenerational participant as well as one additional youngest participant. All the participants amounted to 13 voices that contributed to the study in accordance with the qualitative design. Yet, the established perceptions yielded profound meanings which nevertheless, retained minimal transferability to views of the general population.

Accordingly, the persistently constraining effects of socioeconomic factors were expressed as impacting negatively on career imperatives of the youth, similarly to how it happened in the inxiles' lived-career management experiences. The conceptualised multipronged complexities were understood, framed, articulated and viewed as impediments in career processes especially related to the generally poor quality of education in SA that encompasses the equally meagre returns from career education in particular. The good intentions that are expressed in the Life Orientation subject were regarded as weakened by persistent complexities compounded by inadequate teacher competencies required for effective implementation of the subject. However, the positive in the political post-apartheid legislative environment that intended to create enabling opportunities was regarded as having negligible effect and was viewed as undermined by the country's uncertain but very weak economic performance at local and global levels. Other noted positive intentions were the implementation of the nationwide Feeding Scheme in schools and the Social Grant for children which intend to offset poverty. Also noted was the availability of the National Students Financial Aid Scheme, scholarships and bursaries which played a big role towards helping better performing students particularly at tertiary education level even though understood as insufficient.

Still, these positive yet minimal changes were noted but the widely reported events capturing upheavals in higher education in recent times were highlighted as further evidence that the *minimal* interpretation of current events actually glossed over deeply cancerous frustrations across the explicated complexities that then require urgent attention from all stakeholders. Interestingly, there was notable congruence in viewpoints across the generations of participants, ranging in age from 22 to 65 years, especially on observed, experienced and constraining complexities on career imperatives. Moreover, resonant utterances were extracted in alignment with the multi-voiced perspective of the study that bolstered the findings and thus also rendering them credible. The third research question and related objective sought to highlight elements that could be extracted as manifested approaches from lived-career management experiences, particularly those from my peers and fellow inxiles for possible infusion in career theories as part of the quest for indigenous knowledge development processes.

Their representation in the findings accentuated the emerged conceptualisations as framed from narratives and utterances, thus privileging their prioritisation in alignment with uniquely derived outcomes of qualitative studies such as in this study. Where resonance with theoretical conceptualisation was evident, the elements were synchronised towards meanings that enhanced indigenous knowledge scholarship. Briefly, these elements encompassed theming threads as follows:

- o **Values clustering around *ubuntu*** emphasising the kind of values within collectivistic value orientation that require to be explored, expositioned and espoused prominently in indigenous career knowledge development processes. *Ubuntu* emerged as a highly distinctive value that has potential to set apart African scholarship outcomes within global career knowledge tenets.
- o **Familial imperatives** flowed from the *ubuntu* value whereby the notion of family was expanded to include all support structures in the form of other individuals, community members or from societal benevolence initiatives in alignment with collectivistic value orientations. Accordingly, it should earn pride of place within indigenous knowledge development processes.
- o **Spirituality in career processes** as a uniquely represented element in lived-career experiences in this study and a vital coping resource to be acknowledged as a fundamental influence in indigenous knowledge development processes. It was regarded as a significantly salient area of future research.
- o **Psychosocial status as a contextual influence** in recognition of apartheid induced psychological sequelae characterised by endemic violence, crime and trauma that has woven itself in the fibre of life in SA. It is yet another uniquely represented element in lived-career experiences and was regarded as vital in indigenous knowledge development processes. Again, it was regarded as another substantially prominent area of future research.
- o **Authenticity as a trait** whereby personality was regarded as a broader domain and an externally discernible, enduring and consistent quality in individuals, hence the element seemed a character trait within the domain. Its interpretation was in recognition of our divisive past that created a trust deficit among SA citizens with a particular impact in career counselling relationships.

Authentic and truthfully represented characters were thus regarded as strong requirements among career professionals which should then form part of indigenous knowledge development processes towards sensitised practice spaces.

o **Serendipity as a trait** was regarded as similarly embedded within personality as a domain within which to acknowledge and encourage serendipitous attitudes of readiness to seize opportunities in unexpected encounters and circumstances towards gainful career outcomes. Accordingly, requiring prominence in indigenous knowledge development endeavours.

o **Planned happenstance as a trait** was regarded as similarly embedded within personality as a broader domain. Indigenous career knowledge should then encourage attitudes of open-mindedness, foresightedness and preparedness for chance encounters that may present themselves in processes of carving out career trajectories.

o **Reawakened awareness** was regarded as congruent within personality as a broader domain, interpreted as a cognitive element that emerged to accentuate mental alertness that should result in optimising attitudes to prevailing opportunities. Indigenous career knowledge should then highlight the importance of such cognitive processes by also promoting self-reliance towards the unending process of personhood.

o **Chance** factors that emerge in career processes and require maximisation whether expected or randomly occurring towards beneficial career outcomes. Indigenous career scholarship should also emphasise recognition of such opportunities especially in view of that most careers (especially of black South Africans) were shaped by similar factors.

o **Enriched capabilities** within individuals' intrapersonal systems which enable career adaptability in view of limitless opportunities according to prevailing diaspora and global careers. Multilingualism emerged as one such capability that required acknowledgement in indigenous knowledge development imperatives.

o **Context** as congruent with environmental system level influences captured SA's historical/political and sociocultural conditions among a plethora of other demands requiring amelioration as already underway through national social cohesion agendas within a changing/enriched legislated environment.

Indigenous career knowledge development processes have to tap into the socio-political fibre where career processes are enacted in order to accentuate contextual imperatives through related scholarship.

The cited elements and the accompanying pertinent emphasis were limited in their origin given the few numbers of participants in the study. However, they emerged as key distinguishing features between existing career knowledge and experiences of fellow inxiles that was also observed by the younger participants which, overall, homogenised the sample viewpoints. Again, utterances were extracted for confirmability and credibility of the findings especially in light of notable agreement across all participants' viewpoints. Thus the formulation of indigenous theoretical knowledge should be grounded on local relevance. Career scholarship should be relatable to local experiences for the field to have meaningful contribution in individuals' career processes by also acknowledging contextual ramifications.

The fourth research question and related objective were similarly addressed according to emanating findings that served as insightful inputs towards SA education policy reformulation processes. The insights were then condensed as points of emphasis including on the:

o **Pivotal role of the individual** in his/her career development and self-management as essential precursors towards understanding and leveraging interpersonal and sociocultural aspects of identity in the career realm. Autoethnographic findings as well as participants emphasised this role as a need for hard-work and several scholars were cited that firstly acknowledged the contextual difficulties but still elaborated on affirming approaches towards individual's ownership of his/her career obligations to elucidate the notion of *hard work.* Briefly, these included reawakening to the demands of deeper insight and self-awareness, self-exertion when an opportunity arises, responding with deeper conviction and a belief that it is possible, community service that might lead to chance occurences, seeking role models, self-mastery and resilience, learning diverse survival skills for career adaptation and prioritising career success in that from it, will spring communal and the country's economic success towards greater achievement of an individual's personhood.

- The imperative to regard all learning areas as important towards a wholesome education provision and **not just fixation on maths and science** even though the reasons for greater emphasis on these subjects were noted as having merit given the entrenched roots of Bantu Education in SA. Basically, participants' viewpoints expressed a plea for better all-round education to cater for all individuals' interests and inherent abilities in a manner that enhanced feelings of affirmation for different gifts no matter what that consisted of.

- The need for **early educationally enriched learning environments** wherein informal family/community career awareness imperatives are formalised in career education from Grade R throughout the educational pipeline till self-management is mastered.

- The need for **properly qualified career guidance educators** especially ensuring that every educator is a career guidance expert in his/her learning area. Such an approach would minimise the burden of career knowledge on one educator in view of the dynamic and ever growing knowledge in response to local/global economic and technological advances. Importantly, this emphasis is recurring in career education scholarship in the country even though there is no visible change towards implementation as yet.

- The imperative to acknowledge the relationship between **education-spend and economic output** whereby an economic investment in enhancing educational experiences would logically impact on medium to long term positive economic outcomes which related to the next emphasis as follows.

- The imperative to **grow the economy** by recognising that careers do not develop in exclusion of a vibrant economy that also protects the environment. As such, personal career success was regarded as inextricable from national economic success.

- Vital **lessons from the past** were emphasised whereby how careers were developed and managed provided exemplars on resilience, persistence, courage and determination to make something out of one's life against all odds. The additional youngest participant protested in a clear desire for the nation to forget the past and rather preferring the need to start afresh. Yet, there was overriding consensus from all other participants that a lot can be learned from the archive of lived-career management experiences, a view with which I agreed fully

- o The **role of key stakeholders** in support of government initiatives. The stakeholders were framed as the importance for successful individuals to plough back and for increased private sector involvement towards bolstering career imperatives through means such as internships and mentoring.

- o The **pertinence of policy reformulation and implementation** whereby the study's findings were considered as a review mechanism on what still needs to be done, emphasising a more proactive than reactive approach to career education. The review should also focus on minimised dependence on government relief schemes whereby the careers of beneficiaries should rather be recycled and rebuilt as sustainable strategies than continued dependency on the social grants.

- o Finally, the **value-adding contribution of the study's method** of research as a case study based approach for learning, reflection, introspection and a wake-up call from a lived-career management experience was regarded as relatable to ordinary South Africans. Even developed economies were viewed as having potential gain from the findings that would provide them with insight into career experiences in developing economies, particularly in South Africa.

The foregoing findings were formulated from a discernibly established worldview indicative of a pronounced identification with the inxile conceptualisation across the participants. Although the varying generational gap existed among the participants, it seemed overshadowed by the impact of identified complexities which can be attributed to socioeconomic and cultural similarities due to common political/historical backgrounds. Also, the difficulties associated with experiences of those who managed their careers in exile were acknowledged and appreciated with varying views that largely regarded them as having been better due to assumed exposure to opportunities. However, most views considered the experiences as having been horrendous due to exiled conditions and by being away from the support of family and friends at home. Overall, research questions one and two investigated mostly the lived-career experiences of the researcher as witnessed by family members and corroborated by my peers and fellow self-proclaimed inxiles and younger graduates.

Research questions three and four investigated mostly ameliorative strategies with the former focusing on what can be infused in career knowledge from an indigenous perspective whereas the latter focused on improvements that can be made at career education policy level during review processes. Similar to the summation in Table 6.1, the STF structure was revisited in conclusion to provide a broader overview on those influences that were discernible through utterances and those that were inferable from the voices as a collective in the study and across all four research questions. However, the discernments and inferences do not imply the direction of the influence, i.e. whether negative or positive. As such, Table 6.2 below represents the mentioned overall summation.

Table 6.2 Summary of influences discerned/inferred from the collective voice across the research questions

Participants	Recent Graduates			Self-Proclaimed Inxiles			My Peers		Family Members			AIP	AYP	A
	1	2	3	4	5	11	6	12	8	9	10	13	14	T
Content Influences														
Intrapersonal System														
Ability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	•	✓	✓
Aptitudes		•	•	•	✓	•	•	✓		✓	✓			
Interests	•	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓		•	✓	•	•	✓	✓
Gender			✓	•	✓	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Age	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓
Skills (*enriched capabilities/ diverse skills sets/adaptability*)	✓	✓	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ethnicity	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓
Sexual orientation														✓
Beliefs					•									✓
Health				✓	✓	✓								
Disability					✓									
Values (*ubuntu*)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
World of work knowledge	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•				✓
Personality (*authenticity, serendipity, planned happenstance, reawakened awareness/ agency/hard work/corruption*)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
Self-concept (*selfhood/person hood*)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	✓
Physical attributes					✓									✓
*Spirituality**				✓	•		✓	✓	✓	✓	•			✓

Keys:	✓ Discerned influences	• Inferred influences	*Newly discerned influences**

AIP =Additional Intergenerational Participant	AYG = Additional Young Participant	Autoethnography / Thabile

Table 6.2 Summary of influences discerned/inferred from the collective voice across the research questions (cont.)

Participants	Recent Graduates			Self-Proclaimed Inxiles			My Peers		Family Members			AIP	AYP	A
	1	2	3	4	5	11	6	12	8	9	10	13	14	T
Content Influences														
Social System														
Family (*extended*)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Peers	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		•		•	✓
Community groups		•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
Education institutions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Media							✓	✓		✓		•		✓
Workplace	✓	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
Environmental/Societal System (*Context**)														
Political decisions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Historical trends	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employment market	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Geographical location	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Socioeconomic status (*poverty*)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		•	✓
Globalisation			•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•		
Psychosocial status* (violence, trauma, abuse)	✓	•	•	•	✓	•	•	•	•	•	•	✓	•	✓
Process Influences														
Recursiveness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Change over time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chance	•	•	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	•	•			✓

Keys:	✓ Discerned influences	• Inferred influences	*Newly discerned influences**

AIP =Additional Intergenerational Participant	AYG = Additional Young Participant	Autoethnography / Thabile

Importantly, the qualitative paradigm of the study enabled a consistently integrative approach whereby the research questions and conceptualisations provided a knit-together presentation of arguments culminating in the chapters mainly as an organising structure towards coherent conclusions. As such, these foci finally became pertinent areas of the study's theoretical and practical contributions, recommendations, future research and limitations which are respectively discussed in relevant sections below.

6.3. Contributions of the study

The study was based on observations which pointed to career theories that didn't capture or explain comprehensively career behaviour of individuals in South Africa as a developing economy. The researcher's lived-career management experiences provided the basis for conceptualisation and investigation of the study by also employing the voice of others as witnesses and corroborative participants. These experiences and observations confirmed the highlighted strangleholds as also persistently constraining effective career development and management due to historical misfortunes visited upon us by colonial era outcomes that led to political decisions and trends with devastating consequences for the country and its citizens. The preferred reflexive research approach favoured autoethnography to allow first-person examination of observations that were corroborated through co-construction of the past to provide multi-situated realities for framing arguments towards credible findings as already presented, interpreted, substantiated and discussed. Thus, in the sections below I present what I believe are significant contributions into the field of career theory and its practice as well as to fellow emerging researchers, starting with theoretical contributions as follows:

6.3.1. Theoretical contributions to the career field

The study's theoretical contributions follow on key scholars' thoughts on imperatives characterising the field. Thus, the *first* contribution relates to the support for indigenous knowledge development whereby autoethnographic findings contribute a richly described resource for furthering SA scholarship in that regard. *Secondly*, from the literature I highlighted the emergence of related SA scholarship and this study adds to local empirical examination of the phenomenon of career development and management from a qualitative and constructivist perspective.

Thirdly, questions on how black South Africans managed their careers and how the field can respond will benefit from the detailed lived-career management experience. The selfless role of family members particularly that of black mothers and older siblings in holding families together in the face of challenges stood out as exemplifying familial interconnectedness. The story is thus a resource for multifaceted theoretical interpretations towards knowledge development. Although the study does not claim to be representative of all SA experiences, it still offers a reflexive and scholarly window that has been witnessed and corroborated according to the objectives of the study. *Fourthly*, other scholars in other parts of the world might find useful the descriptions of career experiences in and from a developing economy perspective towards advancing scholarship efforts focused on conceptualising a 'better theory' or 'the most wonderful theory' in the broader field. *Fifthly*, autoethnography as a method enabled presentation of a rich cultural experience that contributes contextualised understandings and interpretations.

Such understandings and interpretations are essential in the process of theory building especially about 'the less visible others' experiences' in the field. This view corresponds with the contention that the greatest significance of life histories in research studies is in the exploration and generation of theory as also yielded to the field by this study. Along with the stated contribution, is the corresponding outcome in the form of a tangible story, a phenomenon evident in current scholarship as an approach that in this instance *sixthly* also contributes theoretically dormant elements such as spirituality and psychosocial influences in career behaviour. Their unique emergence from autoethnographic data signified their pivotal role in influencing career experiences of individuals in low socioeconomic environments. *Seventhly*, the influence of chance was definitely not peripheral in the story but emerged as significant and thus requires a central position in the constructivist formulations of indigenous theoretical knowledge as yet another contribution. In view of the sixth and seventh contributions, one suggestion at this stage would be for the Systems Theory Framework to incorporate the emerged elements into the framework while the broader career field resolves the debate on the matter of convergence of theories. Alternatively, existing theories can also incorporate the emerged elements because the STF is a metatheoretical framework in its formulations.

It can thus still develop from those who are opposed to the convergence agenda because increased single-theory-based research focus forms part of ongoing scholarship. Especially, in that each dominant theory contributes a demarcated dimension of knowledge in the field. The *eighth* contribution relates to the study's exemplification of the postmodern moment that allowed interrelated interpretive traditions and the post experimental inquiry moment that also allowed co-constructed representations of expressing lived experiences from the perspective of the collectivistic value orientation. *Finally*, I believe that the study could have been investigated through case studies, grounded theory, action and applied research, yet none would have allowed personal immersion and cathartic outcomes while advancing the value of memory and preservation of history, particularly within SA's contextual perspectives as contributed by this study. These other strategies may be used to further this study's conceptualisation parameters as explained in future research areas in Section 6.5 below.

6.3.2. Contributions to the career field of practice

Narrative career counselling through story telling is said to be a universal human activity that is strongly re-emerging particularly in Western countries and in SA which will thus benefit the field of practice in that the authored story can be used as a scoping resource and thus becoming the *first* contribution of this study. For some, there could be identification in the story and for others there could be signals on how to deal with career imperatives. Importantly, due to the established inference that career guidance counsellors often have minimal precise understanding about how being part of a certain social class impacts on decision-making competences, investigative tendencies, interpersonal means as well as other vital elements of adaptive career advancement, especially for working class and less privileged individuals that are accounted for in the story. Therefore, the contribution rests primarily on that the story is presented with professional knowledgeability, heightened sensitivity and insight into the needs of recipients of career guidance and counselling in the country. *Secondly* and in relation to the story-narration conundrum, it seemed easy for the process to assume a narrated story in the end and thus the study provides clarity on the two concepts.

The *third* contribution relates to the complex ethical dilemma to remain truthful in my story without compromising the privacy and dignity of others whose roles were unintentional in the story. In some instances it became necessary to omit, disguise or conceal any identifying information or experience towards ethical adherence. Also deriving co-created data from closely related participants required increased sensitivity and thus, the successful completion of the study indicated that it can be done as encouragement to others who may wish to employ the same method, techniques and approach. The significance for practice is that the role of others that acknowledge the group in career counselling within sociocultural environments demands heightened sensitivities particularly within interracial professional spaces. *Fourthly*, mindfulness on judgment criteria enabled meaningfulness of preferred approaches by employing reflexive coherence. Most interestingly, it didn't seem like any participant felt the need to alter perceived reality of their experiences in order to present or preserve self-identities in ways that contradicted who and how I know them individually. I attribute the achieved degree of mutual authenticity to longstanding relationships of trust in spite of the unusual situational demand posed by the study. Thus, I believe that this study has contributed to practice by enacting both the subtle yet fundamental elements of ethics and judgment criteria for other researchers who may wish to embark on similar studies. I present recommendations in the next section.

6.4. Recommendations

In addressing the recommendations of the study and *firstly*, it seemed a need exists for indigenous career scholars to pool resources and develop a dictionary or a thesaurus on all concepts that have particular meanings related to indigenous experiences, influences and/or constructs. As an example, I found more profound resonance in my lived-career experiences with the notion of personhood and/or selfhood (Mkhize, 2000, 2013a) compared to self-actualisation (C. Patterson (2003) although both seemed to have related connotations within individuals' aspirations for meaningful growth. Refined meanings of many other constructs would establish a common resource from which indigenous knowledge scholarship could refer to towards developing the career field.

It also seemed some of the prominent scholars in the indigenous knowledge development endeavour are based within Higher Education institutions whereby resources for increased scholarship are available such as access to literature, students and colleagues across institutions as well as funding strategies are in place for the recommended purpose. It is imperative to leave legacies especially in that expertise in the area is seemingly not as vast and should thus be documented and preserved for the next generations of scholars in the field.

Secondly and as evident, the entire study exposed vulnerabilities. Thus, it is my wish for the effort to yield lasting value especially in the field of education and among students at all levels and perhaps to all those who will have access to the study. Such a wish contrasts Pillay's (2016) concerns that "the tragedy is that the theoretical resources for social action…remain marginalised in obscure textbooks, elective modules, unread journal articles, and ivory towers" (p. 157). Hence, the recommendation is for the study outcomes to be reconfigured into accessible knowledge chunks for students as a role modelling resource and inspiration in developing and managing their careers. Accordingly, career psychology is a formalised field of study in most higher learning institutions. Snippets from the study's findings might be incorporated as case studies within the academic offerings. Emphasised would be the importance of earnest and where possible, early identification of individuals' psychological places of peace with one's vision that could be nurtured with qualities such as perseverance, resilience, hard-work and steadfastness which together, refer to timeless strategies towards career success.

It may not seem to be happening, but every step of the way eventually results in a tapestry of challenges interwoven in steady achievements from which one can then also tell one's story. I believe that along with their own dreams, there are lessons to be learned if only as light bulbs on the treacherous life-career processes that await them. The country needs maximum exploration of their inherent abilities from which they will develop skills with which to contribute towards SA's economic future and envisaged global competitiveness. Thus, the study demonstrated that all change begins within the individual, by and for himself. *Thirdly,* I recommend that the government should hear out the message in the voices that represented the collective in the study.

Given the power distance from ordinary citizens and government policy levels, several outlets can be explored, such as 1) enacting the career story as a stage production[10] towards alerting the government officials while sensitizing the public on career imperatives; 2) I am passionate about community engagement activities and I can present live motivational but career oriented talks at accessible schools, starting with those I already work with which include my local alma maters (Hlakaniphani Primary; Ndondo Higher Primary and Musi High schools, as well as the Othandweni Children's Home). 3 I can access technological benefits of the 21st Century that enable me to flag the personal story in my private practice website (www.bohlalepeopleadp.co.za) towards wider accessibility.

Also, there are various nationwide public discourse platforms such as the 4) Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (www.mistra.org.za) which regularly hosts think-tanks aimed at influencing policy deliberations which I can attend towards infusing the study's findings and recommendations. 5) The study can be converted into a novel or a textbook towards similar ends over and above presentations in scholarly conferences and article publications in scholarly journals. Given that education provision is the primary prerogative of the government, scholars still need to "continue embedding their work within a progressive human rights agenda" (Pillay, 2016, p. 158) whereby for "psychology to truly serve humanity, repressive forms of violence must be rejected, of which…silence is one of them" (Ibid). Therefore, advocacy approaches that are sensitive to the peculiar challenges of our country as a developing economy need to be taken into serious consideration in policy reformulation and redesign processes. All the above can use the Life Orientation subject as a springboard in schools in that presently, the subject has well formulated objectives and learning outcomes which are very good on paper but remain redundant in practical application. The total 27 hours over a three year period for career education for senior phase learners at high school needs vigorous review. Essentially, it means that from Grade 10 to Grade 12, a child is afforded slightly over one full day exposure to career education.

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[10]A very keen family member owns Nobulali Productions (www.nobulali.co.za) a public company that has produced and taken to schools/theatres around the country adaptations of plays such as George Orwell's (1945) *Animal Farm*; John Kani's (2008) *Nothing but the truth*; Bessie Head's (1971) *Maru* among others.

Such gross violation of the learners' right to a bright future contradicts all progressive human rights legislation in the country. Along with this, there needs to be an intensive and purposeful upskilling of all educators at all school levels to also speak the language of career development and management to children from a very young age so that they grow up knowing the reasons and purpose of education in their lives i.e. living meaningful lives that develop self, one's family, community, society and the world. Self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 4* offered a longstanding brilliant recommendation from previous studies reiterated here as the study's *fourth*: that all educators should be career guidance and counselling experts at least within the limits of their subject offerings. The recommendation is clearly demonstrated in Liccardo et al.'s (2015) report from one participant's reference to a Biology teacher who:

> Would use a lot of examples, from the outside, she would try and make you really relate with the subject, than just to understand it and pass it then leave, she wanted you to really grasp the essence of bio(logy), and that also was the reason why I ended [up] loving it as well (p. 385).

The example is emphasised in Khoza's (2015) report on teachers' reflective experiences on the latest Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement [CAPS]. In this instance the educator taught Life Sciences and reports as follows:

> In my teaching I always encourage my learners to study medicine for the career choices and I am proud to have at least 2 students doing 3rd year at UKZN, 3 students doing 2nd year at UCT and 6 students doing 1st [year at] UCT and UKZN because I motivate them (Khoza, 2015, p. 188).

Notably, both subject teachers extended their subjects' content to the career sphere and thus indicated the possibility that the recommendation is feasible and should be encouraged as far as possible. Obviously, the change will have to commence at all tertiary training institutions who offer Education qualifications towards pertinent enrichment of the curriculum with career education as mandatory. Such an approach will sensitise qualifying educators from reinforcement and emphasis in each learning area within the learner's education pipeline. Educators will thus be compelled to think proactively and meaningfully about how they intend to utilise their acquired knowledge first for themselves, the country, society and the world at large. The *fifth* recommendation is that the LO curriculum should include personal development plans which learners should start compiling from an early age as part of the subject.

At primary school level, children can use old magazines or newspaper articles to research and find stories and pictures of individuals after who they would like to model their careers. From these, they can write their own developmental autobiographies around the theme of work and visualisations of personal success. Such an approach would orientate children towards a much more alert means of learning from outside the classroom while embracing a narrated approach to self-development. It will stimulate, concretise and enhance the concepts of self-awareness, career awareness and goal-directed career behaviour during educational experiences.

Indeed the foregoing recommendation has implications for resource availability such as internet access, electricity, libraries, and an information rich overall environment. Therefore, four community outreach projects are relatable to this recommendation as examples thus: the first two being the University of the Witwatersrand's *Integrated Approach to Literacy Instruction* (Andrews & Osman, 2015); the *Go to University To Succeed Programme* (Reeves et al., 2015) seeking to discover talented students from disadvantaged schools in the Orange Farm township and facilitate access in view of their minimal representation among applications at the university. Similarly, the *Schools Improvement Initiative* by the University of Cape Town (Silbert et al., 2015) which strategised to promote community engagement with schools. Finally, the University of Johannesburg established *Funda Ujabule Primary School* (2010). Although the foregoing projects advance the respective universities' community engagement interests, the outcomes underpin resource sharing with township schools and nearby tertiary institutions with the aim of community upliftment. The Funda Ujabule Primary school feeds into the University of Johannesburg Metropolitan Academy, which is a High School that then feeds into the university, thus establishing an enabling pipeline for disadvantaged learners.

In spite of Volks et al.'s (2015) pertinent inquisition about the fairness of such engagements, I believe that where none exists, the models can still be explored for replication by other institutions of higher learning across the country in efforts to partner with the government in the pressing need to maximise resource utilisation in the country. The *sixth* recommendation is for the education department to explore creative ways of assessing competence in the LO subject.

That LO is the only subject that is not externally examined in the present education system undermines the subject's overarching significance which should serve as a medium for articulation of acquired success-focused attitudes embedded in all other subjects. There is very little value for a student to achieve the best marks in mathematics and science in matric if they cannot maximise that value through successful career development and management. There has to be equal emphasis across all subjects and competence should be evaluated within guiding ethos of each subject in a manner that delivers to the nation an all-rounded individual who is hungry for growth and self-development beyond formal educational confines. I know individuals who have achieved distinctions in the matric level LO subject but demonstrate very little insight on their abilities and life-goals. I also know individuals who have achieved distinctions in matric levels of mathematics and science but have no clue on how to translate all that hard work into tangible life-career plans. Either way, the child ends up in the streets as an unemployable graduate, and thus a huge loss to the SA economy, which ties up with the *seventh* recommendation as follows:

Given the kind of education system as described in this thesis, it is highly probable that those fortunate enough to have jobs are not functioning according to their wishes, talents, abilities and interests hence the overall poor productivity levels as argued in the body of the thesis. The recommendation is for career managers, HR specialists, mentors and coaches in the world of work to leverage provisions of the Skills Development Act of 1998 to retrain, recycle, rebuild and upskill individuals. The stated approaches will redirect individuals' aspirations for optimal workplace alignment towards harmony between what one does for a living and how one earns that living. It is the secret to untapped individuals' energies towards desired organisational success.

The *eighth* recommendation emanated from *my peer – Participant 6's* observation relating to how badly SA students perform in literacy indices compared to other countries, particularly those "North of the Limpopo" (*P 6*). I built on this observation to highlight what I refer to as *cumulative illiteracies* in a situation whereby our country is regarded as also lagging in literacy measures when compared with other countries. Thus, the notion of cumulative illiteracies brings to the fore the multiple areas in which our youth especially, is illiterate.

Not all of them are financially literate, mathematically literate, computer literate and internet literate over and above other concerns embedded in the literacy scores associated with basic reading and writing. Given the speed of technological developments and accompanying information explosion, how will our developing country catch up with global developments? In view of the robotics subject (Kennedy, 2015) making its way into the curriculum of some fortunate schools, it seems the private sector has an inescapable role to play in this regard.

The *ninth* recommendation underscores the need to cultivate a fresh mind-set and approach to the field of entrepreneurship which is branded about in social discourse like a panacea for the stagnated economic growth in our country. I believe that the field of self-employment is similar to all other fields and requires creative exploration of individuals' systems for all career prospects. The outcry for entrepreneurial education to bolster job creation and ameliorate unemployment has potential to be misleading in that not all of us are born with the tenacity required in self-employment. However, the belated emphasis is justified given the scale of unemployment particularly among the youth and also for SA's very poor economic performance, with adverse consequences as highlighted in the body of the thesis. Clearly, an improved education system that is sensitised to individuals' overall career orientation will make room for those that have entrepreneurial inclinations and those inclined towards the very vast world of different career opportunities available in the 21st century. Unfortunately, our present government seems to have lacked foresight on how the country can turn a corner for the better which then ties with the *tenth and final* recommendation relating to that: the currently leading/governing political party members were largely prisoners of the past political system.

Somehow, it is fair to assume that they find themselves in a situation where they never knew they would one day be in government which means that they are governing reactively and attend to prevailing emergencies largely by default rather than by strategic design. This assumption got recently validated by Lindiwe Sisulu, the current Human Settlements Minister in her press statement that: "we are discovering that governing is increasingly becoming a difficult issue ….Maybe when we were in the struggle, we did not actually understand how difficult freedom was" (Makinana, 2016, p. 4).

As such, I believe that they too and as individuals are not functioning from positions of career strengths in which case an advisory body consisting of a widely representative spectrum of professionals and experts can be established to serve as a brain capital from which government will draw knowledge and expertise to rebuild SA. Each parliamentarian has limited knowledge that is confined to established (or misplaced) career interests which naturally limits the knowledge base for decision making on a variety of challenges confronting the country. This 'brain capital' will serve as a strategic think tank to point out to government critical aspects for consideration informed by each area of expertise on short, medium to long term perspectives. The government can then reformulate and realign policy development according to strategic directions as carved by the brain capital. There should also be a complementary body that would monitor implementation. These can be structured in such a way that there are local, regional, provincial and national structures to enable multilevel and multidirectional functioning towards tangible and measurable goals guiding all processes. Moreover, career education is part of a whole and where possible, the whole needs urgently contextualised reformulation. Below I discuss what I believe can still be researched in the career field.

6.5. Future research areas

Given that autoethnographic findings are localised and limited in their transferability, I think that career management complexities of broader based inxiles can be investigated further utilising quantitative research designs due to the advantage to gather vast data utilising modern day technologies. Also, mixed methodologies can be used to derive greater benefit and enriched findings which then render the application of the different research paradigms as the *first* future research area. Other qualitative research strategies such as grounded theory and case studies may also be used to expand the body of knowledge related to inxiles-exiles lived-career experiences as the *second* research area. In that regard, the wide spectrum of inxiles' lived experiences could include women who held homes together while husbands were in exile or worked as migrant workers away from home. The significance of this research area is crystallised in the "voices of women who highlight these challenges" (Patton, 2015, xv) from diverse backgrounds on a global scale, bearing testimony of the burdens women carry in their career lives.

Also, career stories of children whose parents perished under apartheid, both in exile and at home could provide greater insight into other untapped contextual influences. I think that findings therefrom will have better transferable representation that was not achieved in this study and thus, also add to the indigenous knowledge endeavour. The *third* research area could be on the difficulties of developing and managing careers in a traumatised society related to violence as a salient contextual influence in SA. Historical and political violence gave birth to all forms of human rights violations including through domestic violence, sexual molestation, endemic crime and the persistent upheavals in higher learning institutions which have potential to ignite similar dissent among schoolchildren countrywide. Still, the country continues to produce eminent individuals in different spheres of society through resilient career processes, which are, nevertheless, still insufficient to steady or bolster SA's economy significantly. Recent education statistics indicate that SA's younger generation is less skilled than their older counterparts (Merten, 2016; Stats SA, 2016) even though the latter are much fewer than the former in recent population statistics. Therefore, those factors that propelled better career success among the older generation could be further examined for infusion in indigenous career knowledge.

The *fourth* research area related to the influence of spirituality as a latent yet cardinal source of strength in developing and managing career processes. The study's autoethnographic findings upheld the role of spirituality in career experiences which was corroborated by family members as well as by one self-proclaimed inxile *Participant 5* through his observation of the sources of resilience in my lived-career experiences. It would be presumptuous to generalise this influence although to some extent it lived up to prominent scholars' assertions that Africans are spiritual beings (Biko, 2008b; Mkhize, 2013a). For that reason, it would be of great value to the career field to establish unadulterated findings related to this influence, perhaps to juxtapose it with notions of purpose, meaning and passion among others in career processes (Pryor & Bright, 2004) especially among low to middle income members of society (Bhana & Bachoo, 2011). The *fifth* area pertains to investigation of the elements of health, disability and physical attributes as entangled within the discussed complexities based on case studies employing the STF.

Given the high estimates of poverty and endemic diseases in Sub-Saharan countries, it is important to establish the impact these have on individuals' career development and management processes. Similar studies may also focus on the veracity of the elements of chance, spirituality and psychosocial influences in order to expand the framework. The *sixth* and final future research area pertains to career behaviour of individuals in exile. Morrow et al. (2004) reiterate several times that the life and times of South Africans' exiled life experiences are documented, held within a specific archived depository at Fort Hare University, referring to existing vast amounts of literature available for future research into career experiences of those who managed their careers outside the country. Ndlela's (2013) life experiences in the struggle count among many untold stories which have potential to reconcile our past experiences towards our common future. I believe that vital lessons from experiences at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College that was established in Tanzania by the African National Congress while in exile, have a very rich heritage that can be explored as a model for the development of education in the country. Thus, qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches can be applied to explore the knowledge reserve of lived-career experiences. Findings therefrom would enrich the field of careers greatly and also assist our country towards the much needed healing through shared knowledge so that both inxiles and exiles can have a healthy insight into one another's traumatic experiences, like siblings of the same motherland would reminiscence together.

Still, I could not verify the claim and context whether the late former SA president, Nelson Mandela, did indeed pronounce that exiles would be entitled to preferential treatment regarding career advancement opportunities (uttered by recent graduate - *Participant 1*). What I know for sure is that the country's indigenous career knowledge wealth exists for exploration that would enrich the field by responding to inquisitions on: How SA still produced black achieved scholars, medical and legal experts, scientists, parliamentarians and many others in spite of the evil apartheid system after massive apartheid impediments. Consequently, there were bound to be shortcomings in the study which I discuss in the next section, thus:

6.6. Limitations

In addressing the limitations of this study, I am the first to admit that several other gaps in the field were magnified but couldn't be addressed fully although the study itself intended to add another drop towards advancing SA's knowledge pool in the career field. As such, the *first* limitation pertained to that only one case could be examined extensively through the preferred design with the outcomes yielding lived-career experiences with limited transferability. The *second* limitation related to a personal career life story that is inextricable from the lives of others whose privacy and dignity mandated ethical obligations which compromised a free-flowing story that required cautious representation to still uphold truthfulness and credible findings. The *third* limitation pertained to the realisation that interview questions in *Appendix A* may have been a bit difficult for the participants even though the reflexive approach enabled conversational processes with sufficient room for ongoing simplification where it seemed necessary. It is important for scholars to refine data collection methods that offer maximum comprehension on the part of the participant. Existing relationships between participants and the researcher in this study made it possible to realise when further clarity seemed necessary. In other situations the level of difficulty may pose a barrier to successful data collection processes. Considering that participants were not engaged in scholarship, words such as 'phenomenon; narrate evident episodes; impediments; propelled and latter day' were not pleasant to grapple with in that they do not form part of our day to day use of the English language. Apart from the unnatural circumstance of relating in a non-African language and in a formal situation, with people I am generally very comfortable with, the added language strain should have been a due consideration on my part. However, I do not think that the limitation impacted on the quality of data collected but it may have contributed to unpleasant interactions during guided conversations.

The *fourth* limitation pertained to the historical past of our experiences which is not a joy to revisit intensely. I noted strong emotional content in more than half of the participants which was difficult for me to overtly deal with empathetically as doing so would have required that I exit the data collection mode and revert to normal ways of relating which would have jeopardised the overall setting. It is a limitation in the sense that one finds oneself in an ethically competing situation that is driven by the goals of the process.

However, it helped that I already had warmly established relationships with participants in that ameliorative empathy and understanding forms part of normal day to day interaction even beyond the interview setting. Moreover, the declaration of informed consent that was signed at the commencement of the process with each participant, clearly indicated that counselling support could be arranged should a need be felt by anyone of the participants especially for post-guided conversation confines. I still wonder what the outcome would have been with individuals outside of my regular personal reach especially because psychological counselling is not usually the first line of restorative processes among black people (Buthelezi et al., 2014). I was comforted by Rapley's (2001, p. 316) assertion "that 'no single practice will gain 'better data' than other practices" in relation to interviewing techniques for data collection. The flipside of the foregoing limitation pertains to the *fifth* one whereby the study got deprived of broader views unrelated to my life-career experiences, had participants encompassed individuals from different race/cultural groups in the country. It would have been interesting to get exposure to voices presently not featuring in the study's findings and discussions, even though qualitative designs often rely on a limited number of participants due to cumbersome and potential unmanageability of cumulative interview data. The *sixth* and final limitation is attributed to the choice of which memory to include in such a study? Which vignette or excerpt is sufficiently evocative to achieve desired effects as well as which narrative resonates better with the focus of the study? Eventually, deciding which part of the narrative is best suited was an interpretive decision that was influenced by the objectives of the study (Riessman, 2000) which then privileges certain parts and left out equally important others.

6.7. The finale

The entire foregoing chapter was a winding down process of the tennis game used as an extended metaphor through the study leading to the end. Therefore, indeed lived-career management experiences are interwoven with life itself where one's life unfolds in a growth process that also integrates career development processes. For me, it has been a life lived in total oblivion of the complexities till I reached a moment in my career management processes where it became inevitable to stop and reflect.

It was from these deliberate reflections that I noted significant epiphanies that served as milestones that could be traced back to knit together the personal tapestry of cultural, socioeconomic, educational and political failures and triumphs in the form of largely forced and unforced errors. I believe that everyone's lived-career experience is unique but I also believe that the ladder of success is manageable through earnest persistence, resilience, hard-work and a steadfast determination towards making tomorrow better than today, no matter how hard the challenge may be. I didn't know it at the time but in retrospect I realise that these strategies are timeless and universal.

Accordingly: "a good pen can also remind us of the happiest moments in our lives, bring noble ideas into our dens, our blood and our souls. It can turn tragedy into hope and victory" (Mandela, 2011, back cover page) and in my case: I cannot resist the temptation to briefly summarise the score in the game of Thabile versus Bantu Education as 6-0 in favour of the former. Thabile grew up under unenviable socioeconomic conditions and started her workplace career as a 13 year old domestic helper on weekends and a *casual* shop assistant from the time of completing her high school education till completing the first university degree.

Accordingly, she finally earned: 1) the matric certificate 2) Library and Information Science Degree, 3) Post-graduate Higher Education Diploma, 4) Library Science Honours Degree, 5) Post-graduate Diploma in Human Resources Management, and 6) the Masters' Degree in Industrial Psychology. That makes the score six to love! If I succeed through this study (PhD), then the score would be unheard of in the game of tennis as it will stand at 7-0. Yes, it was still history-making when the host country and team Brazil was trounced by Germany with the same margin in the semi-finals of the 2014 Soccer World Cup!

Postscript

*If you are reading the postscript then it means **I made it through the grace of God**!*

Indeed, Thabile 7: 0 Bantu Education!

Halleluya! Malibongwe iGama le Nkosi. Thank You Lord!

Mhhhhh Dr Thabile Gama-Chawana

How sweet thou art!

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UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

CAREER MANAGEMENT COMPLEXITIES IN A

DEVELOPING ECONOMY: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC

EXPOSITION OF ONE INXILE'S

BY

THABILE GAMA-CHAWANA

213573186

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Psychology)

Discipline of Psychology
College of Humanities

PART 2 - APPENDICES

Supervisors

Prof. Anna Meyer-Weitz & Prof. Nhlanhla Mkhize

2017

Appendix A: Guiding Interview Schedule

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES:

SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Participant's name and surname (optional)…………………………………**Date**…………………………

Explanatory notes

- Structured but unscheduled open-ended questions are listed below and will be used to guide discussions and/or conversations with the informant/participants/witnesses to the story
- As the researcher and a psychologist, I will naturally observe any non-verbal, unuttered thoughts and feelings which I will note to enrich conversations
- The presence of a scribe is purely for maximizing authentic and trustworthy data collection processes
- Any harm and/or discomfort to the persons of the participants and their psychological wellbeing will be avoided
- When it is observed that great discomfort has been caused and where necessary/consented to, participants will be referred to relevant specialists for debriefing and counselling
- Sufficient levels of comfort will be established prior to commencement of the interview
- The *think allowed* interviewing technique will be used to allow a free-flowing conversation
- Probing as a technique will be used to elicit clearer explanations where required
- Participants will be allowed to ask for clarity where it may be required and/or necessary
- The discussion will be recorded as detailed notes to ensure maximum representation of utterances
- An audio-recorder will also be used to support written notes towards ensuring accuracy of captured utterances
- All notes and audio-recordings will be transcribed to textual data for use in compiling the study

Questions

1. To what extent do you think you know my **(your)** strengths and weaknesses as an individual **(to other participants**)?

1.2. What do you understand by the phenomenon of career management?

2. From your earliest memory, are you able to narrate evident episodes of your observation of how I **(you)** managed my **(your)** career (**to other participants**)?

2.1. From your earliest memory, are you able to narrate evident episodes of your observation of strategies I **(you)** used to manage my (**your**) career (**to other participants)**?

3. What socio-economic, educational and political factors may have impeded my **(your)** career management processes (**to other participants)**?

3.1. What socio-economic, educational and political factors may have propelled my **(your)** career management processes (**to other participants)**?

3.2. What present socio-economic, educational and political factors may be impeding career management processes in South Africa?

3.3. What present socio-economic, educational and political factors may be propelling career management processes in South Africa?

4. Are you aware of any changes in the socio-economic and political environment which impede career management processes of latter day South African individuals?

4.1. Are you aware of any changes in the socio-economic and political environment which support career management processes of latter day South African individuals?

4.2. Do you think there are differences in how I **(you)** managed my (**your**) career and how those who went into exile managed their careers **(to other participants)**?

4.3. What are your views on the advantages of having managed my **(your)** career in South Africa instead of in exile **(to other participants)**?

4.4. What are your views on the disadvantages of having managed my **(your)** career in South Africa instead of in exile **(to other participants)**?

5. How can career management strategies be improved to enrich career management processes of South African individuals?

5.1. How can career management strategies be improved to enrich the career education policy in the South Africa's education system?

5.2. Do you think there is a relationship between career management, career success and economic wellbeing for South African individuals?

5.3. Do you think there is a relationship between career management, career success and economic wellbeing for South Africa's economic development?

5.4. Do you think there is a relationship between career management, career success and economic wellbeing for South Africa as a global economic competitor?

6. Do you think South Africa's career guidance education policy reformulation processes may benefit from the findings of this study? Elaborate.

6.1. Do you think South Africa's government can incorporate this study's findings in career guidance education? Elaborate.

6.2. Do you think other developing economies can learn something from the findings of this study? Elaborate.

6.3. Do you think developed economies can learn something from this study's findings? Elaborate.

7. What additional value do you think may be derived from this study's findings? Elaborate

Thank you for your participation

Appendix B: Letter of Consent

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES:

SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Researcher/ Student's name: Ms Thabile Gama-Chawana | thabilegc@neomail.co.za | 083 235 9952

Student's No. 213573186

Supervisor: Prof Anna Meyer-Weitz | meyer-weitza@ukzn.ac.za | 031 260 7618

Ethics committee:

Title of the research: *Career management complexities in a developing economy: An autoethnographic exposition of one Inxile's*

SECTION 1

The purpose of the research

The purpose of the study is divided into four broad areas to guide the investigation and fulfil the objectives of the study. The **first** purpose is to investigate possible ways and means one may have used to develop and manage a career from the earliest time one can remember to the present, especially considering the constraining social, economic, educational and political environment in South Africa as a developing economy. The **second** purpose is to establish the extent of change in said/prevalent complexities which are persistent in impacting on career management processes from the apartheid to post-apartheid eras. The **third** purpose pertains to possible ideas, perceptions, imaginations, predictions, dreams and understandings inxiles may have had in mind (while developing and managing careers) from which knowledge may be developed so that others (in South Africa and other developing economies) may learn how to manage their careers. The **fourth and final** purpose of the study pertains to what can possibly be derived from lived career management experiences which can be used, incorporated and included as input to enrich career management education/policy debates/formulations in South Africa as a developing economy.

Procedure and confidentiality

Sampled participants will be contacted in person, by phone or by email to request their participation prior to the actual meeting. When meetings are agreed upon and secured, I will visit the participants at their location or request them to attend at my location should it be preferred. The purpose of the study will then be explained as adequately as possible to individual participants to ensure sufficient understanding. Thereafter, participants will be requested to sign this consent letter to indicate voluntary participation in the research. The researcher will use an interview schedule to derive responses to questions or conversation points that will be asked. All responses will be recorded to include as much detail as possible and a scribe will be appointed to ensure maximum authenticity and trustworthy data collection processes. Each interview session will be recorded in an audio-recorder for purposes of supplementing gathered information so that accurate representations of utterances can be maintained for purposes of adequately answering the research question(s) and fulfilling the objectives of the study. All recordings will be transcribed into hard copies and samples of utterances will be included in the final theses document as an appendix for authenticity, research evaluation and rigor purposes. Audio tapes will be stored in a safe place for a mandatory five-year period to maintain confidentiality. After this period, the tapes will be shredded as means to destroy gathered data and to protect the identity of all participants. As a psychologist, I will also note non-verbal communication or unuttered thoughts or feelings as part of inherent observational experience in human interaction, and participants will be informed of this process as well. Each participant's name will be kept confidential should such be required.

Benefits

The research findings will **firstly** benefit the field of career management by including indigenous experiences with local relevance to South Africa as a developing economy. From this, theoretical knowledge patterns can be derived on how careers were and/or are managed by individuals towards theory development and/or enrichment in the field. **Secondly,** career guidance and counselling strategies may be aligned with lived experiences towards enhancing insightful understandings on how to develop strategies towards mediating the tension between perceived personal inadequacy and desirable personal mastery. **Thirdly**, indigenous career management knowledge from lived experiences can be accessed as a resource from which South African education policy reformulation processes can be enriched towards improving the educational system. Other practitioners such as career guidance and counselling educators, employers, managers, career coaches and mentors stand to benefit from the research findings. **Fourthly**, all participants stand to benefit an opportunity to be heard which may be therapeutic while also deriving pride and satisfaction from having made a significant contribution in the study and the intended theoretical knowledge in the field.

Fifthly and finally, I will have an immense opportunity to have my lived career management processes recounted as a story, enriched by the participants' stories towards personal therapeutic ends and subsequent theory development and educational policy enrichment.

Voluntary nature of participation

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary as there will be no remuneration. Participants may refuse to participate, request to withdraw at any stage of the research process and there will be no negative consequences for exercising one's need to withdraw. Although participation is voluntary, any harm and / or discomfort to the persons of the participants and their psychological wellbeing will be avoided.

Feedback

Participants may request to be kept informed on the research outcome and all means will be dispensed to fulfil that request.

_____

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

Dear participant, kindly read the 8 statements below and ensure that you understand them properly, if not, please let me know so that I can explain and clarify to your satisfaction. Once you understand properly, indicate as below how you feel towards each statement. Indicate with a tick as follows

✓   **To show that you agree**
✗   **To show that you do not agree**

I…………………………………………………………………… **(Name and surname are optional)**

STATEMENTS FOR YOUR CONSENT	I agree	I do not agree
1. Hereby declare my voluntary consent to participate in this study as requested.		
2. I confirm that all important aspects of the research have been explained and I was given an opportunity to ask questions to my satisfaction.		
3. I am aware that my participation is voluntary and I may choose to withdraw at any stage of the research with no negative consequences towards me.		
4. I am aware that our conversation will be audio-recorded mainly to support accuracy of my utterances as they will be noted during the interview.		
5. I am aware that the audio-recordings will be stored safely and destroyed after a five year period to protect my utterances.		

STATEMENTS FOR YOUR CONSENT	I agree	I do not agree
6. I am aware that the researcher is a psychologist (registered with the Professional Board of Psychology under the auspices of the Health Profession's Council of South Africa) and may observe non-verbal and other unuttered thoughts, feelings and other context-forming nuances which she may note as part of data collection		
7. I am aware that should it seem necessary for me to get further counselling on any matter that may raise concern to myself or to the researcher as a psychologist, she will discuss it with me for my further decision, consideration and consent after which referral to her colleagues and other support professionals such as counsellors and social workers will be recommended.		
8. I am also aware that the findings of the study may become published whereby confidentiality of my identity and views may be compromised, in which case I will require concealment of my identity and accompanying views.		

Participant's signature--Date--

Researcher's signature--------*Qtaraa*-------------Date--15 October 2014--------

Supervisor's signature---Date--

Ethics committee--Date--

Thank you for your participation

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

**INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

Appendix C

Re. Protocol reference number HSS/1260/014D |

06 November 2014

Expedited Approval

Ms Angeline Joyce Thabile Gama-Chawana 213573186
School of Applied Human Sciences - Psychology
Howard College Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/1260/014D
Project title: Career Management Compexities in Developing Economies: An Autoethnographic Exposition of One Inxile's

Dear Ms Gama-Chawana

Expedited Approval

In response to your application dated 02 October 2014, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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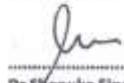
cc Supervisor: Professor Anna Meyer-Weitz
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor D McCracken
cc School Administrator: Ms Ausie Luthuli
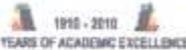
Open Rubric

APPENDIX D

Autoethnographic Phase 1 Data Collection Findings:
My lived-career management story | Player profile

There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you (Maya Angelou, as cited in J. Meyer, 2014, p.187)

4. Introduction

The topic of the study necessitated deconstruction and the process yielded conceptualization which unfolded in the introductory Chapter 1 and expanded in Chapter 2 whereby all concepts were explained to present a theoretical base for the study particularly within South Africa [SA] as the location of the study as well as in the career field. It became practicable to undertake the study through the application of the System Theory Framework [STF] (Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006, 2014, 2015) which is a metatheoretical formulation consisting of constructs that are grounded in the career field and also enriched by alignment with the dynamic interaction of systems theory tenets. These systems foreground the individual in various contexts that theoretically should stimulate career behaviour as continuously influenced by systemic processes of recursiveness. Accordingly, the STF resonated with constructivism perspectives in career theory and enabled a formulation of aligned philosophical assumptions as part of the qualitative research paradigm that was explained in Chapter 3. Also, autoethnography as a strategy, an approach and an outcome in the form of autobiographical data within a cultural context corresponded with the stated theoretical and philosophical approaches from which the resulted career story unfolded to form Appendix D.

Employing the techniques of storying and narrative inquiry within SA's cultural contexts subsumed others' voices which enriched the career story that overall, consisted of my lived-career management experiences. These experiences were witnessed by family members and corroborated by my peers as well as by other self-proclaimed inxiles in their participation as multiple voices that shaped the story. In that regard, this appendix is like the head-lamp to give luminance into the retrospective life-career story that was woven with threads from SA's social, educational, political/historical and economic background. This background is what led to the then formulated atypical personal, familial, educational, social and global complexities which were realised as persistent strangleholds into career experiences of the researcher under apartheid that formed SA's past political arrangement.

Accordingly, apartheid furthered the colonial deprivation of black South Africans' education provision in a pervasive manner that seemingly continues to negatively impact on the career experiences of the post-apartheid cohort of young SA citizens. Overall, the lived-career story provided a reflexive resource primarily as *Phase 1* data collection and findings for the study. In addition, Muncey's (2005) idea that the "snapshot is a moment frozen in time" (p. 3) provided scope for inclusion of snapshots in some parts of this narration towards enhanced visualization of those fortunate moments that could be frozen in time to refresh memorialized experiences as here re-lived to exposition the phenomenon of lived-career management processes. Again, Muncey (2006) explains that "gaining insight into what it is to be human" (p. 8) means insightful understanding of the celebrated lived experiences in all its beautiful imperfections. Hence, it is from these that B. Brown, (2010, 2012) teaches us that often (or is it always?) they form the core of what we sometimes frame as shame, which we need to learn to reframe as powerfully lived moments of vulnerability that allow us to experience the essence of being human. The authors' ideas and lessons, along with Ellis' (2007) and Speedy's (2008) cautionary voices remained an ever-present echo in the unfolded processes of exposition in all its necessary imperfections. That was why maximum effort to preserve the dignity of all involved was, always is, the underpinning moral and ethical obligation, hence I distorted a bit most of identifying details and also concealed all others' pictorial representations except for family members and public figures. Any other representation of my lived-career management experiences that might seem cringe-worthy, are unintended, unfortunate and regrettable. If it was possible, this appendix would consist of only one word: me, but I coexisted connectedly as I constructed and co-constructed my story within the study's overarching ethical guidelines.

Against the foregoing backdrop, common wisdom has it that starting a narrative derives from the principle of always starting at the beginning. It's a principle that doesn't seem to change even when one has to engage on a life-career exposition in that the beginning always presents the setting. It assists in formulating the context so that lived experiences are meaningfully captured in efforts to investigate research questions, as in this instance. As such, it dawned in my consciousness that life as I have known it has been lived in the developing terrain of SA.

Being a South African, my origins seemed to be the best starting point to represent the beginning, as discussed below.

4.1. My origins

I was born in the Dlamini Township of Soweto, in Johannesburg, South Africa [SA], and I was christened Angeline Joyce Thabile Gama. Later in life I read for leisure in Vanzant's (1999) book that our birth patterns determine our recreation of "the incidents, energy, and environment that existed before and at the time of our birth" (p. 41). Explained was that events surrounding one's birth are significant indicators of the extent of love and care that one would experience in one's relationships with oneself and with others. Vanzant refers to no empirical basis of her observations although Murphy Paul (2010) refers to nascent studies to explain that a fetus:

> Is an active and dynamic creature, responding and even adapting to conditions inside and outside its mothers' body as it readies itself for life in the particular world it will soon enter…the pregnant woman is neither a passive incubator nor a source of always imminent harm to her fetus, but a powerful and positive influence on her child even before it is born (p. 5).

Becoming aware of Vanzat's (1999) and Murphy Paul's (2010) notions of pre-birth ramifications, and since my parents were no more when curiosity got the better of me, I enquired from my elder sister, who was still alive at the time, and must have been 9 years old when I was born, about what she remembered about the events surrounding the time I was born. All she remembered was that, being child number five, I was born at home, at about 20:00. Modern day technology thus allowed me to figure out that it was on a Wednesday night. I reasoned that my exaggerated sensitivity to cold weather suggests that it may have been at the onset of winter – one of the bitterly cold seasons of our lives. Nevertheless, I was unable to figure out any additional details since I wrote this story three years after she/we lost her life, and I lost my life-long pillar of strength. However, from the names I was given, I inferred that I was probably an angelic, joyous gift in that both Joyce and Thabile[11] are names embodying happiness.

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[11] The name Thabile means being 'happy' or 'joyful' which somehow made me identify myself as TJ for both the names Thabile and Joyce. Although the name was derived from its isiZulu language, it carries the same meaning in seSotho and Setswana which confuses people at times, who assume my lineage as in those languages as well, a factor I love since it defines my identity beyond its isiZulu confines.

Such inferences resonated with Ngubane and Thabethe's (2013) assertions that sociocultural and socio-political events tend to influence the naming of children in the Zulu culture and I believed that my naming aligned with the former influence. I am not aware how I got the name Angeline but I later recalled my mother's one time story that Joyce was a namesake of her best friend at work. As for the African name, I believe that my birth brought joy in the family in that Thabile means being happy. I understand my name as explained in that my father came from a family of four sons only and my mother from a family of four daughters only. It seemed my father may have been happy to have another girl child after my elder sister's birth was followed by three sons. Again, my mother may have been content to have another daughter seeing that the male-gender-deficit she suffered with her siblings was significantly narrowed with three of her very own sons. Therefore, it was a win-win situation for everyone including my elder sister who I believe had no clue what the joy in that *live doll* meant in terms of her later life parenting burdens! The narrated positive attribution of the name is important to me in that it makes me feel that I was received with joy and love. Ngubane and Thabethe (2013) further indicate that the English names related to what were the Christian names given to Africans according to the colonisation order into the apartheid era during which I was born. This practice resulted in the African names' diminished regard as *amagama asekhaya* (referring to names to be used at home only). True to the authors' assertions though, none of our children in my family now carries an English name, which reflects the new political context in our country.

That my mother often mentioned that I went on to win a baby contest when I was about three months old which was conducted at the local clinic, suggests that I was somehow received with love, pride and with joy in spite of the harsh and contrasting season of my birth. The photo captured remnants of the pink baby clothes that won me the contest.

These baby clothes were passed on to my little brother who wore the full set in the photo below where I posed with our mom and my little sister. Clearly my mom was ahead of her times – clothing boys in pink is trending in the new millennium as the men also handsomely ride the wave in all shades of pink. For my brother though it was definitely not a fashion statement but a necessity of the hard times we grew up under which we survived to tell our story as in this study. Thus, the bottom picture is the only one I have of my younger self which was taken on the front yard at home when I was about age three. The frilly dress, shoes and a doll nestled securely on my left arm, set on a flowery garden as a background, and on a wooden chair I got to know was hand-crafted by my father – enhance the perception of my good arrival in sharp contrast with the overall socio-economic, educational and political environment in the country at the time. Little did I know that so many legislations were being passed round about the same time, which shaped and influenced my educational and career life, notably that:
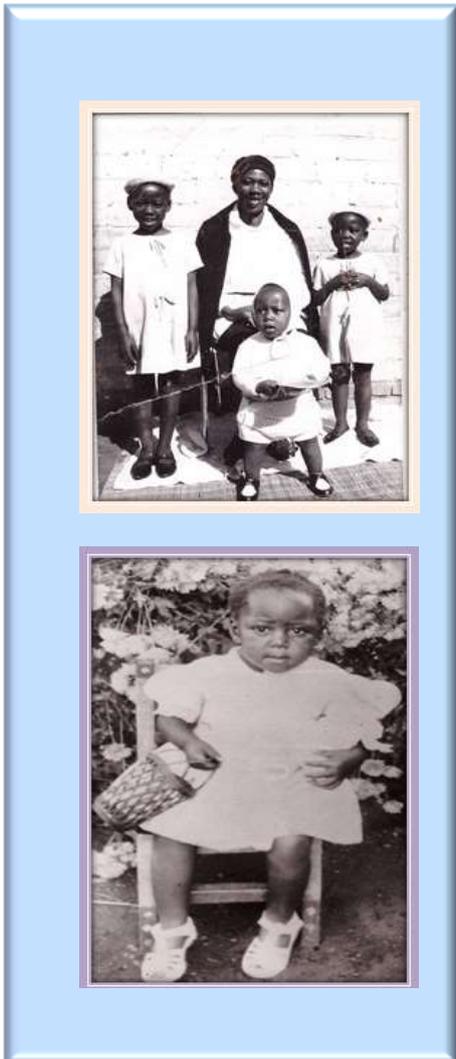
o   It was just over a decade before I was born that Dr Hendrik Verwoed[12] made the speech in the SA parliament clarifying apartheid in 1948

o   It was just a few years earlier in 1953 that the Bantu Education Act had been passed in parliament

o   I was two days short of being a month old when Dr Verwoed made a speech in parliament that propagated the 'Bantu's self-government'

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[12] Dr Hendrik Verwoed is notorious for being the senate member who introduced in parliament the policy of apartheid under the National Party government in the Republic of SA. (http://hendrikverwoed.blogspot.com).

o I was almost two years old when Dr Verwoed made a speech in parliament that propagated the policy of separate development

The list of political events before and after my birth has, in a twist of fate, given birth to the PhD thesis and this story in particular. Nevertheless, it also bequeathed me with what I regard as my heritage, as elaborated in the following section.

4.2. My heritage

My father had no formal education at all but held a job at a bakery where he worked for the same number of years as Nelson Mandela was in prison (27years). Originally from Utrecht, in the former province of Natal, my assumption was that he managed to live in Johannesburg because he was employed and could regularly get signatures from his employers and relevant authorities to remain in the city in accordance with the laws of the land in force at the time. I have vivid memories of numerous occasions when our house door was banged at early hours of the mornings by police who came to raid the house in search of persons who didn't have the *pass*[13] which was required in compliance with the apartheid laws. My mother had to always produce what was a called a house-permit with the names, date of birth and gender of *legitimate* dwellers. Then torches would be shone on our faces to validate those listed. These unpleasant visits happened regularly because our extended family members used our home as a base from which to look for work in Johannesburg, but I do not recall an event where anyone was arrested during any of those raids. I suppose elders in the family talked and knew not to stay for long in one place to avoid being known to be around *illegally,* albeit, in their motherland! These events were particularly very scary and traumatic because my father worked a night shift all my childhood and young adult life due to that the nature of his work required fresh bread to be delivered countrywide by daybreak. He usually arrived home around 05:00 and often crossed paths with my mother on her way to the Kliptown railway station for her own day work by the *kitchens* as that is how domestic workplaces were referred to at the time. My mother always made it known to all of us that she had a Standard 2 education, the equivalent of Grade 4 in this era.

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[13] The *pass* is what became the modern day *identity document* in SA post-apartheid and I owned one which I used to vote with in the first democratic elections on 27 April 1994.

She often worked for more than one family in Rosebank, Johannesburg, to supplement my father's meagre earnings and to make ends meet. Their work arrangement meant that most days she would bring home laundry for washing after work at about 18:00, have the coal stove hot and ready to heat irons to be able to iron the laundry by 04:00 so that she could take it with her back to her employers when she went to work later that morning. This also meant that I grew up mostly with my mother because my father was probably asleep by the time we left for school. He would have also left home for his night shift when we arrived back home after school. He usually got time off from Saturday mornings till Sunday afternoon when he then had to go back to work again and that was the pattern of parenting I grew up under.

How my mother managed to raise all seven of us, is a mystery I am unable to unravel since I am asking these questions 19 years after she passed-on. However, the greatest blessing of my father working at a bakery was that we always had fresh bread which was given to workers at the end of each shift. At times, my father brought home a white loaf of bread garnished with raisins which, when possible, my mother would stash away for an evening treat for all of us (except for my father). One of my elder brothers was known for playfulness and he could sniff out where the raisin-bread was hidden in spite of my mother's greatest efforts to hide it. Alas, in a simple four-roomed typical matchbox[14] house it was either stashed in the red metal kitchen cupboards or somewhere in the dining-room, a task that was made very easy by sparse furnishings in the house at the time. He would cut off big slices and help himself, knowing very well that with the seven of us as children, he could easily hide behind the crowd in that it wouldn't be obvious to my mother and all of us as to who the culprit was. As much as that behaviour was not condoned, there was never an instance where any of us got a hiding for sniffing out the bread although I think my elder sister would disagree as she always bore the brunt for all of our misbehaviours. I wonder why because my mother was the epitome of discipline and we feared her more than my father probably because she was with us most of the time.

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[14] The four-roomed government houses built by the apartheid regime in some of the townships were referred to as 'matchbox' houses. It was a simple house consisting of a kitchen, a dining room and two bedrooms. Large families like the one I grew up in had some of us sleeping wherever there was space including by the kitchen or dining room. There were no indoor bathrooms or toilets, with the latter erected at the back, a few meters away from the house. My three elder brothers had the obligatory task to accompany us (three girls) to the toilet at night and only my younger brother missed that routine due to being the last born in the family.

My elder sister was punished for all kinds of things, including that we didn't eat our soft-porridge before going to school. Again, this porridge would have been dished up and enough sugar sprinkled on top of the porridge before it (sugar) was safely put away. It became a common prank for whoever got to the soft porridge plates first to sip happily all the sugar that would have melted by the time it was ready for eating. This made some of us not to eat the sugarless porridge, which could not be thrown away but would definitely be found in the coal stove oven in time for supper as there were not enough dishes for supper if breakfast was still uneaten. Again, my sister had the task to explain who didn't eat and why. If punishment was to be meted out for this, she probably bore it all.

Oftentimes as adults and when we could, we would sit and laugh to tears about all these practices which definitely bonded us as a family. Such stories became part of the family legends especially during gatherings where we would reminiscence about everything. Seemingly, these memories and the love we shared became my treasured inheritance in a family background that barely survived, though very wealthy in terms of our unbreakable bond of love and care for each other. Therefore, I believe that the greatest gift my parents ever gave me was holding the family together in that I was raised in a secure home where food, no matter its substance, was always provided for. A lot could have gone wrong in the absence of my father at night throughout all our childhood but my mother was the proverbial rock that ensured we were all properly grounded and nurtured. In retrospect, I realise that my elder sister never really had a childhood as she was the second in command while my mother toiled away from home. Consequently, the actual active parenting role fell on the shoulders of my sister who was herself barely in her teens.

4.3. My formative years – ages five to 19 years old

I demarcate this section as my formative years and give the period in ages as a reference point mainly because my earliest memory of formal education was when I must have been five years old. I know that I briefly attended a day care centre which was located a stone-throw away from where I started schooling, doing Sub-Standard A [Sub A], modern day Grade 1.

It was easy for me to calculate the years backwards since I know that I never repeated a standard. I was still five going on six years old when I started schooling at Hlakaniphani Primary School in Dlamini, Soweto. The school is still about 10 minutes-walk away from our family house. It always started with all the children assembling according to allocated classes per standard. We filed in line at a designated place for morning-prayer before we marched, still in line, towards our respective classes. We used *slates* and a specially designed pen-like stylus to write with during lessons. Teachers used white chalk to mark our work which consisted mostly of arithmetic and spelling, and it was a source of great pride to achieve 10/10 in any given work, which we diligently ensured it didn't get erased to show off at home before cleaning it up for the next day's written work. We used to read in turns, one at a time, from an isiZulu picture-word book entitled *Masihambisane* as well as from the English illustrated reader. Each class had one teacher who taught all subjects from 08:00 – 11:00 when school was normally out for us to then go home as there were no extra-mural activities.

Something must have caused unpleasantness in my class because on many occasions I wished to march to Room 10, where one beautiful female teacher I liked was stationed, but I never had the guts to not march to my designated class. Because I was the shortest child and was always the first in line, it was a daily temptation to march to Room 10 but it never happened. I do not recall any particular reason for wanting to change classes especially because I often performed well in my sums and in spelling, regularly netting the envied 10/10. I suppose the fact that we used minimal learning material made it easy for one to have owned the slate and the two readers, probably handed down the line of three older brothers for me, but I remember several incidents that have remained with me indicating that we lacked materially as a family.

As it was the norm in those days, we used to get new clothes only in December of each year for Christmas and for New Year days. We were always dressed similarly with my younger sister and one time we were bought white plastic closed shoes for the special season. It seemed the plan was for the white plastic shoes to be coated with black polish for the winter season because I know that most of us loved walking barefooted to school but winter time we needed school shoes.

Expectedly, the dried black polish gradually peeled off with every step taken and it hadn't really changed the entire colour of the shoes which, by then, were purple-greyish. Soon, teachers noticed it and told me never to wear the shoes again. I am not sure how long I walked barefooted on biting frost all the way to school but I have no recollection of ever getting new school shoes, if I ever got them. I also know that I was generally scruffy and my gym-dress (black pleated school dress) was always crumpled. For as long as I can remember I used a single black wool string to tie around my waist in place of the school twisted-woollen belt. However, it never really bothered me as I was still too young to correct how I presented myself at school. In retrospect, I realise that I was unkempt because my mother was at work already when it was time to go to school. She probably was too tired to check on such after work due to all the parenting and work burdens on her shoulders. Compounding this situation was that my elder sister was sent away to a boarding school in Natal to complete her high school education, probably at the advice of one family of (husband and wife) school principals my parents befriended at church.

The learned couple undoubtedly recognised my sister's potential as well as the need for intervention on her behalf, and thus became life-long l*earned and educated* family friends who I now realise were due to some divine intervention from the universe. I also remember that on one occasion I was sent home during school hours because my school fees were overdue. This memory was remarkable because when I got home I found my father having his much needed sleep and when I mentioned to him the reason I was home before school was out, he simply said I must tell the teacher that I found no one at home. Logically, there wouldn't have been any adult at home since everyone would have been at work, and if they were home, they probably would have been unemployed and thus would not have had the money for school fees at that given moment at least. Punishment by sending a five year old back home was not a wise strategy towards recovering the school fees as it just disadvantaged my learning opportunity while away. Nevertheless, I was in the same school as with one of my elder brothers and I think the fees may have been given to him to pay since I do not recall how that matter was resolved. I also remember bunking school only once, when my night-dress which I had kept secured on my waist while bathing in preparation for school, suddenly slipped down my legs and fell on my feet.

The incident happened when the school bell rang and I tried to run as my brother and I were still a bit far from school. My brother urged me to run faster to not get late but I couldn't due to the nighty incident. I didn't know how to deal with it since no one carried a school bag for a slate as it could easily be slid under one's arm on way to and from school. My first instinct was to throw the nighty on the hedged shrub-fence of the house near where it slipped down but I thought of the wrath I would face at home if it got taken from the fence by anyone who wouldn't know the reason why it was there. When that option seemed more risky, I started crying and walked back home at which point, my brother must have long been at school. I don't remember my father noticing anything amiss about my being home earlier than usual but since other children passed through my parents' yard to cross to the other side of the opposite block of houses, they made it a point to let me know that the next day, I would pay for being absent from school. However, I don't remember any repercussions at home or from school for being absent.

Furthermore, I must have been in standard two (age eight going on 9) when morning-prayer at school assembly started to get me emotional as I always got fixated on thoughts about my mother. I think I was maturing and developing insight in relation to my home-life environment and recognising her struggles and sufferings as the thoughts were with a sense of sadness than of helplessness. At the same time, she was so strict that at times I wondered if she really was my mother, a sentiment my elder sister also shared when we were older and reflected on the very strict upbringing we experienced. Although my three elder brothers also shared the same sentiment, I think the austerity that my sister was relieved from when she left for boarding school, fell on me as the next *woman* in the house.

Also, because my mom grew up without brothers and consistent with our Zulu cultural beliefs, she never disguised the fact that she held her boys in high esteem. The said belief was well captured in the film *Winnie* (D. Roodt, n.d.), a televised motion picture adaptation on the life of Winnie Mandela, also animating circumstances around her birth. Notably, that she was yet another girl child born in the family and her father couldn't disguise his disappointment. Seemingly, boys were/are more treasured to carry the family surname and were preferred in advancing their education in the belief that girls would eventually marry and leave their families, and thus an unwise decision to invest in their education.

Fortunately, my brothers' esteemed regard did not go as far as denying my elder sister, my younger sister and me of the privilege to be sent to school. Also, my brothers had some responsibilities forming part of house chores allotted to them although I believe my lot was more than theirs. I know this because I remember my friends empathising with me when I couldn't join them for play as I was heavily swamped by household chores even on Saturdays. Our home was known for early morning rousing noise when our mother woke us up before she left for work, urging us to make fire on the coal stove and to cook the porridge for our breakfast before school. I suppose that was all she could do to instil enough fear towards ensuring that we did get to school on time but I have no doubt that if there was a better way, she would have opted for it instinctively because all the chiding noise was out of her concern, love and care for us. Overall, there was no hint of career education at lower primary school even though I think I did well academically because I progressed to Ndondo Higher Primary School after passing Standard two.

Ndondo Higher Primary is still located in Rockville Township, Soweto and was also a walkable distance from home to study Standard three to six. It seems the proximity of the schools to our home was a convenient progression criterion for all of us, starting at Hlakaniphani Lower Primary School and then to Ndondo Higher Primary School because I joined my three elder brothers who were at senior standards than me at this school. As such, I simply became another Gama child and I must have been good in cramming poems because on a number of occasions teachers asked me to recite these at assembly. Unforgettably, the isiZulu, Afrikaans and English poems: *Ma ngificwa ukufa by B.W. Khumalo*, *Muskiete Jag* by *A.D. Keet* as well as the *All things bright and beautiful by C.F. Alexander*. The isiZulu poem expresses sentiments on *when death overcomes me* and the Afrikaans one is about *chasing a mosquito*. I recited the poems without complete understanding of embedded meanings, or conscious sense of pride and achievement. I also do not recall being applauded by either the teachers or the schoolmates on all those occasions. I just remember that in one instance, one of my brothers may have been trying to read from an Afrikaans book and I was fetched from my Standard three class to come and show him how it should be done in an obvious gesture to embarrass him. Unfortunately for me I read out *bladsy seven* instead of *bladsy sewe* (Afrikaans for page seven) and the class roared in laughter at that innocent mistake.

I became the butt of jokes from my brothers all my childhood but it never really bothered me to a point where I can recall how the incident impacted on my self-esteem at the time. What I remember most about being at Ndondo is how I never had the required school exercises and note books. I know that most of the time I had only one exercise book from which I tore off pages with written work on so that I could use a clean exercise book for the next subject. I think teachers knew of such problems since I don't remember being punished for always starting on a new page each time for each subject. Perhaps this practice went on till all required exercise books could be bought one by one as money became available at home. I remember on one occasion picking up strewn newspapers in the veld on way to school to fill up the plastic bag I carried with my single exercise book in effort to make it look bulky like those of other children at school.

Also, I never really ever had the required school uniform especially on the days when we were supposed to wear school tunics. My inventive mother had a sewing machine with which she made me the school tunic but the material was not quite the same in texture or colour. It seems there was not enough of the tunic material as only four creases passed for the four pleats that were supposed to form the set design of two pleats at the back and two at the front. There must have been too little material to make for my size even though I was quite a scrawny child. Also, the required contrasting colour material used for the collar and to trim the short sleeves must have been so little because what was supposed to be a full round baby-collar design was just two half-sizes of the set design on each side, and very tiny strips were used to trim the short sleeves.

Now I know that sewing materials are generally not sold in less than half a meter, renders these strips to have been scrap materials which my mom probably thought would be enough for the required design contrasts. I know though that my teachers complained that what I used to wear was not proper school uniform. Therefore, I was always the first to run to the class where punishment was meted out to all learners who were not in proper school uniform. I got the beating each time even though to my mother's knowledge the tunic matter was a problem solved ages ago. I could have worn the regular *black and white* uniform although I think it wouldn't have mattered because it still would have meant wearing *wrong* uniform on *tunic days* and still get punished.

It was a blessing that my peers never teased me about my lack except for one time when one of the teachers spotted underneath the tunic collar what was supposed to be a vest, which my mom had sewn with very thick white jersey-material. It must have been very dirty as well and the teacher, who I had approached to mark my classwork while standing at the front of class, suddenly swung me around in great irritation and announced to the class to have a look at what I was wearing. I must have been 10 years old at the time and I still have a vivid picture of that moment including what the teacher was wearing and exactly where I was standing in front of the class. I think the memory is significant because swinging me around was meant to humiliate me and as mentioned earlier on, I was maturing into awareness about my material lack particularly for schooling requirements. However, that particular teacher was the only one I invited at my graduation party in November 1984 after completing my first degree at university. Perhaps the invitation was meant to show off or due to that the teacher was the only one of the staff who kept track of my progress in subsequent years, the reasons for which I cannot imagine although I noticed the great pride in being present at the graduation party.

Another vivid memory of when I was about 10 years old was when one Thursday morning my father gave me four cents to share with my three brothers at school as he used to get paid on Thursdays. During that particular time, the school was using the platoon[15] system and my classes were in the afternoon. I must have reasoned that my brothers wouldn't know about their pocket money, because it was a rare privilege. I went on to buy a full-house of *ikota*[16] which was every child's delight at school. On that particular day I must have thought lady-luck had smiled on me as for once, I could stroll with other children from the nearby shop to buy and feast on the *kota*. The *kota* itself was too much food for me to finish in one eating and I kept the remainder for after school, which I happily munched on my way home. Little did I know that first thing on Saturday morning, my father would notice that none of my brothers had come to him to express gratitude and show appreciation for the pocket-money.

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[15] The platoon system involved resource sharing by schools whereby groups would be split in such a way that one would have classes from 08:00 – 11:00 and the next from 12:00 – 15:00 or thereabout.
[16] *Ikota* is the modern day 'bunny chow' made from a quarter of white bread, with the soft bread part scooped out and filled with curried mashed potatoes, oil drenched mango atchar, slice of polony and a slice of cheese.

I am not sure how exactly it all turned out but I remember my father summoning me while he stood in the middle of the kitchen, where he then asked what happened to the money he had given me for my brothers. I am also not sure of my response but I know that the next minute I was flung across the kitchen floor by the force of a really hot face slap which remains memorable to this day. Notably, this was the only time my father ever physically punished me in my entire life. I am not sure of events after that moment but I know it was a very good lesson that served to plant the seed of integrity[17] (Barnard, 2008) towards instilling character by nipping petty theft in the bud in the household. However, in my Zulu culture, it is often said that *ligotshwa lisemanzi*, loosely translated to imply that a child needs to be disciplined from an early age, much like in bending a tree-branch to the desired shape while it is still supple. Of course, in retrospect I think it was reprehensible for him to punish me like that but four cents was a lot of money which he probably weighed in relation to his earnings, only for me to use it for my selfish needs without considering those of my brothers. But then again, I was only 10 years old!

I now reason that I probably used the money for myself because small change wasn't a big deal for my brothers due to that I used to find coins they had forgotten, about attached on a magnet in their laundry which I knew had been won in a game of *izwipi*[18] from the streets. I never played *izwipi* as I wasn't good at it and there wasn't enough play-time for me in general, although it could be due to the huge scar on my leg I earned from the wrath of my mom for over-playing one day when I was about eight years old. It was standard practice to make tea for her first thing when she got back home while she also soaked her swollen feet in lukewarm water to unwind from the pressures of the day after work. On that particular day I didn't see her arriving till I noticed that it was getting very dark outside and I quickly ran to the house to check if she was home already or not.

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[17] I regard integrity to refer to morally right things we engage in in our private spaces. In the cited incident, i failed dismally. Barnard (2008, p. 4) captures the "construct specific competency model of integrity". Even on this indicator, my conduct showed poor self-discipline, lack of honesty and fairness towards others.

[18] *Izwipi* is a game whereby a coin would be spun around on the ground by the thumb and index fingers, and the gathered group of children would have to guess the top side, whether head-or-tail. They used to bet with their coins which were then collected as the loot by the spinner when the answer was wrong.

As I tiptoed into the house, I wasn't aware that one of my elder brothers had already picked the strongest branch from the apricot tree in the garden and it was hidden behind the kitchen door, placed as a whip to be used on me for when I got inside the house. I was shocked to find that my mom was already in her bedroom and I quickly grabbed the teapot, emptied it by the drain outside the house and rinsed it to make fresh tea for her. Unfortunately, the tea I poured into the drain was fresh tea, already made by my brother and was stood by the side of the stove to brew properly for when my mom would come to the kitchen to enjoy it. Even more unfortunate was that the tea-leaves my brother used to brew that tea were the last lot available in the house. I am sure anyone can imagine the fury that accompanied that hiding. I still bear a permanent scar as evidence of that incident and interestingly, that was also the first and the last time for my mom to beat me up for the rest of my life.

Overall, I was still very scruffy and unkempt most of my higher primary school years. Change came about when my elder sister took a gap year after matric and secured a position as an assistant teacher at the local high school before pursuing Social Work studies at Fort Hare University the following year. With her first pay-cheque she bought me proper school uniform and by then, one benevolent neighbour's child had already handed me down the correct tunic. I was in Standard six at the time and I was 12 years old, an age at which I was a bit able to start looking after myself and presented myself in a better condition at school. Luckily, all this didn't disturb my school performance as I breezed through primary to high school in record time. It helped not being preoccupied with my circumstances in that I had very little awareness of how impoverished I was. I just went on with the business of being a school child with no conscious realisation of poverty's impact on my life. Again, there never was any career-focused education till I exited higher primary school. I progressed to Musi High School in Pimville Township, also in Soweto, at age 12 going on 13. The school was still a walkable distance but quite far compared to the two previous schools and it required us to walk about a kilometre up the road to catch a school bus.

I started with my Form 1[19] in 1973 along with a number of other peers in the neighbourhood. We used to catch the bus in the morning and walk back home as a group after school. This made it possible for me to save the three cents bus fare which I used to buy *Sunlight bar soap* to wash my school uniform after school. At least by then I had one decent white school shirt and the gym-dress was still usable in high school. A huge bonus was that my other brother who was at another high school, later made it into the cricket clinics that were conducted in the townships by a benevolent group of sponsors. He became very good in the sport and eventually won a prize consisting of several white school shirts which became a windfall for me because I was now able to use his shirts as well due to that he had a small body frame and his shirts fit me just perfectly. This also meant that I washed the shirts on fewer days than in the past.

When I started high school, the *learned family* that rescued my elder sister asked me to help with domestic work in their house and I captured the pictures in fond reminiscence and in tribute to my 13 year old self! I don't remember ever being paid for this work but I remember very well the leftover food packs I took home after work on Saturdays. I also know that from that time onwards that family were the ones who bought me and my younger sister the Christmas and New Year clothes because on some of the Saturdays we alternated doing the piece-job. This means that at that point in my life, I started tasting the world of work as a domestic worker, at the impressionable age of 13 years.

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[19] The present day reference to 'Grades' in the school system was referred to as at 'Standards' which became 'Forms' at high school level back in the days, thus, Form 1 is now the equivalent of Grade 8.

I know though, that as time went by, my younger sister became the favourite domestic helper apparently due to her more industrious approach to housework. She was reported to have always enquired on *what I should do next* after completing each chore, whereas I was reported to have always reported that I was done! I guess my being relieved of the domestic work perfected succession planning although I believe that they recognised the bigger need for me to help at home, especially with laundry as our family was much bigger than just the couple they were. All of us as children at home helped out with all chores and our laundry on Saturdays was always a huge mountain, a task that occupied my mother a lot after work on most days during the week as she brought home extra laundry from other white families to increase her earnings. Therefore, I think my withdrawal from helping the learned family had to do with this particular task which my mother probably didn't want her sons to perform. This could have been due to the high esteem with which she held her boys and she probably felt that laundry would emasculate them according to her view of the task as a highly gendered role. It could also be due to her great dislike of the task itself in that it alone encroached more on her time to spend with her children after work. I would have hated it too for same reasons but probably would still have continued to perform given the need for more money in the household.

However, when I got into my second year at high school in Form 2, my mother was planning for me to start training as a *nurse* at the Baragwanath Academic Hospital after completing Form 3, a career that I think she had decided on out of necessity in that the academic hospital was quite accessible from home and there were no fees to be paid but trainees were paid a stipend with which I could start contributing to the family income. Also, it was obvious that there wouldn't have been any funds to further my studies since my sister was furthering her own at Fort Hare University at that stage. Apart from the possibility to start earning the stipend, I have no clue why *nursing* but my mother must have discussed the planned nursing career with the *learned family* because soon thereafter they visited and gave me the Rand Bursary Fund [RBF] application form to complete. The RBF offices were located in Orlando Township in Soweto, accessible by train and I was told to hand-deliver the forms along with my latest school report. I soon got to know that the bursary was awarded and the offer was the start of big things to come for me.

RBF mailed a Form with all school necessities (except uniform) which I had to take to the aptly named *Via Afrika Bookshop* in Johannesburg. For the first time in my entire schooling life till then, the Form enabled me to collect the largest ever haul of school material which included notebooks, exercise books, textbooks for all subjects and dictionaries, all colours pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, brown and plastic book-covers. These were all more than enough for me and we happily shared with my brothers who were at high school as well. It was such a great joy to taste having neatly covered books for once in a lifetime.

The psychological impact was so great in that I remember on one occasion being among the top-ten good performing learners called out by the school principal at assembly to be congratulated. I know that on that occasion I committed to not getting any position less than being in the top-five in my class. It was also in the same year that I attempted to participate in athletics, running the 800 meters, which unfortunately didn't last long as I got into serious trouble with the coaching teacher for events unrelated to the sport itself. The coaching teacher also taught us one content subject and often made us write tests every Wednesdays at 06:00 in the morning. The approach was that no one was allowed in class for the test after the teacher had arrived and thus he literally became *the clock* on test days. My brothers had the responsibility to walk me to the taxi rank on those Wednesdays as it was often still very dark for me to walk by myself, especially in winter even though they too still had to prepare for school. One fateful Wednesday morning the taxi I was traveling in drove past that teacher who was waiting by the next stop at the taxi rank and I was certain I would get to class in time. I think the teacher got a lift in a private car to get to school before me because when I got there, the test was already underway.

Knowing the rule very well, I decided to hide in the girls' toilets till the start of school at 08:00, same time as when the test usually ended. The plan was to bunk that subject's lessons to escape the punishment awaiting me which I knew very well wouldn't pass till meted out. The teacher must have realised that I was then bunking his lessons and decided to come to class during one random period when there was no other teacher in class. At that moment, everyone looked at me and I looked at the nearby open window which was too high for me to jump out of, and the teacher reached me before any other means to escape could come to mind. In his hand, was the thin black leather switch we called *istrap*[20] which the teacher used to cruelly whip with on learners' stretched-out-opened-palms. The strap would then wrap around the hands such that a person would get twice as many lashes on the palms and on the back of both hands. The teacher then just came straight to my desk and without a word started hitting me all over my body with the strap. That went on for so long, so much that it seemed it wasn't going to end and the entire class was shell-shocked at the force with which the punishment was meted out. I was so defenceless and my silent screams went on without any mercy till the teacher was satisfied. All I noticed afterwards was that all my jersey buttons were ripped off due to the viciousness of the lashes. My hands, arms and upper body bore the hall-marks of the severe beating which, on hindsight, seem to have been well calculated because I wasn't hit on my head or face. God forbid how I would be looking like now with those tell-tale scars on my face! I am not sure how my lessons in that subject progressed after that incident but I know that this teacher was not that subject teacher in the next Form.

I met him once at a family friend's graduation party when I was studying my final year at university and we never spoke to each other. I was disappointed that it was not my graduation party although both of us were not dressed in the academic regalia like all other graduates at the function. I am not sure what the teacher thought of me but I was disappointed in that there wasn't scope to mention that in that same year, I was completing first degree studies at the University of Zululand [UNIZUL] and soon, I was also going to be a graduate. It seemed obvious that the teacher wasn't one of the graduates waiting to parade their academic wear to grace the occasion as graduates usually did at a party in the township in those days.

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[20] Istrap was a thin black leather strap that was designed for meting out punishment on learners. It was so strong and yet so supple that it never broke no matter how much force it was applied with.

Such a parade was reasoned to be inspirational to the younger ones. I remained at Musi High School till the outbreak of the Soweto Uprisings in 1976 as also captured by Morrow et al. (2004), Ndlela (2013) and Ndlovu (1998), having escaped the nursing career route due to the RBF as already explained. In that year four pertinent incidents took place at school and in my life. The *first* one was when the boys abandoned school one Monday morning and walked around the township in search of an alleged thug who was said to have trailed (in a private car) behind the school bus travelling to an out of town sports trip. Apparently, he had terrorised one school girl on arrival at the destination. I think the thug was well known for troublesome behaviour in the township and the school boys decided to hunt him down after returning from the trip. They found him at a nearby shebeen and dragged him to the school yard to account for his misconduct. At one point he tried to escape but was pinned down to the ground and beaten so badly that I thought he had died. School was dismissed after this incident and he was left there, oozing blood from all over including from his wrists which were also slashed, probably to ensure that he died. The girl he allegedly terrorised was coerced to throw a brick at him and it was quite ghastly but we later learned that he survived the beating.

The *second* pertinent incident was when one subject teacher gave us homework of unknown proportions one Friday during class. As a generally disciplined child, I was among the lucky few who completed the homework by Monday when the teacher came to check it up during the subject period. He rooted out to the front of class all those who had not completed the home work. He had brought along a wooden broom stick, which he placed between two desks and used *kung-fu* to break it into two thick sticks. He started administering punishment to one girl and must have given her 10 of the best lashes on both her open palms. The beating was done so cruelly that when she bent to ease off the pain on her palms, the teacher would lash on her bent back. When she couldn't stretch her arms, he poked her with the stick on her stomach or chest till all 10 lashes were meted out. Then next, it was one boy's turn who steely braved all 10 lashes without ever withdrawing his hands to rub away the pain. Then followed one other boy but it seemed the teacher was getting tired as he missed the stretched out palms and hit the boy on the wrists. The boy annoyingly asked the teacher to please aim properly for the palms and avoid the wrists as he could break his wrist-bones.

The boy's request angered the teacher a lot and he seemed to now aim more for the wrists. At that point, another boy who was standing next in line for punishment just got angrier and started punching the teacher with his fists. After just a few punches, all the boys in the class descended onto the teacher, tearing off his jacket and shirt while kicking and beating him in all possible places. His pens got strewn all over the class, and *funnily*, the girls started to sing and dance. The noise alerted another teacher who rushed over, quelled the commotion and rescued the teacher who was at that staged, totally dishevelled. He had bruised eyes and never stepped back into our class ever again. The two incidents at Musi High School had potential to derail my studies and at that point, I still hadn't even thought of what career I would embark on after matric. I was just passing my standards without any direction or clear life-career goal. Even the subjects I took at school were just subjects without any relation to my ability or interests.

Then the masterstroke *third* incident took place with the outbreak of what became known as the Soweto Uprisings on 16 June 1976. I was quite oblivious to the events leading to the riots as we were busy writing midyear exams on that fateful day at Musi High School. I later got to know about the rumour that our school students were supposed to block the exit of white officials who worked in the township. They would have been exiting Soweto and destined for their homes in the suburbs, using the then Potchefstroom Road [Potch-Road]. Probably, our school students' leadership planned to block the route after the exam but on our way home, the township was engulfed in thick black smoke from cars and buildings that were burned and vandalised due to being associated with the governing apartheid regime. It was when I got home that I realised the full scale of the unrests as most people were shouting *black power* with their right hand fists raised into the air. One of my older brothers worked at a nearby brewery and it was burned down while he was still at work and he returned home to explain what was happening as the brewery got looted in the process. The next day my mother ordered us not to leave the house while she went to work but soon after she left, I joined a group of children and headed to the Potch-Road as a lot more commotion was taking place there. This was one moment where I experimented with my bit of stone-throwing to participate in the chaos.

It was at during that mayhem that the police in their riot-control cars diffused the crowds with teargas and we scurried down the road back home but the police cars caught up with us and we split in different directions into nearby houses to hide. I easily could have been hit by a bullet on that day because as soon as the police were not in the vicinity, we regrouped to join in the chaos and witnessed the unfolding history-changing event in the annals of South African history. So many people died, others lost limbs and permanent mobility in the days following what became known as June 16. I lost a classmate who was a good friend on June 17 and another friend was hit by a bullet that crippled and condemned her to a wheelchair till she passed-on just a few years ago. The unrest and violence quickly spread to other townships resulting in more deaths as the country got engulfed in massive political uprisings. The uprisings prompted my mother to take us all to our grandmother in Wakkerstroom, a rural part of the country in the then Natal province.

There was no other way to ensure our safety as the police conducted random raids in families arresting mostly the youth, especially boys. Clearly my three elder brothers were vulnerable and taking us away was the only thing to do for my mother since she couldn't stay at home to ensure that we didn't get into trouble with the police in her absence. It was by the grace of God that none of us lost our lives during that time. I am not sure how long we stayed in Wakkerstroom but schooling could not be salvaged and it got permanently out for us for the rest of that year. It did not resume normally even at the beginning of 1977 which was the year I was supposed to complete my high school education and I know that I loitered around the township with no clear plan on what to do next. Obviously my bursary had lapsed by then and it seemed it was the end of the road for me till my elder sister (pictured) intervened just as she was starting out to practice as a *social worker*.

She decided to travel to the boarding school where she had completed her Form 5 to look for space for me and my younger sister so that we could finish off our high school education. Because my elder sister was one of the former prefects and a head-girl in her final year, it was easy for the school to accept us based on her good standing. She bore all the costs related to our relocation and education. For my brothers, it was the true end of their school careers and they found employment in different places. Indeed, it was also the case for most children across the country.

The *fourth* and final incident was that I got politically awakened even before reading Biko's (2008a, 2008b) book on black consciousness which accentuates pride in being black. I became aware of what I came to refer to as my *slave names* – Angeline and Joyce. I then enrolled at St Augustine's High School, situated at Nquthu, in Natal as Thabile Gama, resuming my rightful African identity in a name I embraced to define who I am. It is how I am known today although those closest refer to me as Thabi or Thabs if endearment is intended. The significance of the 1976 uprisings was that they bequeathed me with a sense of strong identity along with all other historical moments in the history of our country. Furthermore, I recount in in Section 4.6 how I became *a reader* but I note here that it was through reading a number of titles from *The African Writers Series* such as *Things fall apart (*Achebe, 1958) that my identity crystallised. I always reason that I lost two years of my schooling life (1976 & 1977) yet ever so grateful because others lost their lives in the vicious carnage of the apartheid system. Generations got derailed and lost educational opportunities. The likes of Nelson Mandela lost simple enjoyments of being a parent, a husband and a free citizen for much more than the 27years in prison. In comparison, my lost two years seem so trivial and that realisation underscores just how lucky I have been, hence the coinage in the next section as it refers to my existence as a lucky girl.

4.4. The lucky girl!

The events recounted in the previous section testify to the loads of luck which saw me through the formative years and I would have loved to label this section as *the blessed girl* had Best (2002) not gotten to it first to title his awesome autobiography in which he battled alcohol addiction.

Yet I found it irresistible to relate to Fox's (2002) regard of himself as a *lucky man* in the face of tragic turn of events in his acting career milestones that were threatened by the onset of Alzheimer's disease. However, my luck was not evident when I arrived at St Augustine's High School in 1978 when they told me I couldn't start in Form 5 but had to repeat Form 4 as their policy didn't allow them to take learners at exit level. I was dumbfounded because my expectations were that I came to finish off high school education which was not consistent with reality since I was last in class in mid-Form 4. This brought about a rain of tears while in the school offices trying my best to let them take me in their Form 5 class. The magnitude of the lost two years meant further delay in my career-life although I didn't have a specific goal I can quote as pressuring then. Yet the thought of the lost time posed what I thought was an insurmountable hurdle at the time. What made matters worse was when I found out that my younger sister and I couldn't be accommodated at the school hostel which was full already, which meant that I was stuck in the office with all our luggage with no certainty about where we would sleep that night. I finally gave up the fight for space in the Form 5 class and we set about looking for accommodation in nearby houses. Had I known then what I know now, I would have taken heed of Fox's (2002) wisdom that: "it wasn't for me to fret about time or loss but to appreciate each day, move forward, and have faith that something larger was at work, something with its own sense of timing and balance" (p. 238).

As such, we were still lucky to be directed to a mud house about 300 meters from the school which already had several girls who also couldn't find space at the hostel*,* as that is how it was referred to. The mud house had no running water, sanitation or electricity services which wasn't too different from what we had back home although we had a brick home along with the first two services except for electricity. We used candles for lighting, paraffin primus-stove for heating irons to straighten washed laundry as well as for cooking. We used a nearby dam for bathing and washing laundry in large portable plastic basins. We also used a pit toilet that was dug in the yard of the mud-house we rented. We became a joke at school because the dam was located across the gravel road, directly opposite the boys' hostel who must have feasted their eyes on our highly compromised privacy. There was one girl among us from Thokoza, a township located in the East of Johannesburg, who was quite feisty and didn't really care about the exposure.

She was slightly older than me and she simply got on with the business of living and schooling. We became best friends after being drawn to each other by our common, yet seemingly natural desire to work hard accompanied by simple ambition to be top performers as far as we could. We resolved to make names for ourselves at St Augustine's perhaps because the Natal girls referred to us as *die kom van Transvaal*[21] which is Afrikaans reference to those *hailing from the Transvaal*. Another reason for their displeasure was that they couldn't mete out the much enjoyed initiation custom on us, referred to as the *msila's treatment*, loosely referring to *treatment of the last to come at the school*, with *msila* being a Zulu word for the *tail or the last one*. Furthermore, having been roaming around the township since the '76 uprisings, my hair had grown into a big afro by 1978, which I liked as the hairstyle consistent with those times. I passively resisted cutting it off although the norm was five millimetre maximum length for both boys and girls. I was not allowed to plait it and I finally decided to cut it because it was hard to maintain when not plaited even though none of the school officials enforced this on me. However, prior to that decision it drew a lot of attention towards me, predictably negative from the envious girls and positive from the boys. Also, at Musi High we used to wear very short uniform and my black school dungaree was a few centimetres shorter than the black school blazer that one boy had borrowed me for many months after we swapped, with him using my school jersey. It was an innocent exchange, lest someone thinks there were romantic undertones to the exchange!

I suppose the decision to work hard at school with my friend was in retaliation for the hostility surrounding our presence as well as the *fish* name we had by then acquired as part of teasing we received for bathing in the dam. As a strategy, we decided to cover our books beautifully to ensure that they stood-out, which paid off quicker than expected for me as I got top marks in class for our first Geography Test in the first term of the school. I got the recognition I wished for and soon, I was asked to help other learners in our Geography lessons and was occasionally requested to also help learners in lower standards, which all earned me some respect all round at the school.

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[21] A former province in South Africa before the new political dispensation post-apartheid

I recall one lesson where I took the Form 2 class to the soccer field where I instinctively knelt down and started forming various shapes of sand dunes to demonstrate a part of the lesson on that. The group was highly impressed as I continued to explain this, they were all satisfied and we went back to class. The adoration felt very good but the accompanying luck almost ran out as fast as it came when the schools reopened for the second term in that my younger sister and I found space in the school hostel. Having been used to wonder around freely without restrictions while staying outside the school hostel, it was no surprise when one Saturday night a group of us decided to sneak out of the hostel to attend an engagement party of people I didn't know, but who lived in the neighbourhood. We were so unfortunate that the school's vice principal was also in attendance at that party and he sternly told us to see him first thing on Monday morning, which we all did, one by one. In his office, he sneered at me, mimicking how I cried for space at the school and yet I then had the nerve to disobey school rules. He dictated what I had to write in a letter to my parents to report myself for the misconduct, and for them to send money soon since I was going to be expelled. I had no choice but to write that letter as all the girls I was caught with had also written similar letters to their parents.

It turned out the letters were never posted but served as standing final warnings in case of further misconduct. I completed Form 4 and progressed to Form 5 at the beginning of 1979 and contrary to Ellery and Baxen's (2015) evocative title: *"I always knew I would go to university': A social realist account of student agency"* (p. 91) to capture their very interesting study, I still hadn't wrapped my mind on the idea of progressing to varsity. Also, the school was so strict that there was a regulation against any contact or communication between boys and girls, even opposite gender siblings couldn't be seen talking to each other within school premises. We were allowed to talk to each other only during class and it was strictly prohibited at all other times, even at church, which was compulsory to attend every Sunday morning. Still, the school often organised movie nights held at the school hall and even then, boys and girls sat on separate sides of the hall. Then early in the year 1979, on one unfortunate Saturday late at night, boys decided to rebel against this rule and went on to storm the male teachers' quarters.

They chased them up the surrounding mountains and I am not sure what the overall grievance or goal was but one of our teachers couldn't run as fast in the dark. The boys caught up with him and stabbed him to death. After that, they stormed the girls' hostel, beat up the matron and wrapped her in a blanket and frogmarched us all to the hall. We remained at the hall where we were made to sing till dawn the following morning. We were later rescued by police, the school got closed indefinitely. We were all expelled and told to reapply for readmission, which we did. More than losing that teacher in that manner, it was most unfortunate that even though my younger sister and I were readmitted, my elder sister couldn't afford to send both of us back to the school. She then decided that only me would return to the school, an opportunity I decided to grab with both hands and ensured I did my best in all my school work.

My lucky streak resurfaced in that I became an established Geography assistant teacher because the subject teacher didn't come back after the murder of the male teacher. Having lost that one teacher, we also didn't have teachers for Biology and History. One boy who was good in history took on the responsibility to lead us in assistive teaching of the subject. Our isiZulu teacher doubled as the Afrikaans teacher and our English teacher looked still very young and remained at the school probably because he understood the boys' grievances. We never had replacements for all the other subject teachers which meant that in my matric year, I had two teachers only for the seven subjects I was enrolled for. For some reason, I had also become fond of debate during our English lessons and I soon got established as the last speaker during competitions, internally and against visiting schools. The school hall had wooden floors which sounded hollow when stomped on during the debate celebratory moments.

This practice was intensified to intimidate visiting schools with intention to scare them, and so it was on this one particular occasion when I stepped forward to argue in conclusion as the last speaker from my team. That measure of confidence marked a point at which I decided I would want to pursue law studies as a career, an imminent goal that seemed possible as my performance at school remained satisfactory.

Notably, there were 62 learners in the two Form 5 classes in 1979 at the school, but only six of us managed to pass with full exemption under the historical Joint Matriculation Board (South African Vice-Chancellors Association, 2001). It was a legal accreditation body assembled from 1918 to March 1992 when its role was reviewed in accordance with changes in the country at the beginning of the 1990s. Under this body, a matric learner was required to pass at least six subjects, four of which needed to have been registered and written on Higher Grade [HG] to qualify for a matric exemption certificate that permitted university entrance. Also, we were registered on HG for all seven subjects and only three of us enrolled for our first year at university the following year. The three learners consisted of one mathematics whizz-kid who enrolled at the University of Witwatersrand [Wits] and two of us who enrolled at UNIZUL, notably me and the boy who facilitated our history lessons. One other girl among the six joined us the following year at UNIZUL and I don't know what happened to the other two but my best friend pursued a career in nursing, for reasons I have never asked about even though we are still close friends to this day.

It is clear that I seemed to have been good in Geography but I performed the worst in that subject in my matric final exam. I also remember that the bad performance was due to how I struggled with topographical map interpretation, a syllabus section I don't remember ever covering in class or by myself. Such a realisation shows that a learner's effort, no matter how motivated, has limitations. It highlights the role of a qualified teacher who would have known to balance our approach to the subject at least in preparation for final exams. Also, my general sense of direction correlates negatively with good geography knowledge which indicates that learning without depth or insight through application exercises is a handicap. It demonstrates that poor education hinders effective and impactful functioning in an individual's adult life.
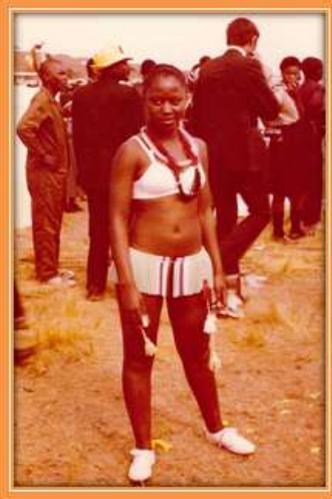
Overall, I still remember how hard we used to study by ourselves in my Form 5 class. We studied during the school day, slept soon after evening meals at about 17:00, woke up at 21:00 when the rest of the students returned from compulsory study times and carried on till the morning. Personally, I studied so hard so much that I didn't believe how much more studying was required when I got to university. At least it paid off although I believe it was also by sheer luck and the grace of God that some of us still managed to pass well enough to be able to enter university, which was the cherry on top after also taking part in historical festivities organised by the school as part of the centenary celebrations (in the picture) of the Impi yase Sandlwana (The Battle of Isandlwana 22 January 1879 – 22 January 1979).
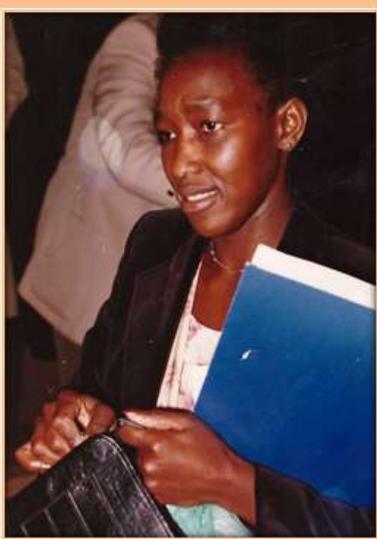
Since I had applied to start with my law studies in 1980, my elder sister had already decided that that career was unsuitable for me. The reasons she gave were that one of her friends who was the brightest among them struggled a lot through law studies. Apart from that I think she couldn't firmly say that failure was financially unaffordable. Another reason she gave me was that under apartheid, very few law students completed their studies as they became highly politicised and often left the country to go into exile due to tumultuous general political unrests in the country at the time.

My sister had played such a crucial role in my life that her word was final in all instances and therefore, I changed my registration status at the university from intending to study law to studying what she recommended, a four year degree in Baccalaureus Bibliothecologiae [B.Bibl] commonly known as *Library and Information Science,* and it is a professional qualification.

I was hearing about B.Bibl for the first time in my life and had no clue what the qualification was about. During orientation at university we were alerted that some of us were forced to study what our families wanted us to study and we were advised and encouraged to disregard that and follow our hearts' desires. That was a perfect opportunity for me to pursue law studies as I wished, but I couldn't go against my sister's instructions and I reasoned that library science would give me the bread which I resolved, I would butter any how I wished one day in future once I was able to finance and pursue further studies. I still resolved to continue working hard with an aim to secure a bursary so that I could relieve my sister from obvious financial burdens. I was lucky in that I managed to do just that, so much that at the end of the first semester, I had secured a merit bursary from Coca Cola and a full bursary from the Institute of Race Relations of South Africa [IRRSA]. However, both bursaries were nearly cancelled as it was against the rules of each sponsor to hold more than one bursary at a time. I decided to forfeit the Coca Cola sponsorship because the IRRSA offer covered tuition and boarding fees.

I was lucky too when after passing Form 5 I got a holiday job at Sales House, Market Street in Johannesburg which paid R45/week. I still have a vivid memory of the items, their colour, texture and sizes I bought my mother with my first wages which was paid in cash. It made me so proud to be able to buy her something and I also started saving for university to assist my sister in any way I could when university opened. I was even very lucky in that for some reason, Sales House kept that job for me for winter holidays as well, which meant that I held holiday jobs with them for the entire four years while at varsity. The holiday job was a great relief as the burden of my education partially fell off from my sister's shoulders.
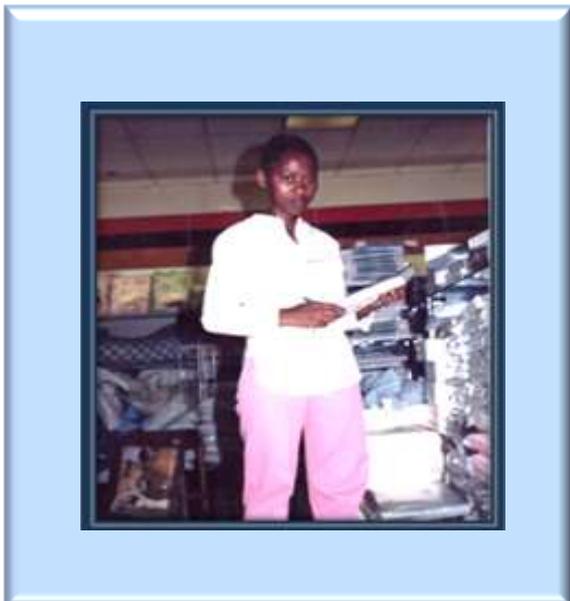
Furthermore, the university library also employed student librarians to work the afternoon and evening shifts when fulltime staff knocked off. UNIZUL paid us R90/month for four shifts a week, including on Saturdays. Suddenly my fortunes changed for better as I could now buy myself clothes, finance my travels from Johannesburg to varsity, and was even able to come home on Easter holidays for example if and when I wanted to.

I bought myself a portable radio, nice bed linen, all personal care stuff I needed and groceries which made it an option for me to go to the varsity dining hall, especially when the food was not very appetising. Again, two incidents nearly derailed all the mentioned luck at UNIZUL, the *first* being that I didn't really enjoy one elective subject I had chosen for the degree programme along with psychology and Preliminary French. When I was in second year, the subject classes were scheduled for 07:00 in the mornings and this timeslot went against my nature as I regard myself as an *afternoon person* related to Paffenbarger's (2009) descriptions of individuals' circadian rhythms. It seemed like there were lots of us who used to bunk that class and only pitched for tests and our professor knew about this as he often called out the class register to mark absent those who were not in class on random occasions, regardless of the almost 500 of us attending for the subject.

Accordingly, it became interesting to recently read about the tendency to bunk classes investigated by Papageorgiou and Townsend (2014) among accounting students at a SA university whereby findings reported that on average, class attendance recorded 57.9 percent. It was a significant finding in that the percentage was made up more by discipline specific students who planned on becoming chartered accountants in the field compared to those who took the subject for ancillary requirements. The implication is that nearly half (if not more) students do not think class attendance is important if the subject has no bearing on intended qualifications. I then recalled that the class I had bunked back then was for a minor subject as well.

However, Papageorgiou and Townsend's (2014) findings are limited to the scope of their study but I think bunking of lectures as a phenomenon needs more exploration in the light of the digital information era along with hefty costs of travel to lectures for non-resident students. Also, in SA an 18 year old person's vote has influence on the government we eventually have which I regard as a bigger decision in comparison to whether to attend or miss a lecture. One could then argue that tertiary level students have the onus on themselves regarding how they shape their career trajectories related to all other decisions they make, including class attendance. Nevertheless, I learned the impact of my discretions the hard way, particularly this one time as narrated above, when I had missed class but attended for the test. Afterwards and realising the implications, I sheepishly went to the professor's office to apologise for being absent during his class. I embellished the truth about my grandmother having passed-on same day as the previous lecture was scheduled. The truth was that my granny had indeed passed-on around that time, but it was not honest truth that I wasn't in class because of that incident.

My professor seemed very sympathetic about my loss but I noted that he didn't remove the *absent* tick next to my name on the class register. There was no other means to do damage control more than I had already tried through that stunt. In retrospect and as an academic, I now realise how many grandparents one student tends to have who all seem to pass-on through multiple deaths while the student is registered. My professor must have had a good laugh and a great day after I left his office seeing that the test was in the same 07:00 timeslot in the morning. All the same, because I had a bursary, good marks were mandatory for me and I always aimed to achieve above 60 percent semester mark which I reasoned meant I had to work for 40 percent only to pass the exam. This subject was no different and similarly, I had a good 60+ semester mark for it because I got 68 percent in that last test. However, I strangely got a supplementary [sup] exam for that mid-year mark which was an embarrassment among my group of friends. I told no one about it and had to hide to study for it when the second semester commenced. In the interim and for some reason I suspected that the sup result was rather *payback time* for bunking class and it was a rumour we all knew that once one started getting sups in that subject, chances were that one will never ever pass for as long as the professor was in charge.

I then decided to go to the administration offices to establish how I got a supplementary exam since it was a first ever incident in all my examination results. The exam officer showed me my script and I noted that actually, I got 57 percent in the exam itself which, combined with the 60+ semester mark, should have earned me a pass above 60 percent at least. With that discovery, the exam officer told me that my only recourse was with the academic students' advisor on how to resolve the matter since it was clear that I had passed but a sup mark reflected in my results instead. The student advisor simply recommended that I should just sit the supplementary exam since it was against the university rules for students to be shown their exam scripts and it was a dismissible infringement for the employee to have shown me the script. The moral of the advice was that it was better for me to sit the sup exam than to get the employee in trouble. Whether that was true or false, I didn't know, but I grudgingly sat for the sup exam and predictably failed it by one mark [49 percent]. Since I already knew from the rumour that I wasn't going to pass the sup exam, I decided to register for an additional elective subject in the second semester as a strategy that would ensure that I still completed my degree in record time.

I registered again for this subject in semester one the following year, got a sup exam in June, wrote and failed it again by one mark. Since I had also registered for the outstanding first semester part of the additional elective subject which I had ensured to pass, I dropped this subject for good and my degree courses were balanced even though I still passed the second semester of this subject which remained as an additional semester course that didn't count as a full subject in my degree. I was really lucky to have had the foresight of anticipated failure of the subject which helped me to make contingency plans that did not impact negatively on my qualification programme and especially on the bursary. Perhaps the rumour was not a rumour after all, but was based on established truth as proven by my experience! The *second* incident pertained to that I was in my final year when Inkatha Freedom Party [IFP] supporters allegedly[22] killed five students on campus on 29 October 1983, just as we were about to start with the end of year final exams (Violence breaks out at the University of Zululand, 1983).

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[22] It is an allegation that the IFP and its members were part of the violence at UNIZUL in the tragedy of the 29 October 1983. However, the actual events as narrated did take place as I participated in them.

The violence was triggered by planned celebrations of the IFP on campus on that day, which the Students' Representative Council [SRC] had planned to disrupt as part of controversial political rivalry among political parties, also widespread in the country in that era. In reaction to the IFP's plan, the SRC convened a student body meeting on Friday evening which I attended and it was decided that we should all assemble at the foyer of the Bhekuzulu Hall, where the IFP celebrations were to be held the following morning. Accordingly, we gathered at the foyer as arranged and when the IFP arrived, they found and dispersed us from the vicinity, clearly not in a sweet-talk kind of way. Students started retaliating by throwing stones at the IFP members. Both camps then alternated between advancing towards attack and retreating several times till the IFP members seemed totally exasperated and started pursuing the scurried students right into the men's residence, a move which the students seemingly had not anticipated.

Realising this cornering strategy, the SRC marshalled the scampering students beyond the men's residence towards the Umhlathuzi River which borders the eastern side of the campus while the IFP men showed determination to beat up anyone they managed to catch up with. Those who could, swam across the river quickly and those who couldn't (like me) were assisted to the other side and we continued to run with the IFP men still hot in pursuit. We ran till we reached some mountains late afternoon and we could see from afar that the IFP men were not relenting. We just ran and ran till they gave up very late in the afternoon, by which time we were hungry and very tired but we also noted that the IFP men were no-longer chasing after us. At about 19:00 we started walking back to campus and we found lots of male students at our ladies' residence that had realised that the IFP men chased mainly male students and didn't attack students at our residence. We later got to know that five male students were cornered and killed in various parts of their residence. I am not sure if the planned celebrations continued on that day but on Sunday morning we went to the men's residence to witness blood splattering on walls and floors as hallmarks of the aftermath. One male student was reported to have been studying in his room and not even part of the picketing students. Apparently he was found by the IFP men who didn't know that, and smashed his head with a nail-prickled assegai and it was the saddest day of our lives at UNIZUL.

The university authorities sent out a memorandum by midday Sunday instructing all of us to vacate residences with immediate effect, and the university was closed. One of my home-girls knew a family originating from Dlamini (my home town in Soweto), who had relocated to Esikhawini, a township just outside Empangeni, not far from campus. We packed all our belongings and caught a taxi to that family, hungry, with swollen feet, and a few days later I developed severe symptoms of bilharzia which required medical treatment immediately upon arrival at home. We didn't have to report the incident back home as the violence received widespread media coverage and our families were worried about our survival and safety as every parent who had a child at UNIZUL on that day would have been, given the turn of events. However, we got home safely a few days later and we followed news reports for daily updates on what was going to be our fate. The university reopened after a few weeks just for the exams to proceed and I travelled back to campus, luckily passed and made my final exit from UNIZUL.

Seeing that I was part of the group that picketed and had run to the mountains with the scurried students, I noticed that I didn't relate easily with other students and one of the male students sarcastically asked me *what was a library staff member doing in the mountains?* The question was meant to be funny but the timing was not proper as I couldn't see the funny side of our collective tragic circumstance at the time. I knew that the question intended to mock me as I couldn't swim and it made me realise that I had all along been perceived with some *authority* by other students due to my part-time work in the library. Also, I may have been strict in my role which would definitely not have endeared me to other students who may have brought in overdue books, had exceeded their quota or who had to pay a fine before being served satisfactorily. Overall, I socialised minimally at varsity as I was focused with intent to pass well and retain the bursary so as not to disappoint my family in any way. My mother had already bought clothes to wear at my graduation ceremony and everyone back home was looking forward to the completion of my studies. It was unfortunate that after the 1983 Students' Massacre at UNIZUL, as the tragedy came to be known, the student body decided to boycott graduation ceremonies because Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the leader of the IFP, was also the chancellor of the university at the time. We agreed to graduate in absentia in protest against him capping us during the ceremony.

My parents accepted this position as they also empathised in unity with the parents who had lost their children during the massacre. So, after all my hard-work, I graduated in absentia for my first degree. I resolved to make it up to my family by studying further with the University of South Africa [UNISA] so that my mom could get a chance to wear her attire. It is thus clear to me that the aborted career path in law studies destabilised my overall flimsy career orientation as I ended up studying something outside of my sight. In retrospect, I think I resorted to drifting along in search of the area of my total passion as I explain in the next section.

4.5. The drifter

When I qualified as a librarian, my elder sister was in the employ of the SA National Council of Mental Health Head Offices in Johannesburg (a Non-Governmental-Organisation [NGO]) as a senior social worker and they had a special-library that seemed in desperate need of a junior librarian. This meant that immediately after my final exams, I terminated my holiday work arrangement with Sales House and started with temporary employment as a Junior Librarian at this NGO. My status was upgraded to full-time Special Librarian after I received my exam results which led to permanent employment at the beginning of 1984. The senior librarian had designed her own systems of running the library and I quickly had to abandon all theory I had learned especially in cataloguing and classification of materials. The senior librarian was highly efficient, very hard working and exceedingly knowledgeable about her work.

When I joined the company she used to work half-a-day, three times a week. My job included mostly operational functions as primary tasks, and my senior focused on managing the library which was very well stocked with all kinds of literature in the Mental Health field, sourced from the very best publishing houses in the world. Patrons were mostly social workers, occupational therapists and psychologists working for Societies affiliated to the National Council and located across the country at regional offices. The work demand was quite intense and the library had a well established reputation for effective and efficient service which required me to up my own performance especially because I was alone most times when my senior was off.

My first weakness was that I was already an avid reader and finding that I was working in a specialised library required alignment of all information requests with available literature in the library. The task could not be done well without extensive reading to narrow the search towards ensuring the need was properly met for the patron. This was made even more difficult by the fact that I had taken psychology as a major subject in my first degree and the interest seemed too intense as I got established in the field. I got more and more curious and read more and more which on the upside, created a positive reputation for my services from highly satisfied patrons, my senior and general management. The downside was that I felt I was giving away all that information for others to read and enjoy while I could only read *so-much* because I was primarily at work. What compounded the matter was that the NGO ran a youth project on *Life Skills for Self-Development* that was managed by my elder sister. I got involved by default in the programmes, workshops and all other work pertaining to this project, mainly to provide administrative assistance to my sister as these were often held on Saturdays. As a black youth myself (aged 24) at the time, I naturally related easily with the young participants who somehow stimulated my latent interest in facilitating theirs, and probably our mutual development which I found quite fulfilling. The emerging interest in young people intensified but because I still *owed* my family a formal graduation celebration, I decided to organise and host a huge graduation party at my parents' house in November 1984**.**
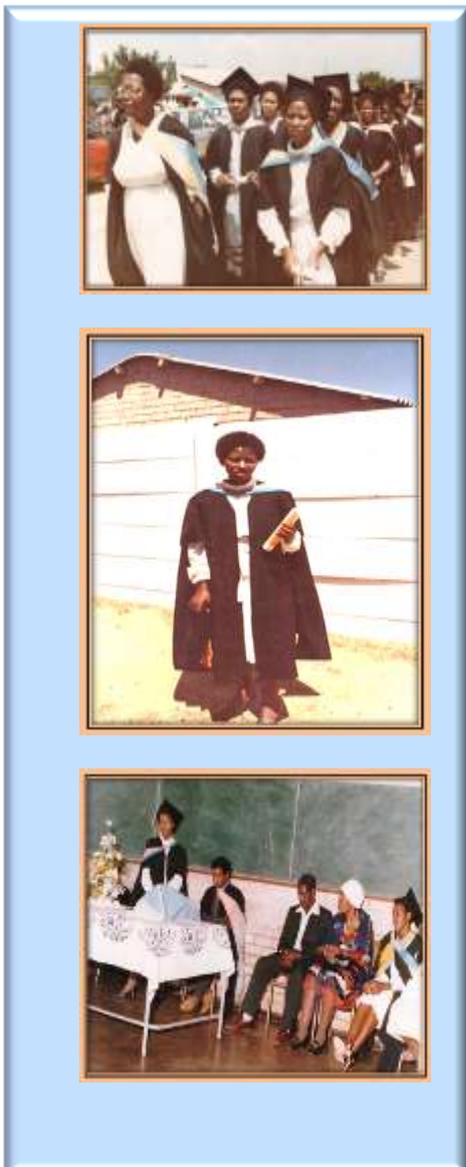
I also decided to register with UNISA to start with my honours studies in library science just so that my parents could attend my capping at a graduation ceremony. I am not sure what happened to the dream to pursue law studies but at that point it didn't become my next career move. As such, it was with a high degree of admiration, glee, mixed with envy that I watch on as our country's current Public Protector, Advocate Thuli Madonsela (Madonsela, n.d.a), because she is an achieved black woman whose origins are rooted in the same township (Dlamini in Soweto) where I was born, even more-so, she is younger than me, which heightens the probability of myself having been the admired one! I often wonder about whether with law as a career for myself: could it have been me that the public runs to for the same kind of protection? I guess I will just have to accept that I will never know. So I started with honours studies in 1985 while harbouring a strong desire to want to work with the youth.

I was passing but not very well at UNISA which slowly lessened interest in librarianship compounded by frustration due to not being able to read enough of the literature that surrounded me at work. I was also developing a strong need for a separate identity as I had become known as *so and so's younger sister* instead of being Thabile. Since my elder sister was a natural high achiever, she was popular among her peers and colleagues and she was highly respected by all around her. I definitely felt I was living under her shadow and started thinking of ways of stepping out and work on developing my own identity. It was at the start of my third year in the employ of the company that the man I was dating started to press insistently for us to get married as I didn't really feel ready on all previous occasions he had tried to speed up the process.

I still wanted to continue bringing about change at home now that I was working and had already started upgrading both my home and our lifestyle. However, in the middle of that year I relented, agreed for lobolo[23] to be paid. My father paid in live cows for my mother's lobolo hence I didn't even think of getting married without such an important rite of passage in my African culture that nowadays seems to be debated around me, albeit with my ears closed. To me and ironically, it is a negotiated process based on an established value that in and for itself: is not negotiable. As such, I started planning my impeding new life and a new career outside my sister's shadow. My first step was to put on hold the honours studies with UNISA and registered instead for the two-year part time studies' post-graduate Higher Education Diploma [HED) which I intended to complete in one year. My plan was to finish quickly, get a job as a teacher and be surrounded by high school youth I was yearning to help develop and grow with.
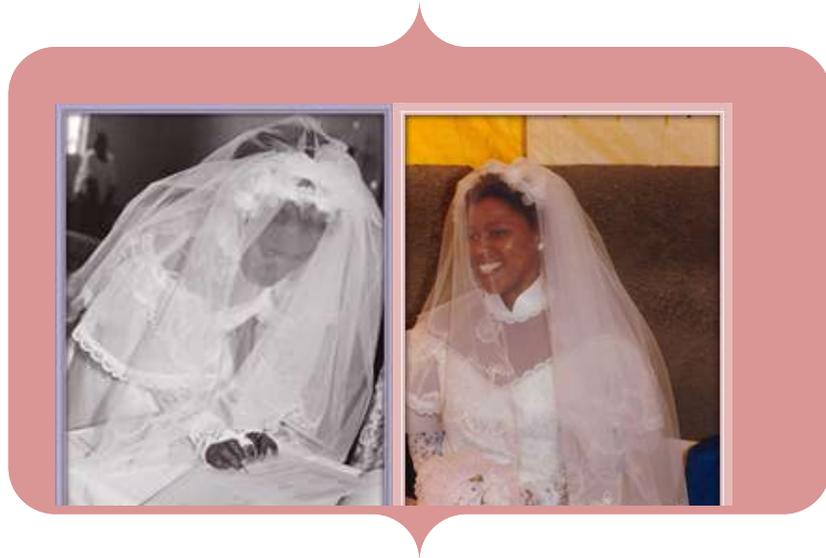
Because of the kind of degree I already had, I specialised in School Library Science and School Guidance and Counselling (due to psychology as a degree major) as my two teaching subjects. I got married in November 1987, resigned from my position as a librarian and studied for the HED full time in 1988. I registered for over 20 modules and half-modules which I intended to complete in one year, which was not really difficult except for the mountainous volume of work. I passed almost all modules at the end of the year except for one which required me to write a sup exam in January 1989. This misstep halted my sprint into the teaching field and I soon found a job as a career guidance counsellor at one other NGO. I got very disappointed to discover that the NGO's manager knew my elder sister so well that she was all we talked about during the interview.

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[23] Lobolo is an isiZulu (and African) practice whereby cows or money is taken to the bride's uncles by the future husband's uncles as a way to ask her family to form relationships between the two families through the couple's marriage. It is an elaborate process involving cultural negotiations and as a black African woman, it gives both one and her family a sense of pride knowing that lobolo was paid before marriage.

However, I accepted the job offer when it was made and I joined three other female career guidance counsellors although my role was split into two including career counselling and to develop career material. The need was for pamphlets which *spoke to the black youth* in terms of wider scope of career fields while being easily understandable in terms of concepts and terminology. The NGO's management agreed to the need to also include graphic designs to enhance conceptualisation of career information and we contracted the services of a Sowetan graphic designer who understood the kind of designs we needed. Generally, there were lots of students who came in search of personal and career advice which, in my case, tilted priority towards servicing their needs than developing materials as was required by my role. Their stories encompassed heart-wrenching accounts on severe poverty, aborted study plans due to failure or lack of funds and confusion about what they really wanted to pursue in their studies. Family related issues, unrealised career dreams, unemployment and personal identity issues formed part of their needs for counselling. Our four offices were designed in a way that enabled us to walk through each other's office without stepping outside to the corridor. This accessibility allowed us to walk into a colleague's office to consult for a quick opinion when the case at hand seemed too complex. Often, though we would escape in the same way to dry off tears or to regroup and comfort each other away from the client when the case seemed too emotionally draining.

We identified with the shared stories and could relate to our clients' struggles, which in a way was what led to the termination of our jobs (all four of us). In this instance I discovered that although fundraising was done mainly for career material development and dissemination across the country, funds were not used primarily for this purpose. The discovery of the mismanagement led us to ask uncomfortable questions and we didn't get satisfactory answers from management, which just heightened tension as our politicized advocacy role for the black youth made it impossible for us to ignore financial wastefulness of the proportions we discovered. We held long meetings and sessions with management to establish accountability but it was not forthcoming and it didn't help that they were white, which we felt made it easy for them not to understand the plight of the black youth. We strongly believed that our clients should not be given compromised services while money raised internationally in their names was used for unrelated purposes.

It was at that point that we realised how almost bankrupt the organisation was, not only morally but financially as well. By then, I had been in their employ for just over a year and all the painstakingly well-developed career material could not be bulk-printed due to lack of funds, just as it was ready to be launched countrywide. I couldn't believe such a waste of my time and resources as much as I didn't want to be associated with financial mismanagement. It then seemed better for me to resign, which I did immediately. Two other counsellors resigned at the same time with me and a month later the last of the four also terminated her services which led to the collapse of the organisation and I have never heard of it again. At that point, I had already completed my teaching diploma and had resumed working towards completing the honours studies with UNISA, which I finally did. Unfortunately, interest to attend a formal graduation ceremony had waned on my parents' side and only my two sisters accompanied me to be capped for the honours degree. I had also secured a new teaching job at P.J. Simelane High School in Dobsonville, Soweto which we affectionately referred to as PJ. This teaching position eventually became my longest serving years in one organisation. What was interesting about the school was that it was newly built and was one of the biggest schools in that township. In its first year, it started off by hiring unused classrooms at two nearby primary schools while the building was in the process of being completed. Its construction meant that there was no library for me to work at yet and one of my ex-colleagues at the NGO also found a job as the senior career guidance teacher because she had an MA qualification in the same field obtained in the United Kingdom.
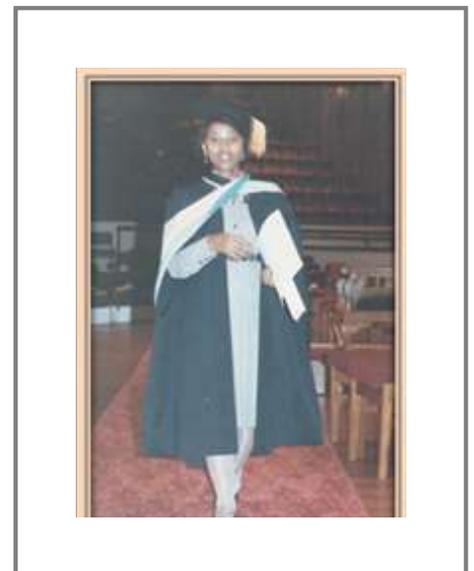
It then meant that both of us had no immediate roles in our respective fields because the actual school that could maximise our expertise was still under construction. The school area manager who hired us had indicated when we got employed that he was looking into the future needs of the school as a new project at the beginning of the 1990s in Soweto, a vision we passionately embraced and looked forward to realising. Sadly, the appointed principal didn't readily share in the same vision (in relation to our appointments) which caused a lot of strain in her relationship with the area manager. This was primarily because she had filled the new teaching posts with some colleagues from her previous school which then duplicated personnel as we were also appointed in those positions, along with two other teachers. The difference was that none among her preferred staff had the kind of specialisations we brought with us into the positions. Also, the area manager argued that we were newly employed into the teaching field and he didn't see a need for already employed teachers to vacate their positions to fill newly created ones. He emphasised the fact that he didn't want to lose us as the school was just a few months from being fully operational mainly because our offerings were bringing much needed additional value into the school considering the scarce expertise we were qualified in.

The community where the school was located desperately needed the injection of culture revamp in teaching and learning, which the area manager realised as an important catalyst we could contribute towards, a factor we fully agreed with. None of this line of reasoning made the principal allow us to stay and she terminated our services barely an hour after reporting for work on our first day at the school. We were baffled, but left the school premises and went to my house which was nearest, to phone the area manager about this development. He offered to meet with the principal as a matter of urgency but ordered us to report for work the following day, which we did. He got to the school and instructed the *extra* teachers to go back to their old posts or run the risk of being regarded as having absconded. Apparently, since the school was new, the area manager had superior hiring responsibilities as the principal herself was hired by him. Naturally, the power game between the two became a source of great mirth in the school corridors perhaps because the final decision favoured us. Unfortunately, it also tempered with the process of establishing harmonious work relationships which marked the beginning of really long workplace strife for me, even after change of leadership till my resignation 12 years later.

Difficult as the relationships were at the school, I am proud of the fact that I participated in choosing the school colours and the design of the uniform. I am even more proud that I came up with the school's motto: *As you rise, lift*[24] (Commodores, n.d.) which is still emblazoned on the school's badge and letterheads to this day. The impact of those four words got ingrained in me and assisted in formulating the core of my personal credo *(Appendix G)* which I aspire to always live up to. Furthermore, what really kept me going over the years was my love for the learners with who I had one of the best relationships in my teaching career. With no fully functional library even after I had worked on establishing it on weekends and after school, it was not fully operational and it received minimal support. I still managed to win several prizes through local and regional debates because I ended up teaching English as a Second Language. One of the prizes was the then latest edition full set of the *World Book Encyclopaedia*. Most enjoyable was that we received the encyclopaedia after winning against *a white school*[25] (a concept that is fully described by Liccardo et al., 2015) that

we participated with in a competition organised by the READ Educational Trust. My debate team won one trophy competing with local schools and came up as runners up in one provincial debating competition which earned us space in the local newspaper (*Appendix H*). I also secured book donations from Wits University through one other ex-colleague who had found a job as a career guidance counsellor within the institution. This relationship also helped to establish further links with yet another ex-colleague who was by then based in Canada and facilitated shipment of loads of book donations.

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[24] I had found this motto in one of the music album back page cover of The Commodores, who are an American funk/soul band reported to have been at their peak from the late '70s to the mid '80s. Their music was what bonded us as children at home as we sang along in their tunes that were popular at the time.
[25] We colloquially referred to the newly/racially mixed schools (Model Cs) as 'white schools' because they were predominantly attended by white children and were substantially well-resourced than our township schools. Winning a debate competition against them was a huge achievement for us, especially for my learners.

I collected these books using my private time as well as my family's resources to catalogue and classify from my home but at best, relations at work remained just functional. Since the school was new and most teachers were graduates in their respective fields and nearly all of us were in our late twenties/early thirties, the work environment was a mix of all emotions. We established an organisational culture that was cemented by our collective ambition to make a good name for our school.

We worked towards entrenching a strong culture of teaching and learning as well as instilling a sense of pride among our learners as defining qualities of all our belongingness in that school. We often organised days when teachers would wear the school uniform (as me in the picture with other teachers) jointly with the learners as a means to instil positive institutional identity. Parents loved it and our learners loved it and we all truly loved working at the school as we strived to work together as a unit for the benefit of the learners. What I loved most was that we designed a system whereby all teachers would start offering their lessons to Grade 8s who were new at school and progressed with them to the next Grade till they exited the school in matric/Grade 12. This meant that each teacher, including myself, spent 5 years in a row with the same group of learners which *firstly* created a strong bond between me as the subject teacher and the learners. *Secondly,* it helped a lot in creating desired learner-conduct and learning expectations which established clear behavioural boundaries that enabled better discipline to be maintained. I am not proud though that at times, I found myself also resorting to the barbaric corporal punishment even though it was not as severe as was meted out to me as a school child. In retrospect, I think I should have known and done better than that! No amount of remorse makes me different from those teachers who physically abused me as much as I feel I was.

It helped when the method was outlawed by the SA Schools Act of 1996 as also reported about by Mokate (n.d.), Veriava (2014) and Waterhouse (2007). The legislations intended to force educators to find alternative[26] means to discipline learners. However, it was and still is very difficult to work with teenagers who are adorable angels one minute and a bundle of tumultuous conduct the next. On one occasion I looked on helplessly as a fight broke out between two boys in a Grade 9 class till other boys disentangled them. It seemed high school learners get too excited and better acquainted in Grade 9 after being subservient in their first year in Grade 8. I found them to calm down a lot from Grade 10 onwards and we had fewer and fewer disciplinary cases as they matured towards Grade 12. Also, the system to progress with the groups in one Grade made it easier for me to manage syllabus content in that when they were in Grade 10, I would gradually introduce Grade 11 and 12 work to stretch and challenge the learners, most of whom were by then, very hungry for learning. It meant that we used Grade 11 to fully integrate Grade 12 work and we used the Grade 12 year largely for revision and to hone exam skills.

I organised debate competitions between junior and senior grades just for the fun of beating senior learners, which the juniors often won. Also, at times I let the learners set tests to compete in their groups whereby each group would be given time to ask questions to the rest of the class. They got marks for questions that the class could not answer correctly and the asking group had to provide the correct answer, which I moderated. Then each group would also have a chance to try and set at least one very difficult question for me (as the teacher) to answer. The trick was that they got marks only if I got the answer wrong but they lost marks if I got the answers correct. One can imagine the enthusiasm towards digging into their work to try and find difficult questions for me, which never worked in their favour but it was a fun way of teaching and learning. To let them win at times, I let them ask me general knowledge questions and they would include questions on movies or music celebrities which I would obviously get wrong because of generational differences in interests especially in the entertainment industry.

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[26] As an alternative I disciplined learners (mainly for not doing homework and for disruptive behaviour) by making them sweep the class after school or scrub the floors on Fridays, which they found demeaning and made them aspire not to want to do this kind of work. I hated letting learners do it because in Model C schools learners do not scrub floors. The method seemed to perpetuate slavery but it was a lesser evil compared to corporal punishment even though I know that nothing can test a teacher's patience than high school learners!

The delight in their eyes was priceless on such occasions, a lot so for the oral work marks and for the joy of knowing that they knew something I didn't know. Although I used my car to travel with the learners to all the debate functions and dropped them off at their homes afterwards, I never got compensation from the school. This was not because I had more than enough but I guess I was passion-driven and loved my involvement with the learners. The reward was in seeing them debate competitively which boosted their mastery of the English language while grooming them for public speaking. It instilled both self-confidence and a sense of achievement in them. This kind of work commitment from most teachers earned us the visit by Nelson Mandela[27] to endorse and launch nationwide the culture of teaching and learning in 1997 when the school made it into newspaper headlines after achieving a 91percent pass rate in our second group of matriculants *(Appendix H).* We achieved fame mainly for hard work, discipline, passion and intense competitiveness which united us in defending our acquired identity as a school. We became the sought-after school in the township and had the highest cooperation from both parents and the surrounding community.
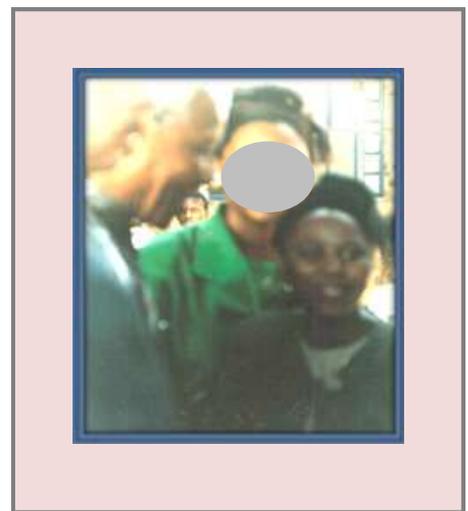
Meanwhile, I never really stopped continuing with my studies as I went on to obtain the post-graduate Diploma in Human Resources Management [HRM] (1995-1996) with the then Rand Afrikaans University [RAU], now known as the University of Johannesburg [UJ]. For some reason I had by then realised that although teaching was a personally fulfilling job, there were almost zero professional development prospects for me. I reasoned that the HRM qualification would provide a stepping stone towards a future job outside teaching when the time came for me to move on. It was after completing this qualification that a masters' degree in Industrial Psychology [IP] became clear in my mind that I wanted to be an *industrial psychologist* as my passion for nurturing individuals' potential had also clearly crystallised. I took a year's break from studying in 1997 to make proper enquiries leading to my enrolment for part-time studies in 1998.

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[27] Nelson Mandela subsequently became the first president in South Africa after the democratic elections of 27 April 1994. It was a huge honour to have him visit our school in recognition of our good work.

As much as this was a career development and management process, it was a deliberate exit strategy from the teaching profession mainly due to poor treatment of teachers by authorities. The decision was long overdue as I had found myself at loggerheads with authorities on a countless number of occasions over the years. These clashes intensified when I resumed studies for my masters' degree which earned me a reputation of *thinking I knew it all*. This was because as much as I was working hard in my teaching role I was working equally hard in self-development as part of my career management. I still tried my best to abide by the teaching professional codes but I didn't understand them to mean abandonment of my aspirations through personal development which seemed instinctive to me.

I could not allow myself to stagnate because I naturally hungered for learning as a defining personality quality as I had also resolved to focus on myself towards becoming an industrial psychologist. I reasoned that I needed to become a qualified and registered industrial psychologist so that I could establish a private practice, a journey described as "arduous" by Manganyi (2013, p. 278) though in reference to clinical psychology and also during the much darker days of apartheid. All the same, at that stage of my career life, it was apparent to me that I didn't deal well with authority in general. This was not because I disrespected anyone but it was because I discharged my responsibilities very well without the need to be micro-managed. I respected my work responsibilities and was committed to them, an approach that earned me a label of being an *untouchable* at school. This was attributed to that I seemed to know all HR legislation and could argue employment relationship matters knowledgeably. Attending supervision appointments for the research component of masters' studies was perceived as insubordination even though I never intentionally compromised my duties towards my learners.

My relationship with the learners was so open that they knew when I was not going to be around and I had enough class work planned in advance for them, which I tried to evaluate in full the next day. My opinion was and still is that learners took pride in that I trusted them enough to look after themselves on those occasions. It was during this phase in my life that in March of 2002 that the then Department of Industrial Psychology at the then Vista University[28] in Soweto Campus (Ogude, 2005) got to know about me through one of the honours[29] students I was attending with in our evening classes. The recruiting agent had asked this fellow student if she knew anyone in her class who might be suitable to lecture the third year group at the university. The student gave him my contact details and the recruiting agent phoned me to ask if I was interested. We arranged a meeting to talk more about the opportunity which was a God-send on my part as the unfolding events testified. It took me by surprise in that this was in the same week the school had planned a weekend getaway for a *change management intervention* which I had planned not to attend due to my pressing study schedule at the time. This non-attendance resonates with van der Vaart, Linde and Cockeran's (2013) description of how psychological well-being mediates employee's intensions to leave because in the same week, I had met with the recruiting agent at Vista.

He looked at my curriculum vitae and certificates of qualifications which together, led to a quick agreement that I would resume lecturing duties when the second term of the year began in April 2002. I was given all learning guides and understood how the highly centralised education system at Vista was organised. It was totally unbelievable because my intended next career move was to do my internship and then establish my private practice. Lecturing was never part of the plan. However, I missed the planned weekend getaway and by the time it ended, I had received numerous text messages from colleagues who hinted that a storm awaited me from the Department of Education [DoE] authorities for absenting myself from the event. It was a few of us who had not attended but for various individual reasons and it seemed we were all in some kind of trouble. I was then not surprised when I got to school on Monday morning to find one DoE official waiting for me and the others.

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[28] Subsequently referred to as just Vista in some parts as that is how it was commonly known.
[29] The HPCSA required me to complete three honours level modules to supplement my HRM Diploma (marketed as an honours equivalent) so that I could register with them as a student psychologist.

Upon arrival at the school, I went straight to class and readied myself to commence with my teaching duties when one learner came to inform me that I was needed at the principal's office. I stopped the lesson and proceeded to the office but found the DoE official on the passage way outside the office. Then a conversation resembling the dialogue below took place:

DoE official: "Are you Mrs Chawana?" (*In a very angry tone*)

Thabile: "Yes." (*I always maintain a direct gaze in my conversations as part of active engagement*)

DoE official: "Why didn't you sign the time-book?"

Thabile: "Usually there are lots of teachers who wait in the queue to sign and I decided to go straight to class since I am on for the first period instead of standing in the queue" (*I had arrived at the school yard 15 minutes before classes were to officially commence*)

DoE official: "I have heard lots of stories about you and it is true that you are arrogant!" (*Angry facial gestures accompanied this statement*)

Thabile: "I am sorry if you find me arrogant but it is not my intention" (*I was sensing a showdown and was trying to diffuse it as I neither had interest nor energy for overt conflict so early in the morning*)

DoE official: "Who else was in your car when you arrived at the school?" (*Its possible she wanted to suggest that we were late because we hadn't signed the time-book on arrival, but we were not late which made it hard for her to start a conflict from that angle*)

Thabile: "Did you really make me stop teaching so that I can come here and tell you who was in my car?" (*I honestly found this question provocative and I naturally reverted to an assertive mode*)

DoE official: "Yes"

Thabile: "It was Mrs Lebowa* (*Again, my direct reply was meant to calm a looming storm towards a full scale conflict – the name* is fictitious*)

DoE official: "Go and find her and come together to the office"

Thabile: "I would really love to go back to class because my period is nearing an end. Please ask one of the school secretaries or a learner to find her for you. Please excuse me" (*I turned around and walked back to class after excusing myself*)

The following day I was handed a letter in which I was charged with insubordination for not attending the getaway session during that past weekend and for refusing to find or fetch another teacher. The disciplinary hearing was scheduled for the Friday of that same week. Most unfortunately for the school, I was already appointed at Vista University as a lecturer and schools were due to close on the Wednesday for the Easter recess the following day. It meant that the disciplinary hearing was technically scheduled outside the school calendar days, which made it not compulsory for me to attend. Based on stated factors I was able to draft the resignation letter that same night, wherein I gave a 24 hour notice of my work termination with immediate effect. I handed the resignation letter the next day which happened to also be the last school day of the first term. I had mentioned therein that I wouldn't be able to present myself for the disciplinary hearing due to longstanding personal plans given that the day and date fell on school holidays. However, I couldn't master the courage to tell my learners that I was leaving them on that Wednesday and we continued with class work as if everything was business as usual. I spent the day using free periods to quietly pack all personal stuff in my car boot which was strategically parked for this purpose since arriving at school in the morning. My colleagues couldn't believe that I was leaving for good and I didn't mention that I already had another job, something I had only mentioned to just my best friend at school and had sworn her to secrecy till I had, at least, started with my work at Vista. That eventuality marked the end of my career as a teacher.

In a strange turn of events, it became so tragic that a week after the schools reopened for the second term, I learned that one of the learners in my class had fallen victim to suicide, an epidemic also reported about by Bantjies and Kagee (2013) especially among the youth. Unfortunately, I was the register-teacher and thus compelled to attend the funeral as it was the norm at our school. This misfortune brought me face to face with the rest of the learners I had cowardly abandoned due to matters unrelated to them at all. I could see the hurt and disappointment on their teary faces as we all cried during the entire funeral service. They all just fell into my arms and I didn't know who or how to comfort them as I was also crying uncontrollably, definitely for more reasons than just the tragic outcome about my student.

Also, the occasion was not appropriate for me to explain why I had left them but I could see sadness and mistrust in their faces which broke my heart. But then, it was all done and it was time to move on. There is a slight chance that my departure may have contributed to the suicide tragedy given that earlier in that year we had had an intense counselling session with that boy. He[30] was slightly older than most of the learners and had joined us at the beginning of the year in 2002. It took some effort to get him settled and integrated with the rest of the class but he did remarkably well in his school work. The counselling process came about after he had been found to have stolen another learner's book. His crime led to the counselling which concluded when he requested to explain to the class the reasons for the theft and an opportunity to ask for forgiveness since harmonious and a family-like relationship bound us together as a class. The class agreed with youthful glee to give him an opportunity to explain, and in the end we applauded him for his bravery and he was also welcomed back into the fold. It was this act of bravery that prompted me to pen down *My Ode to… (Appendix J),* which became the only means by which I could pour out my grief, albeit, to myself. That misfortune convinced me that teachers are more than educators at schools. They have immense influence and impact on the moral character of the learners and their role includes that of nurturers of these qualities as well. Much as it is really difficult to embrace all these roles and generally, I truly enjoyed my teaching time with the learners.

I am sure that I managed to stay in teaching for as long as I did mainly because of this additional teaching role and in my heart I seem to feel that I may not really be done with being an educator at high school level. Perhaps in my retirement years I would want to go back to teaching as a contribution to my community and society at large while also assuaging my unquenchable yearning to uplift the disadvantaged black youth who I regard as my children at this stage of my life. The section below has been hinted upon already in earlier discussions and it is an important part of my life-career development, thus, I take liberty to elaborate on it as well.

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[30] I have concealed his real name in the valediction to him. I was supposed to eulogise it in tribute at his funeral, which I couldn't do due to the very sombre mood on that occasion. In fact, I only remember our deep mutual grief on that day and everything else is not even a blur in my memory.

4.6. The reader

Previous sections of this story already indicated that I have a strong passion for reading, an activity which I started engaging in during my formative years while at Ndondo Higher Primary school. One of my brothers (pictured) loved to write fictional stories in which he also had cartoons drawn to accompany the stories. This one story he entitled *Gamalomncinci* loosely translated to mean the *name of the little one* which I believe kindled my love for reading to this day. I do not recall what the story was about but it was very engaging and I stumbled on it by mistake as he usually hid it on top of the red kitchen cupboards at home. I also do not remember how I found his notes but I often climbed on a chair to retrieve and indulge in the unfolding story. I believed that he wasn't aware that I was following his story with each piece of writing he added whenever he could. However, he must have noticed that someone was infringing his privacy because one day I climbed to the usual spot and there was no sign of *Gamalomncinci*. I tried to ask him in our adult life not long ago but he just laughed off at my question and I never got a clear answer on the storybook or its fate. It seemed like it was his private personal matter which I couldn't let go and during the writing of this story, I decided to send an email to ask about it. His reply suggested that *Gamalomncinci* was his way of expressing his natural creative writing ability that unfortunately got suppressed under apartheid just like many talents that got scuppered under the previous governing regime.
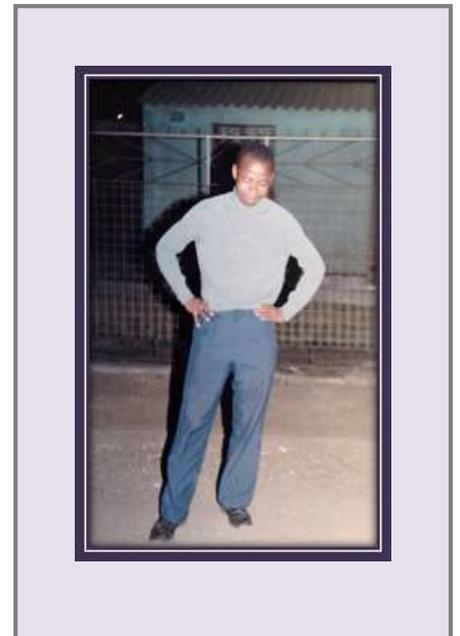
However, because I grew up mostly with my three older brothers, they exchanged with their friends novels we called *The James Hardly Chase* and I was always curious about what was in those novels till one day I managed to find one lying around at home, entitled *Lay her among the lilies.* It turned out to be a fictitious murder-thriller within a romantic plot and suddenly I was also hooked. At that stage my brothers didn't seem to mind that as soon as they put a book down, I would pick it up and read it, and so the habit caught on and became a hobby. Since my mother worked for white people as a domestic worker, she also usually brought home old newspapers and magazines mainly to help start the coal stove fire with.

Again, my brothers always managed to save the *Archie Comics* series and the *She Magazines* which we all managed to read before these became real fire-starters. It was also by sheer coincidence that when I got to Musi High School, I befriended one girl who lived in a neighbouring township, not too far from my home. We were quickly joined by another one, which led to us being labelled the *three stoogies,* a name I never had time to investigate for its meaning or significance. She was a natural devout reader and she quickly made me join the nearby Pimville Public Library where we went to apply for membership and we started loaning out books as often as we could. She had a habit to read and then compile summaries on all books she had read, a habit I emulated for as long as we were students at this school. Being brought to tears by novels such as *Now and forever* (Steel, 1978) became part of growing up by learning from fictitious accounts as well. Furthermore, my friend came from a better (by just a fraction) socio-economic background and was comparatively speaking very well-off in that there were just two of them as children in her family compared to mine that comprised of a wholesome of seven children. She was the eldest with a younger brother and I regarded her as highly intelligent because she performed very well in all her subjects. Being able to read a lot more and to know about the existence of libraries is a gift she gave me to this day because our friendship lessened after the 1976 uprisings as she went to boarding school much earlier than me. Our contact has been very random, rare and far apart in subsequent years. I also remember one occasion when my elder sister couldn't bring me to do a household chore which according to my knowledge was supposed to be done by my younger sister. For once I defied her, and took a book to hide behind while sitting on a straw-mat under the apricot tree in the front garden of our home.

In exasperation, my sister called me a *deviant*, a label that stuck with me since that time till today. However, I never had an opportunity to really ask her why she regarded me like that and I still wonder why at that impressionable age she found occasion to diagnose my personality, obviously applying her then nascent *social work* knowledge. I know that I continued to read the novel which ironically was hers, entitled *Passion's promise* (Steel, 1977). The labelling remained with me and held a negative connotation in my mind which gradually changed as I got to know myself better.

I matured to recognise my introverted personality as quite normal, especially after reading Laney's (2002) liberating representation of the introvert advantage in the world of extroverts as well as Gladwell's (2009) reverting description of outliers. Consistent with my sister's labelling, one other suitor labelled me *atypical* and in my childhood, neighbours used to refer to me as *umuntu ozicabangelayo*, loosely translated to refer to a person who walks around with a degree of self-importance. I have accepted that there must be something unusual about my personality although I am quite satisfied with my overall self and place in the universe. I was also very aware and conscious of this oddness when I decided to be an educator in a Soweto based high school which I intended to be an opportunity to reconnect with my roots and formulate a stronger African identity of myself. I realised that the privilege to have acquired a university education had potential to shape me differently to how I viewed myself as well as the role I intended to play in my community. In a way, I seemed to be running away from a class of privilege which I knew I didn't belong to in as far as my sociocultural and political identity are concerned. It is a decision I am happy and proud to have made as it heightened my sensitivity to the plight of my fellow Africans. It developed in me a strong sense of wanting to do more towards sharing what I regard as my purpose in my community and in society. The fact that I had that choice is something I relish with a sense of gratitude in that I feel I can traverse both the privileged and the underprivileged terrains of my society. If I wanted to, I believe I could easily have entered corporate SA and climbed a career ladder whereby the sky would have been the limit at least in monetary terms. That I now feel I can comfortably interact among highly successful corporate individuals as well as with the most downtrodden in my society, is a rare privilege which has enriched my sense of purpose towards the betterment of my country. I reconnect my role as an academic in the section below which I needed to preface with the reader-side of me in that it played a huge role in this regard.

4.7. The academic

My life-career phase as an academic attests to my belief that in life all things turn out the way they are destined to be. I never consciously planned a career as an academic but in retrospect, I realise how the Geography tutorials, librarian foundation, educator role and the avid reading hobby constellated to produce my love for academic work.

My academic career came about as I was finishing off my masters' degree studies. It strengthened my belief in the power of fate which, when understood Biblically, ties in with destiny whereby there is a definite beginning and a definite end, as much as there is an invisible and inseparable connectedness with nature within the universe (Mkhize, 2005, 2011, 2013a, 2013b). I stepped into this role in April 2002 and suddenly found myself working independently to regulate my work, hours, relationships and tone within which my day to day functions turned out. Given that the previous workplace was highly conflictual from the very beginning, I made a conscious decision to create harmony and avoid conflict as much as I could master, anywhere I may have found myself at work. Vista University had a centralised system for all operational tasks and management processes. There were only two of us in the Department of Industrial Psychology and I happened to be the most qualified (and older) which naturally placed me in a position of greater responsibility towards ensuring that all academic work went smoothly at the Soweto Campus [SWC]. I loved the freedom to design my lessons to the best of my knowledge and abilities within the given scope of work in my subject. The centralised design of the Vista University meant that my line-manager was in another province and we relied on telephone calls and emails to maintain daily contact whenever it became necessary. It provided me with an opportunity to be appointed a *sub-head* whereby I was the link for the department within the university structures.

Being a sub-head was just a position with no final decision-making powers regarding learning content, tests and examination opportunities. This minimal administrative demand enabled me to focus on the research component of my masters' degree programme which I completed in September 2002, and the qualification was officially conferred in April 2003. During this first year at Vista, it was smooth sailing and I enjoyed my role which was enhanced by the community-based feel of the SWC. It is a very small campus that was characterised by intimate collegial relationships, with heightened awareness of it being located in the township. I loved its quiet ambience and very beautifully kept gardens against a backdrop of a mountain which together with a tiny lake across the main road provide unique features of academic seclusion bequeathing it a very unique character. That peaceful atmosphere was nearly quashed when one day one of the young men in my third year students' class came to my office and implied in our discussion that I was misrepresenting myself.

In our conversation, he implied that I belonged in a different social class than the students although his perceptions of me could not be clearly explained to my full understanding. It did not worry me at all since I had learned very early in my career as an educator to be extra-sensitive about my conduct and self – representation especially among learners. With the benefit of hindsight, my understanding is that it could have been related to that the majority of students who attended at Vista were older and mostly disadvantaged. It was probably beyond their means to attend better resourced universities across the country because the fees were much higher than those charged at Vista. Therefore, to them I may have appeared as of the same age as most of them. Thus – a young black woman, having taken over lecturing duties from a long serving white male, allocated a third year group to start lecturing at – which may have created an impression of being better privileged perhaps than most of them. They didn't know that prior to my appointment I had been previously employed for over 10 years and had managed perhaps to dress myself decently and could also afford a car. Such material things are often associated with privilege and/or success hence they erroneously regarded me as their peer only differing because of the perceived privilege.

Furthermore, because I was the only black student in my masters coursework class of 13 students at RAU, I had consciously adopted a braided hairstyle. Lectures were often facilitated in Afrikaans and I had given up trying to have them facilitated in English. The braids the young man referred to were some kind of personal statement endorsing my blackness in a silent appeal about my struggle to follow discussions in Afrikaans. Nevertheless, the subtle protests were futile in that even when I participated in English, a fellow student would respond in Afrikaans which would then swing the discussions back to Afrikaans. Indeed, I do remember one lecturer actually saying that I will never get lectures in isiZulu when an intricate process was explained on how to develop and statistically validate a psychometric instrument. This was the pattern in all course work for the masters' studies. Lecture attendance was compulsory hence I later decided to bring reading material to class to revert to each time discussions were in Afrikaans.

I would occasionally lift up my head when discussions were in English which didn't last long till the session returned to the dominant language. On many days I would arrive early for evening classes, parked my car, reclined the seat and just cried in misery as I anticipated yet another three hour session of confinement but I persevered and relied on that most learning material was published in English and resolved to still do my best. I also felt that my presence in class represented black people which somehow obligated me to do well *for them* as well towards quashing stereotypes about our inferior position in society. I managed to achieve this secret goal as my marks were often among the best in that I could see and compare on our student-number-linked mark list that was regularly pinned on the notice board outside the lecture hall as feedback for performance in a particular module. Yet, now here was this young man alluding that I wore a braided hairstyle to disguise who I really was which seemed to suggest I was a *privileged elitist*. I don't think our very brief conversation managed to convince him to the contrary but I know that I didn't try hard at all when I realised that there were age/gender/race undertones questioning my position more than my social status. The conversation ended as soon as I was certain that the undertones were what the young man was actually questioning.

Another wakeup call was in the following term (three) and in time for the first test in the *research methods* module when I received an agitated delegation from the SRC in my office. They reported that students in my class were not ready for the test because they didn't understand my lectures and were afraid that they would fail the test that was scheduled to be written a few hours later that afternoon. Luckily Vista students' class-groups were quite small and I was able to maintain a regular attendance register. In my discussions with the delegation I explained that the reasons students were unable to understand the subject was due to their bunking of lectures which made it difficult for them to consult with me because I knew each and every one of them, including who was always in class and who was not. Therefore, they knew that I was not prepared to repeat lectures to individuals under the cover of *consulting for clarity* when in fact they were absent from class. The attendance register supported my claim and the SRC was unable to prove that students couldn't understand the work due to any poor lecturing ability on my part.

That incident helped in that it afforded me an opportunity to highlight that my blackness was not a license to deliver lessons less than my knowledge and how my academic conscience dictated to me. I emphasised that it definitely didn't mean that I would expect less effort from the students as doing so, would be failing myself, them, the field, the profession and the university as a whole. That firm assertion seemed to strike a positive cord among the delegation that eventually seemed to have shifted position to be on my side of the discussions. As class was due to start soon after that meeting, I invited the SRC to accompany me so that I could repeat what I said to them to the rest of the students in their presence, an offer they declined as they felt the students' grievances were baseless. I made a quick decision to email my line manager and explained the reasons for intending to postpone the test to the following week, citing the tense atmosphere between myself and the group. Although I didn't get an immediate response to that decision, I went ahead with it. When I got to class we deliberated further on the unwelcome delegation in my office which I believed had tempered with the relationship of trust I thought we had established together. I told them that I expected to be the first to know of their dissatisfaction where our work was concerned. I expressed my disappointment at their disruptive strategy which undermined the integrity with which I held my lecturing commitments. I concluded by indicating to them that I had decided to give them just one more week to prepare for the test and I highlighted that its content was not going to be determined by their level of preparedness and I left the lecture hall.

Again, the class attendance register indicated regulars and non-regulars in class hence I knew who exactly were deeply troubled by the impending test. Accordingly, I was not surprised when after leaving the lecture hall a few of them followed me to apologise and to say *it was not them* that instigated the SRC's intervention on the matter. For some reason, that incident played a huge role in asserting my authority at least on my subject and it earned me respect which resulted in improved relationships with both the students and the SRC. Since that time, I have never again had to deal with disgruntlement among students across campus since its small size meant nothing went by unnoticed by the grapevine. However, my utopia was short-lived in that this was about the same time as when the Higher Education Act of 1997 was due for implementation.

The Act of parliament instituted a merger between some higher learning institutions in SA as part of educational redress towards equity in education (Liccardo et al., 2015; Y. Waghid, 2015). Accordingly, Vista campuses across the country were designated for incorporation with nearby *privileged* universities. The Soweto and the East Rand campuses were to be incorporated with the RAU perhaps to neutralise the Afrikaans language dominance in a proposed merger with the Technikon Witwatersrand. The goal was to create a comprehensive institution of higher learning that was to offer degree and diploma qualifications. For me, the move was a great positive development towards resource sharing especially because our department was going to grow in terms of subjects and qualification offerings. Personnel too were going to increase from just the two staff members we were at Vista to a larger department with infusion of a broad range of skills and expertise. Moreover, I was particularly excited about the impending access to the RAU library because having been a post-graduate student in that institution meant that I knew first-hand the difference in comparison to the library at Vista on SWC. It meant that our students were going to have greater access to all these resources which proved some change from apartheid based access to resources and facilities. I heard voices of discontent about this progression in some quarters but in my mind, it was essential and I thought the benefits far outweighed the negatives, which I shared with the department's readership (Chawane, 2004).

The bitter-sweet part of the merger process was that as the sub-head in the department at the Vista University, I was required to lead representation of our academic interests during the incorporation with RAU. It essentially meant regular meetings with departmental representatives who, up till that time, had been my former lecturers and were heads and shoulders far above my academic standing at Vista. I imagined that the incorporation was easier on their side because they knew me well and knew what to expect in terms of work standards but on my side, it pushed up expectations and took me out of my comfort zone. It helped though that I think they had positive expectations of me which made all talks and negotiations a smooth transition even though I struggled a bit to make the psychological adjustment from being a former student to being a colleague. In a sense, it also helped me maintain a high quality of work for my own personal integrity and professional reputation.

Eventually, my workload increased drastically because the incorporation required that Vista students already in the pipeline were to be gradually phased out along with the programmes they were registered for. We jointly redesigned the new curriculum and new programmes were phased in simultaneously towards creating a new institution that later became the University of Johannesburg from January 2005. Lecturing responsibilities did not pose a huge demand as at that time I had acquired a firm understanding of the field and knew for sure that it was the field of my profession then onwards. However, the administrative workload was horrendous because we didn't have sufficient support to absorb the operational changes brought on by the merger. Although I had a degree of influence on most matters, I hated those that were budget related because they were not easily negotiable and for many years after the merger we begged for admin support staff which never happened. We got relief very late into the years in the form of student assistants. I think the reasoning was that SWC student numbers were fewer in comparison to those at the Auckland Park Campus (APK) which was an undeniable truth. However, I believed that it was an oversight in that preparing for, and delivering lectures and setting question papers took the same amount of time and energy whether one or 1000 student(s) would be in class. It was also contentious that the extent of student engagement was broader at APK than on SWC, which didn't make sense because in my opinion, having one student in class is more demanding than having 1000.

Also, having one student in class did not diminish officially scheduled contact time to one minute or expand it to 1000 minutes for 1000 students. The minimum regulated contact time remained the same all round. Gradually, very small and incremental changes were introduced which created a lot of work related stress while quality assurance on the academic side of my work remained a self-imposed obligation. I am not sure how it came about but one morning after a meeting at APK, where the larger department was located, one of the senior professors called me into the Head of Department's [HOD] office where it was mentioned that the Dean of the faculty had requested me to be the Faculty Coordinator as well on the SWC. Accompanying duties and the extent of responsibilities were not spelled out and it seemed like a non-negotiable proposition, to which I agreed. Since I had no aspirations toward a managerial career within the department or in life, I continued to focus more on my lecturing duties.

Still, the faculty coordinating role on SWC seemed to bring on additional tensions probably due to unspecified expectations from all sides. At least the Dean allowed me to hire an admin assistant, a move that enabled me to do what I thought needed to be done to also ensure that faculty matters went smoothly on campus. At times, the direct relationship with the faculty tended to confuse reporting lines for some in that my department, which was my station and from which I drew a substantial portion of my salary seemed to have its own unspecified expectations. I functioned under the faculty which required me to report directly to the dean on matters related to the four other departments on the SWC, including my own department. I cannot say for sure but I think this created perceptions of overstepping my boundaries since my department seemed to want me to liaise with them first which in my opinion was not really necessary as the overriding goal was to ensure smooth functioning of all departments under the faculty on SWC. It was just a role without any power over anyone, no final decision-making or any managerial status. It was a simple role that largely involved noting what needed the dean's attention and then letting him know for his intervention but others seemed to understand this differently. It is possible too that because of my natural aversion to authority I may have failed to understand the need to go through my department for matters requiring the dean's attention that emanated from a role through which the department itself invited me to assume.

I am reminded of a very high level meeting that was convened on SWC which the dean asked me to attend at which one of the department's representatives asked me *what I was doing there* in a very condescending tone. It was a baffling question to which I could only respond with a glance that suggested I wasn't going to dignify the question with an answer. The colleague seemed to understand the look very well and came during refreshments to apologise but I wasn't really interested and our relationship got ruined permanently. Given the conflict-riddled experiences in my previous workplace, which H. Meyer and Kirsten (2015) correctly describe as *psychological violence,* as well as my very conscious decision to avoid any fresh conflicts at work, it created lots of unstated dissatisfaction, benign indifference and restrained relations which then made the SWC feel like *home* and the APK like a *workplace*. I suppose that was a natural outcome which didn't come about intentionally as the sentiment was shared by most of other SWC based colleagues across work levels, departments and faculties.

However, my sense of it was that it created a gap in relations that seemed to also have racial undertones. For me, the gap meant being kept on my toes all the time in all that I did mainly to uphold my own personal integrity in all my engagements regardless of the area of work where it came from. During this transitional period I was highly preoccupied with efforts to find an organisation where I could follow an internship programme towards fulfilling my career goal to become a qualified-registered industrial psychologist. Several opportunities came about but were for fulltime internship candidates, which was not really open to me because of my personal circumstances at the time. Just before I terminated my services as a teacher, there was one offer which slipped through my fingers because the HPCSA declined my application on the grounds that my curriculum needed three honours-level-subjects (as earlier explained) for me to be considered a student psychologist. Needless to say, the opportunity lapsed in a strange twist of fate in that the offering organisation itself got involved in a shaky merger and takeover that rendered the opportunity abortive.

Still, soon after the (higher learning institutions) merger, I applied for one opportunity in a company that had four vacancies and I was so sure I would secure at least one of them when I got shortlisted. My optimism was short-lived when the director of the company phoned after final interviews and said that I was not appointed for any of the four spots. I received the crushing phone call just as I was preparing to attend our department's Christmas lunch and I was about to put on my well-chosen attire. After that phone call, I had no appetite for festivities or desire to socialise or to face my colleagues or my family. All I could do was to take two biographies I had bought earlier and decided to lock myself in one of the rooms in the house where I alternated mental states between sobbing and reading. I read Marley and Jones' (2005) book on the life and times of Bob Marley which resonated with the miserable state of my personal life at the time, while McGregor's (2005) on the life and times of Khabzela opened my eyes to the extents of the of HIV/AIDS scourge in my community. My other major preoccupation was on attempts to pursue PhD studies, a goal that also seemed impossible as captured within the summarised timelines in the Table below.

Summary of the PhD failed attempt

Year	Major activity and personal preoccupation	Typical feedback
2005	I read up a lot towards formulating the research focus area	A very good area of research | Move this part to this section and that part to this section | You write very well
2006	I clearly conceptualised and demarcated the area of interest for the study	Very good conceptualisation of the study area | Move this part to here and that part to this section
March 2007	I presented the proposal to panel	A very interesting area of research | Read more about how to conduct literature review | Consider concept analysis and grounded theory as methodology approaches | A study combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches is not mixed methods | Justify your claims | You write very well | Well done on your study progress thus far
April 2007 – August 2008	12 months Internship | Sat and passed PBP Board Exam | Registered with HPCSA as IP	N/A

Year	Major activity and personal preoccupation	Typical feedback
2009	I read up on grounded theory and concept analysis | Integrated grounded theory into proposed study's methodology | I clearly delineated mixed methodology approaches	Take out all grounded theory and use the Delphi Technique | Move this part to this section | Your work is very good
January – April 2010	I removed all grounded theory methodology | Read up on the Delphi Technique and integrated it into the study	No feedback

January – April 2010	Added content analysis for the qualitative phase of the study and kept the Delphi Technique for parts of the quantitative phase of the study	No feedback
May – June 2010	I decided to meet with the study leader and requested for feedback | Planned to register in July 2010	I give you five minutes in my office | Feedback will be ready by Monday | No feedback on Monday
July 2010	I attempted to escalate the matter for intervention	**From study leader's line manager:** It is between yourself and your study leader
September 2010	Sought objective opinion about the dynamic from a trusted friend	**From the trusted friend**: Nothing suggests a bad relationship | The good relationship does not seem to be serving your study's interests and career goal | Consider cutting your losses and moving on
October 2010	Weighed my options with a view to cutting my losses	No feedback
November 2010	I achieved psychological courage to cut my losses and moved on	Come to my office | Your proposal is very good | You write very well | You can register in the new year 2011

Needless to say, at the time a go-ahead was given to register, I had already taken mental strides to move on and I was engrossed in efforts to reconcile myself with the loss towards inner peace. Largely, I was still puzzled about why it was so difficult for me to put together an acceptable research proposal after almost five years of intense effort towards that goal. Complex factors that compounded my understanding were *firstly* that my lecturing role had expanded to include sitting on research panels where research proposals were presented, almost weekly and my input was always praised. I had gone through several proposals in this role and I thought I had acquired sufficient learning on what was required but perhaps I was wrong.

Secondly, one of the subjects I loved teaching was *research methods,* and it was one subject in which I had performed quite well in previous years. But again, the level of demand was greater at the PhD level compared to honours and masters levels. Perhaps I wasn't that well prepared after all. *Finally,* I had functioned as a reviewer of manuscripts submitted for possible publishing for the following accredited journals:

- o *SA Journal of Human Resources Management*
- o *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*
- o *SA Journal of Psychology*
- o *African Journal of Business Ethics*

As such, I had reviewed several manuscripts over the years which all made me think I had a grip on what would be required in a research proposal. Not being able to apply the knowledge acquired through all the prior learning confused me. The consistently positive feedback added to the confusion in that the intended destination seemed correct but the map with directions to get there seemed thoroughly scrambled. I agree fully with Backhouse, Ungadi and Cross (2015) that in SA, the PhD "generally follows the learning by doing model with a student working closely with a single supervisor…the relationship…becomes a key element in the learning experience" (p. 16) especially the "the most powerful… aspect" (Ibid, p. 19) of giving feedback. Notably, the study reported by Backhouse et al. (2015) accentuates sampled PhD students' negative supervision experiences around seven key themes[31] and interestingly, none of these capture mine although knowing that the career-debilitating experiences are a universal phenomenon was enlightening to some extent. I still do not know what was in the mix: was the research proposal truly inadequate or was it politics in academia that were at play? However, I felt that the statement *I give you five minutes in my office* trivialised my deep concerns for lack of progress. It left me feeling demeaned. My time and effort as well as my career needs seemed insignificant. Overall, the declined request for intervention posed a challenge I could rise to only by waking up to the urgent need to stand on my two feet.

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[31] These include: 1. Purpose of supervision; 2. Level of proposal complexity; 3. Modes of interaction; 4. Feedback and advice; 5. Requirements and expectations; 6. Academic writing; 7. Involvement in scholarly activities (Backhouse et al., 2015, pp. 24 – 25).

Consequently, from the time the *five minutes* lapsed onwards, I started to make peace with that the PhD, at least at that stage, was a near impossible endeavour. Even the final feedback to register at the beginning of 2011 came about after I had moved on psychologically. I had already resolved to start all over again one day in the future, with hope that it was going to be possible. Importantly, I realised that it had taken just over four years to be able to put together an acceptable research proposal. I honestly felt that if the inner peace I was yearning for included salvaging the study-leading relationship, then I should brace myself for four decades to complete the study itself. That option didn't seem intelligent at all and I chose to walk away from the study, its topic, the relationship and the supervising institution. Indeed, one of the participants in Backhouse et al.'s (2015) study "recounted that she had spent five years trying and gave up. She could not understand what her supervisor wanted from her" (p. 28). However, the authors support the view that "nationally (and internationally) there are concerns about the need to improve the quality of supervision" (Backhouse et al., 2015, p. 23).

Parallel to the foregoing experiences and through God's grace: in one seminar I attended in 2006 I made small talk with one delegate during a tea-break. What drew me to the delegate was that he was black and at that type of function black professionals attended in lesser numbers. I had also made it a habit to mingle with them during breaks because of the natural tendency for one to always seek those similar to oneself in social encounters. The break itself was very short but we managed to get to know each other and also stated our respective workplaces. Little did I know that those 15minutes would usher in an important era in my life-career, as I explain in the next section below.

4.8. The industrial psychologist

During the aforementioned encounter with the delegate, I shared my desire to become a registered industrial psychologist and the delegate's response was that he would connect with one at his workplace for exploration of an internship opportunity. We exchanged contact details and the following day I readied myself to make the phone call to the industrial psychologist, who casually invited me to a meeting to discuss the purpose of my call.

On the morning of the meeting I had packed all certified copies of qualifications as well as my curriculum vitae, just in case there was an opportunity somewhere he happened to know about. As a generally grumpy person in the mornings, I struggled to cheer myself up towards making a good impression during the meeting since it was set for 10:00. It didn't help that the organisation was an hour's drive away from my place which meant an even earlier start of the day so that I could be well prepared. Driving to the company was emotionally laboured due to past disappointments on other similar quests. At some point I decided to pull off the road to pray for some cheer that would carry me through whatever lay ahead. The prayer and the music from the car-radio seemed to help a bit but I also decided to turn up the volume on the radio which was playing an upbeat music tune that helped me to also loosen up a bit. My psychological state improved a lot and I was well pepped up when I arrived at the destination and I finally met with that organisation's industrial psychologist. We exchanged pleasantries and went on to settle in his office. I am not sure what impression of me he gathered but he asked me which category of psychology I was interested in and I indicated that it was industrial psychology. He then simply responded: *that was good* – mainly because that was his practice – category as well. I had expected a formal interview process but he just chatted casually about his background and then started explaining processes at his organisation using an organogram and a flipchart. This went on till lunch time through which I still anticipated the *real interview* moment which never happened.

Towards the end of the workday, I mentioned that I had brought along all relevant documents in case there was an opportunity for an internship since he had mentioned that he supervised a number of interns from time to time. He still casually took the carefully packed envelope and asked me when I would like to start with the internship. I couldn't believe what he had just said and I asked him to please clarify. He went on to explain that there was an opportunity which was up to me to decide as to when to commence with the internship. He gave me a copy of his organisation's internship programme and advised that I should examine, edit and align it with areas of my interest within the scope of his organisation's offerings and what was possible to be offered by my employer at the time. The turn of events was totally unexpected and I fervently studied the internship programme when I got home. I made notes on compulsory parts and emailed it back to him at my earliest convenience.

Thereafter, he compiled the letter of application to the Professional Board for Psychology [PBP], also stating that he will supervise the internship. That process ushered in a long wait for the proposed internship programme to be approved by the HPCSA. At that stage I was not in a position to leave my fulltime employment because of personal obligations but we both committed to a flexible yet fulltime internship that would be completed within 12 months as required by the HPCSA. I committed to the fulltime internship but I wasn't sure how I was going to manage the fulltime lecturing job along with additional responsibilities at work and at home. I discussed the predicament with my line manager at work and it seemed the flexible nature of lecturing duties along with all round support provided a possibility on condition that none of my work obligations suffered in the process. That meant I had to evaluate the full scale of demand and recommit with a clearer idea on how to balance the scales. Essentially, it was all up to me not to mess up on such a rare opportunity and completing the internship in record time as per application was a vital priority.

The HPCSA as a legal custodian in the field is known for very stringent measures which I knew about first hand including having to pay a penalty for the time lapse between completing the masters' degree and the time I submitted the application to commence with the internship. It didn't matter that the delays were not deliberate or intentional. In the interim, I travelled to Pretoria so often and on one occasion I waited for hours while the *council* had its board meeting where the fate of my application was among what was being discussed. It didn't help that the board met only four times a year and on that particular afternoon they were meeting for the third time and I desperately needed a positive go-ahead with the internship. When I finally got a response form the HPCSA after weeks of waiting, I learned that the board had declined my application due to the time lapse after completing the masters' degree studies. Also, it was during the time when there were talks to make the PhD a minimum entry qualification for one to pursue an internship towards becoming a psychologist. I must here give thanks to all colleagues and affiliated associations who objected to the PhD as a proposed minimum requirement. In my eyes it seemed to suggest destiny's indication that my goal was actually just a dream.

During the professionals' negotiations with the HPCSA, and in response to my declined application, I decided to write a detailed letter requesting condonation on the lapsed time. I begged for permission to start with the internship programme while expressing undisguised emotions accompanying frustrations due to circumstances that were not of my making. The declined application seemed intended to destroy the one opportunity I had waited so long for and it seemed to unfairly prohibit personal and professional development. I handed the condonation letter of request in person to the then chairperson of the board with who we were (by then) on first name terms due to many emails, telephone calls and personal visits to her office. I was lucky that she promised to put the matter in the next meeting's agenda, essentially the last board meeting of 2006. Nevertheless, the year ended without any response from the *council* and my hopes remained in balance where I thought things could still go either way but this time, I was prepared to challenge any arising obstacle that threatened to stand on my way.

When the new-year began in 2007 without any feedback, I decided to travel to Pretoria once again to enquire what the outcome to my condonation letter was. To my amazement the person who helped me mentioned that my application was approved by the board after lengthy deliberations based on the letter I had written. She advised me to proceed to one office where I could pay my fees to register as an *intern psychologist*. To my even greater amazement the official refused to accept *certified copies* of my qualifications, claiming that he could only register me upon presentation of originals which I didn't have with me. Pretoria is about an hour's drive from my place and I begged him not to leave work till I could return from home with the originals. I managed to return just before his knock-off time and he made his own copies and gave me a printout with which I could pay to be registered as an intern. What a struggle! What an exhilarating feeling I experienced as I drove in heavy traffic back home. I phoned and sent text messages of great relief and excitement to all who mattered while contemplating the prospect of my unfolding journey as an intern psychologist. I remember that it was still in March 2007 that I was crisscrossing town from work to pick up my child from school so that I could drop her off for extra lessons after submitting some urgent documents at the faculty offices in my role as faculty coordinator.

I was racing against time and wasn't sure whether to start at the office or to start with picking up my child. I decided to start with picking her up since I was also concerned about her safety as she was waiting outside school premises. I remember that the route I was taking was the shortest between all these points and I knew that there were two *stop-signs* I had to cross before turning right towards APK. I had successfully picked up my child along with two other neighbours' children and as teenagers would have it, all three of them cramped at the back seat of the car and happily chatted while nibbling on some snacks. When I approached the first stop-sign, my mind was preoccupied with how I would negotiate the next stop-sign since it was on a curve of the road and a bit tricky to cross. Nevertheless, I didn't make it to that next stop-sign as I failed to correctly gauge the distance of an oncoming car which started hooting and startled me. By the time I realised that I should drive on, the oncoming car had already crashed on the back passenger wheel of the driver's side of my car. At that point, all my carefully planned work and family responsibility plans came to a sudden halt, and the car's immobility forced me into a time of deep reflection on what I was really trying to achieve overall. It all seemed to have consumed me to a point where I nearly lost my life along with those of three innocent others.

In due consideration of all personal and work commitments, I had no choice but to put the PhD on hold and I prioritized the internship and my work. Somehow, my family bore the brunt of it all as they became the support structure I took for granted to remain steady and unyielding – no matter what. I used every available gap of time to push work and the internship, doing all I could to keep to all scheduled deadlines including quarterly reports which captured every minute of all internship activities to the best of my ability. I managed to complete the internship programme as scheduled and in May 2008 I applied to sit the board exam on the 4th June 2008. My organisational supervisor had thoroughly prepared me but I never really felt ready although I was determined to pass on first attempt since that feat qualified one some bragging rights. In my capacity as an academic, it felt compulsory for me to *get it right* as I couldn't imagine telling my students that I had failed or even sharing with my colleagues that I had failed. I brought to the exam all my skills and arsenals in effort to leave nothing to chance.

That much preparation seemed not enough as the first mishap was that I got lost on my way to the exam venue even though it was conducted at UJ which was my workplace. It helped though that I am always early for such important matters as I still managed to find the venue in time. The question paper itself was the longest I had ever seen and all plans to go over my answers as revision were nullified as I started to write my answers from the first minute till the invigilator told us to stop at the end of the scheduled three hours. I literally emptied my cranium in effort to give the exam the best ever effort I could master but Question 4, which was the last one of the exam, covered a section I had glossed over and never thought there would be enough to ask about. I couldn't answer it as well as I was required but I had in mind what was at stake and I decided to draw from all my knowledge reserves and work experience to just give it my best. I do not believe in blank spaces in an exam answer sheet, especially if the question is worth 20 marks out of a 100, and the mandatory pass mark is 70 and nothing less. Essentially, without adequate answers for Question 4 it meant that I was competing for marks out of 80 and any extra effort was worth more than I can explain.

I know that I hardly slept the night after the exam as I searched in my head for the minimum 70 pass mark which was the beginning of a really long one-month wait for the results. Then on the 7th July 2008 I happened to go to campus even though it was still during winter recess and I had a terrible sore throat. Still, and out of habit, I checked the emails first and got greeted by an email from the HPCSA which I was certain contained my exam results. The corridors on SWC were empty, with neither academic staff member nor a soul of any student in the vicinity. I steeled myself and clicked to open the email. My eyes raced up and down the email page looking for a *pass or fail*. I couldn't believe my eyes when I finally saw the *pass* as well as the final 71 marks I had obtained. With no one nearby to share the news with, I stormed out of my office only to notice the emptiness in the corridors again. I then went back to the office and grabbed my cell-phone to make calls to anyone I knew was holding their breath along with me in anticipation of the final outcome. All I could *scream* to people on the receiver's end was that: '*I am a psychologist'* in the highest possible pitched-voice in total disregard of my indisposed condition at the time. The screamed announcement of my results was followed by uncontrollable laughter and indescribable joy due to that successful result.

I wasted no time and sent out emails to all others to express sincere gratitude to everyone who walked that journey with me. I glowed a lot in the praises and congratulations which were so rewarding for that very particular achievement. I soon scheduled a day to go to the HPCSA to register as an industrial psychologist, a moment I seemed to have waited a lifetime for. However, I am not sure exactly why but the euphoria was quite short-lived in that for some reason I felt so dressed-up with nowhere to go. It could have been due to that my court appearance to get divorced was looming as it got finalised on 1st September 2008. After that, I decided to ease myself slowly back into the PhD study with intention to get into the full swing of things at the beginning of 2009, which I did albeit, with nothing to show for it in the end. From the beginning of 2011 I started working on setting up my private practice[32] and focused my energies on what lay ahead into the unknown. Anyone who has ever set a goal in mind would attest to how hard it is to just let go even in the face of defeat.

As such, I was also constantly preoccupied with thoughts on how else I could still pursue PhD studies, a transitional state in search of myself and my voice, as expressed by Divala (2014) and Mahope (2014) and also resonant with Madileng's (2014) "critical reflections" (pp. 2027 – 2040). The psychological retreat became a contemplative time to leave the full-time academic role. I arrived at a different kind of awareness where I took to heart some utterances at work like when one colleague (more or less same age as myself) referred to me as *a junior employee* even though I had a combined work experience of nearly 25 years at the time.

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[32] The private practice came to be known as *Bohlale People Assessment and Development Practitioners* appropriately named firstly because the word 'Bohlale' means 'wisdom' given that I achieved the practice very late in my life-career stage. Also, it is a name that celebrates my alma mater, the lower primary school where I started school at as a snotty five year old, named: *Hlakaniphani Lower Primary School*, located in the township of my birth in Dlamini, Soweto. 'Hlakaniphani' is a Zulu word seemingly imploring wisdom. Lastly, it captures my innate passion (which came through wisdom) to help in developing others towards their potential maximisation, a sentiment I penned down long before this kind of awareness (Chawane, 2005, p. 7).

I figured that the embedded meaning was that *being black meant junior* especially as the task I was required to perform was to make a phone call to someone perceived as very senior. It drew the same feeling whereby our black mothers and fathers were/are referred to as a *boy* or *girl* by colonialists and I resented the insinuation which I chose not to challenge but acknowledged as an extrinsic incentive to fly out of the nest. Overall, it seemed a better option in that "bullied employees may become less willing to work as hard or as efficiently as before the bullying commenced" (Meyer & Kirsten, 2015, p. 182), entailing workplace attitudes that contradicted my whole work ethic. The transitional state led to eventual resignation and a resolve to also explore further study opportunities while growing the private practice. Accordingly, from the beginning of 2012, I served the mandatory three months' notice of termination with a request to still facilitate the masters' level practical module entitled *industrial psychology in a developing economy* (Gama-Chawana, 2014). Since I had conceptualised, designed and facilitated the module within the broader industrial psychology programme from January 2009, I believed that it had made a significant contribution in shaping our exit level students' future professional lives (Chawane, 2009, pp. 7 – 9).

Essentially, the practice-based module is anchored on the peculiarities of South Africa as a developing economy and the challenges industrial psychologists should confront towards meeting the needs of such an economy given the field's bias towards developed economies. This role stretched my knowledge from which I drew to make the course informative, challenging, interesting, stimulating and broadly based. When I resigned, I regarded the module as still *young* and the students seemed to enjoy it and always gave encouraging

feedback on their experiences of it. Moreover, it seemed an opportunity to stretch our students out of their comfort zones and exposes them to the challenges confronting our country and developing economy.

As a practice based module, we explore what our field can offer to bring about tangible change particularly through partnerships with Small and Medium Enterprises as our project sites. It is always an interesting angle from which to examine our field from. I thus got retained on this role, which was and still is a huge blessing in that I can still pursue my love for academic work although on part time basis.

Furthermore and while fulltime, I was also deeply involved in the community engagement programme of the department at a Children's Home which I started in 2010 (Chawane, 2010, 2011). The project lost some momentum when I left and all involved were painfully impacted especially because it focused on vulnerable members of society who benefited a lot from our involvement as a department. We had worked very well, particularly with the high school learners at the Home whereby primary focus was on life skills needs and extensive career guidance interventions. I know though that the department continues supporting education related needs of the learners at the home. Also and through the module, we still collect donations (e.g. books, clothes, food items) and spend

some time at the home as a compulsory component of the module. The need is always greater but any effort is worthwhile as a contribution. Gradually, I refocused on the PhD dream and it evoked a wish to explore international opportunities but it was not practical largely due to family obligations.
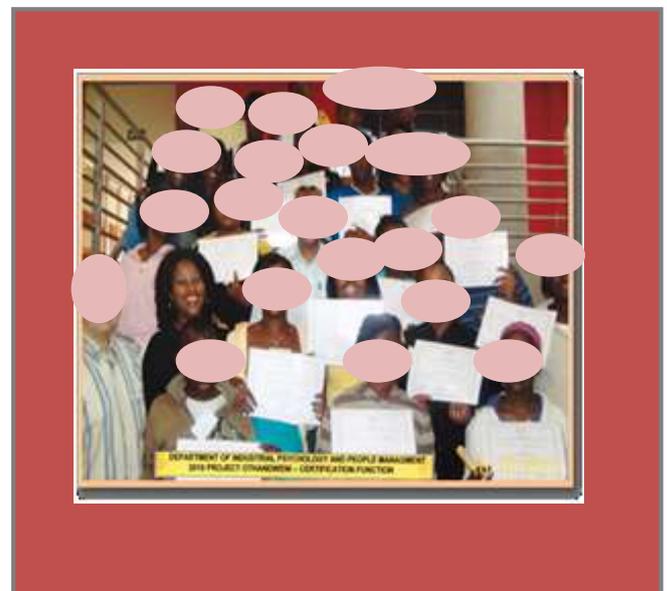
Somehow, I started reading widely in the area of *career management* as by then it was clear in my mind that something was amiss in my own life-career management processes. Early in 2012, I finally formulated the topic of the present study and I felt all was on track. I remember one colleague enquired about my general wellbeing after the resignation and I expressed both joy and relief to be finally focusing on developing myself as the responsibilities of my academic role had gotten too complex yet still very interesting which, in a way, diminished focus on my own career growth. Reading Struwig and Cilliers' (2012) article on the imperative to manage psychodynamic system boundaries for balancing life roles made me think all I needed to do was to just go forward as all seemed under control.

However, it was during that idyllic phase that *life happened* when in April 2012 my younger sister was involved in a car accident which miraculously left her with no visible injuries. That miracle was short-lived as she passed-on two weeks later. None of the rivers of tears I cried brought her back and it took me a while to regroup and reconnect with the intended study especially because part of my reasons for cutting down on fulltime work was to also spend quality time with my family. I was aware that I was not spending enough time with them over the years while building my career. I became rudely awakened to the fragility of life and its cruel lack of infinity at least for the loved ones to always be there. All the same, the diversion of focus and energies slowed me down a bit in formulating a full scale research proposal which I wanted to have ready by the end of 2012. Then one weekend I read a large advert on Masters and Doctoral programmes at the University of KwaZulu-Natal [UKZN] in a weekly newspaper. The advert suggested that study fees were deferred to remission which sounded like a scholarship offer to students wishing to study at these levels. I hesitated to make inquiries due to the distance between my location and the university's location in Durban. At that point, parenting obligations and the nascent private practice required careful consideration. Eventually, I resolved to make enquiries at UKZN and to my lovely surprise I got a response with very clear guidelines on what would be required and what I needed to do to apply for the remission. My proposal was quite advanced at that stage and it became a challenge to reduce it to an impressive four pages that was required as a concept-paper towards the proposed study.

At the beginning of 2013 the prospect of studying at UKZN became more and more attractive in that I reasoned firstly that it would stretch me outside my comfort zone in that it was still very local given available travelling infrastructure between Johannesburg and Durban. Also, the prospect of starting on an autoethnographic exposition provided so much more to look forward to. I later received an email from UKZN that the concept paper was accepted and that the university was then looking for a supervisor for the proposed study, which was just what I needed early in 2013. The supervisor was appointed and I started earnestly to work on refining and aligning the research proposal such that by April 2013 I felt it was ready for presentation. The date was set for 28 June 2013 for the proposal presentation and I made swift travel arrangements in that all seemed to be going according to plan. Just at that time, as fate would have it, once again, my elder sister was shot dead early Sunday morning after church in May 2013. I was devastated beyond description. The violence of her murder was hard to swallow and to lose the woman who was the reason I was able to reach the career heights I had been able to scale, is indescribable.

The loss of my younger sister was the worst experience of my life in recent times but to lose my elder sister, both of them in such a short space of time is a reality that settles very uneasily on my mind. Still, I had no choice but to proceed with the travel plans to present the research proposal. It helped a lot that at that stage we had already developed a warm relationship with the appointed supervisor. There was enough compassionate space to share my tragedies while working towards the presentation which went fairly well given the state of my psychological wellbeing. Upon returning home, family circumstances compelled me to put the study on hold to try and find my feet while ensuring some kind of balance especially in my late sisters' children. In an instant, I became *mother* to them amidst my own shattered self. It was an even greater awakening to reality when one of the children referred to me as *the matriarch* in the family, a station I had never imagined I would ever occupy in my life.

But then the labelling was consistent with reality in that I was now the eldest surviving female in the family and the station came with immense responsibilities I hope to document one day. It took me nearly six months to stabilise psychologically and be able to gear into the study once again. I probed my mind endlessly about the tragic circumstances of my sister's death and the related restlessness led me to Retief's (2011) dossier into the mind of a murderer. It was a very difficult time and reading about how others cope with similar tragedies offered some perspective on how to deal with my own.

I remember one afternoon I was working on the study and I just felt so emotionally drained that the best thing to do was to lay down for a while for much needed respite. I must have fallen into deep sleep as I later woke up in a hot sweat from dreaming about my elder sister. In that dream, she was holding my hand and waking me up in a gesture that suggested I shouldn't give up. I got startled but got up immediately and started working again on the study. I do not have full comprehension of how "izinyanya" manifest but they are described as "the recently deceased" (Mkhize, 2013a, p. 4-18). When I read about the phenomenon, I wondered if that was it: had my sister appeared in that dream as an *inyanya* – singular form for an inhabitant of the recently deceased? After the dream though, I got up being certain about that from that moment onwards I needed to just push and work harder than ever before. Still, the unanswered question settles uneasily in my mind as it touches on cultural beliefs which I haven't fully grasped yet even in my late years in life. It seemed as if Muncey (2005) was reassuring me in the resonant insight as follows:

> At this point of rebirth I no longer worry about the future, *I know what I am becoming and that is an ancestor*. The archetype of the ancestor is resolved to history, resolved to herself and the realization that life is not real until it has been told like a story (Muncey, 2005, p. 9, italics added for emphasis).

And so I persevered. As a highly spiritual person, I could not help it but concede that throughout the life-career journey, there has been and still there is a super power that far surpasses my understanding. It has led me thus far, and I can only regard it as *the hand of God* as I explained in the next section.

4.9. The hand of God

I start off by acknowledging how difficult it is to reconcile reality with matters of spirituality especially in an academic space that requires logical explanations, along with concrete and visible evidence. Earlier discussions of spirituality in the body of the thesis noted various descriptions from different perspectives including from an African cultural worldview espousing interconnectedness of the individual with the environment in its cosmic state (Mkhize, 2013a; 2013b). Again, this story attributed a lot of my life-career passageways to luck but I believe one is never lucky in the absence of a super-power in one's life. In an effort to concretise this belief and related to life-career experiences, I draw from the already recounted *first* incident whereby I got awarded two bursaries simultaneously in the first semester of my first year of study at UNIZUL. On the eve of the last day of my June exams in 1980, I found a letter under my room door, cancelling both bursaries as I wasn't allowed to hold two bursaries at the same time. I calmly read the letter and continued to prepare for the exam with the plan being to visit the students' advisor's office for clarity immediately after the next day's exam. I remember that it was raining a lot the next morning and I was wearing a navy-blue raincoat as I walked across the beautiful lawn to say good bye to a guy who had been like my brother since we discovered that we shared the Gama surname – mainly because it was my last day on campus till the next semester, or so I thought! After the exam I later found myself seating in great frustration on the very short queue to consult with the students' advisor. There had been an organised transport (taxi) to Johannesburg scheduled to leave early afternoon as I was also due to start my holiday work at Sales House the next morning. Any further delay was not just a normal delay because failing to catch the taxi had adverse consequences for my financial wellbeing should I lose the job. Then it was lunch time, still before I could meet with the student advisor, and at that time it was obvious that I would miss my transport.

After lunch, I finally made it into the students' advisor's office only for her to ask me for proof of both bursary awards, which was very tricky in that I had already packed most of my luggage at that stage. Some of it had already been taken home by a fellow student whose parents had come to fetch her a few days earlier. Still, I hurried back to my room hoping to quickly find the letters only to realise that I had lost the key to my room. With that misfortune, all I could do was to simply slide down against my locked room door into a foetal position and I just cried in great frustration. However, I soon realised that crying was not a solution as I needed to resolve the important bursary matter. Without doing that, my June results were going to be withheld and I wouldn't be able to submit them to the sponsors which would then greatly jeopardize my studies. I decided to go and ask for the duplicate key from the residence housemother and *she gave me hell* before giving me the duplicate. I luckily managed to find the bursary awarding letters among my treasured personal possessions.

I had planned to go to the nearby town of Empangeni to get the key duplicated for future use as well after meeting with the students' advisor. This expense was going to dent my very limited budget in that I wasn't going to travel by taxi back home anymore but I also needed to get the duplicate key. As I walked back to the students' advisor's office, I decided to be hawk-eyed and looked everywhere I had walked that day to see if I wouldn't find the key somehow. To my great astonishment, I saw the red tag I used as a key-holder, showing so prominently on the grass path I had walked on to my brother in the morning. Wow, it was such a great showing of God's hands for me and I have relived that moment so many times in my mind especially because my full bursary got restored and Sales House kept the job for me in spite of the inconvenience to then travel back home by train after solving that *big problem*. The significance of this incident is that I was totally by myself, facing a situation with multiple adverse implications that resulted in a make or break kind of a situation on so many fronts in my life-career as a first year student at varsity. But for some reason, God saved it all as I believe it was meant to be! The *second* incident happened midway of my third year first degree studies which required me to find a library where I could complete a mandatory two weeks of practical work training before commencement of the fourth and final year.

I had a male friend who was a classmate also from Soweto and he lived a walking distance from my parents' house. We used to help each other in all possible ways and I regarded him as my brother too due to our closeness. He managed to find space for us at the Sharpeville Community Library [SCL] and the librarians were willing to host us for the duration of the practical training. The distance from home in Dlamini to Sharpeville was not only too far but it was also going to be very costly given my meagre income as a student librarian at UNIZUL. We could only walk about two kilometres to the nearby Kliptown railway station to catch the 07:00 train to Vereeniging where we would then catch a bus to Sharpeville. The weekly train ticket was quite affordable but the bus trip from Vereeniging to Sharpeville was a huge financial challenge. At that stage of my student life I had become financially self-reliant and asking for money from my elder sister was very difficult even though I knew she would have gladly assisted as she had done all her life.

Then on this particular day I literally had enough bus fare to get to Sharpeville but I didn't know how I would come back to the Vereeniging railway station since the distance was not walkable, perhaps because I was not familiar with the route on foot in that township. However, when I got to the empty bus in the morning, I was spiritually led to choose a seat on which I miraculously found so much loose change that I just couldn't believe my eyes. I reasoned that it must have fallen out from the pockets of an earlier passenger because the bus was empty when I got into it. As soon as I had picked up the coins, the bus driver announced that we should change buses and get on another bus for reasons I didn't hear as I was caught up in the moment of my fortune. None of the library staff believed it when I told them how I got into a bus, picked up the much needed bus fare and then be told to move to another bus in the same instant. Also, the librarians had made it a habit from the day we started with the practical training to buy enough fatcakes for all of us as a lunch meal. On that particular day, I suddenly had enough money to contribute towards the lunch for everyone. Furthermore, and for some reason, my elder sister also gave me R10 after *work* when I got home that same day which was going to be enough to cover my bus fare till the end of the two weeks' practical. I somehow realised that she had discreetly known that my funds were soon to dry up and she quietly made a plan to come through for me even before I could ask.

Again, the significance of this incidence strengthened my belief that indeed, God is love[33] as indelibly inscribed in 1John 4:10 as well as in my mind and heart that "in this love, not that we loved God but that He loved us" (Maxwell, 2007, p. 1571). Hence, I have no other way to explain these two incidents which I believe are nothing but a showing of the hand of God along with many others which have to be shelved due to space limitation at this stage. That notwithstanding, I cannot escape the urge to really sum up this story by recollecting what seems to be at the core of it all, hence, I try to reflect on that in the next section.

4.10. "At the core of it all" (Kohl, Meela & Kohl, 2013, p. 116)

I could not have formulated it any better than the foregoing quotation to capture the essence of this last part whereby the lingering question could be: what exactly comprised the spine of this life-career journey as narrated thus far? *First* of it all, I know that God led my every move as I yielded to being a puppet on His strings, and just be obliging. Much later in life, I seemed to have my own life-career goals but ended up at different destinations than I had intended. *Secondly*, my late parents and family provided the crucible I needed to grow within while being securely preserved to remain grounded. My parents and siblings are the best gift God has ever given me, my parents for staying together in the face of hardships, to give us a home that was materially very impoverished and yet extremely rich in love. It provided me with an unforgettable life experience! Their sacrifices and resolve to hold the family together while eking out a living for all of us, without compromising on the set boundaries we desperately needed very early in our lives such that we all knew to toe the line even in their *absent-presence*[34].

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[33] If families had their own unique *family anthems*, at my home we were nurtured by the Scripture in 1Corinthians 13 (Maxwell, 2007, p. 1429), which became a unanimous decision to inscribe on our parents' memorial.

[34] Absent-presence captured my parents' daily presence while absent most of the time due to work commitments.

Thirdly, I am a firm believer in coaching and mentoring, something which Maodzwa-Taruvinga and Divala (2014) as well as Obers (2014) believe is cardinal in career success. Blustein (1994) also contends that mentoring is "another issue that may be examined fruitfully…in career development theories" (p. 144). It is related to the notion of embeddedness which the author describes as concomitant with the "broader social context that helps to constrain or enhance one's options while providing many of the cultural elements of one's identity" (Ibid). Nevertheless, it is evident in my story thus far that I hardly ever had that kind of privilege in my own life-career experiences. I don't remember anyone having a concerted effort towards ensuring that I succeeded in any venture I embarked on. One could argue that my elder sister coached and mentored me but that would not be true. We loved each other very deeply but she had a position of authority in my life which made it not easy at times for me to reach her. In retrospect, I feel that she was more of:

- a provider for all my needs than a sibling
- a parent than a sister
- a support structure than a nurturer
- a yardstick for my conduct that was character shaping, than a role model
- an enabler than a mentor or a coach

Her personal sacrifices instilled in me empathy, compassion, selflessness, love and a generous attitude. These qualities have shaped me into being highly protective of all those I hold dear in my heart and **I realise just how much she made me**. The only time she was instructive was with the career choice at UNIZUL. With the opportunity I now have to reflect, I know that her objection to my law career was due to her concern for me not to lose the only opportunity she could provide through her own sacrifices when she knew how far stretched and limited her resources were. She knew that I didn't possess sufficient insight to understand at the time, hence she just instructed me as she did. Now that I realise how much she loved and cared for me, she made the career choice for me also from the fear of losing me to politics and probably to life in exile. At the same time, I realise that when she thought I could, she seemed to be lighting a candle and let me find the way by myself. Even when I made mistakes later in life, she never interfered or corrected me.

I could tell that she had reservations about my marriage from the very beginning but she kept them to herself, probably out of deep respect for my decisions when she realised I had come of age. Even when it failed, she never said *I knew* because she always seemed to know what to say and when to say it. Yet in all these, she expected nothing from me in return which had only deepened a lifetime of my indebtedness to her. Sadly, she died too soon, before I could do anything meaningful for her, particularly after this belated realisation. It would have been so befitting to present her with a copy of this thesis. But then events of this life in this universe had, and always have their own destiny. Amazingly, the pictured bunny was her last birthday gift to me on 22 April 2013, just 34 days before she died. A true lasting impression of how much she loved me, and yes, all of us! She was everything to us.

Indeed, in one instance while searching for an internship opportunity, I requested a letter of recommendation from someone I believed had a keen interest in my progress a month prior to submitting the application information. After two weeks without any response, I decided to follow up on the request and she replied that my request was sent on short notice even though there was still a further two weeks before the closing date. I was baffled and very disappointed. Nevertheless, the opportunity slipped out of my hands largely because I had work commitments I could not postpone on the day an *assessment centre* was arranged for selection. Thus, the closest I have ever been to being mentored was with my internship supervisors I would refer to as *supervisor-he* and *supervisor-she*. From the very beginning, *supervisor-he* showed a broad interest in me as a person and as an intern. Our supervision schedules went far beyond the stipulated parameters and he understood my career needs and he coached me as much as he gave guidance on all of a person's domains: spiritually, emotionally and cognitively. He gave me unconditional support and responded patiently to my many questions related to the internship and my personal growth. It was a bonus that he was an Orlando Pirates fan which meant that sometimes we could also discuss the dismal or great performance of *our team*.

I remember one day on my way to a supervision meeting when I noticed that my car was overheating and I decided to drive to the nearest service station to get it checked. I noted that the brief detour was going to delay my arrival and I decided to phone him to indicate my predicament. His response was that of great concern and he asked if I needed him to drive over to help in checking how serious the car problem was but I assured him that all was under control and I would still come as soon as I could, which I did. Such an act of kindness and deep concern is what underscored mutual care and embodied *ubuntu* in all its dimensions, which has since gifted me with yet another brother in this universe. I am forever grateful for his presence in my life. He found a new job elsewhere halfway into the internship which did not come as a surprise as he had mentioned it right from the beginning that he was being head-hunted by many organisations and would leave anytime an irresistible offer came his way. The internship programme nearly fell through when *supervisor-he* eventually left the hosting organisation but at that stage, I had worked with a number of his colleagues, who, along with his prior planning, had arranged for the company to ensure the internship progressed without disruption.

I was very anxious at the change of guard but I shouldn't have been because *supervisor-she* stepped in with similar care and concern. We worked together very well and we both acknowledged in mutual gratitude, how it seemed like we had known each other much longer than we had. As a female supervisor, she explained things much deeper, and the relationship also went much deeper as the bond of trust allowed me a very safe learning space which I have treasured and will continue to do so for the rest of my life. Again, life blessed me with a *white sister*, thus showing that *ubuntu* is indeed an African value regardless of our racialisation by the apartheid forces. As such, we continue walking this life journey together. Thus, when I look around at the better opportunities seemingly available for the children who came a generation after me and often realise how little advantage some of them take of *this better life* I get to wonder as to what personal qualities *held me together* over the years to be where I am today in spite of the difficulties that one has had to endure along the way. The *fourth* aspect thus attempts to provide a glimpse into the stated inquisition, particularly that: key personal characteristics include the fortune to have developed insight into my personal circumstances very early in life, generally being a hard worker and striving for excellence in all I did.

I maintained a steady focus on my latent goals and I was patient towards realising them. I persevered and developed resilience in the process which kept me going especially during difficult phases of life. I am always mindful of that I am a priority only to myself and I strive for self-reliance as far as possible. I am an independent thinker and I fully grasp the consequences of following any decision I make. I have achieved a strong sense of self and personal worth which all came naturally as I grew up *alone in a crowd*. To some extent it helped being a middle child in that I realised very early that nothing was special about me which all seemed to position me at the mercy of the universe, allowing me to unfold much like a seed that sprouted to grow spontaneously from the ground in response to the sunshine, rains and winds both for nurturing and strengthening in equal desirable measures. Especially, as nature intended! In some instances, these qualities are often mistaken for conceit although I really love being a non-conformist in that it sets me free and has always led me to independence which has allowed me to live life according to the dictates of my heart and mind. I now realise the possibility that I may have been a *nightmarish subordinate* to those who have had the misfortune to *manage* me over the years since it seems the best way to have harnessed my talents, skills and abilities was to leave me alone.

I do not claim having succeeded all the time but I know that I backed up my self-management with commitment to excellence as an inherent requirement which has earned me the unfortunate label of a *perfectionist*. A labelling I do not mind at all if it means doing all I do very well. *Fifthly*, the intrinsic response to potential development was probably stunted by my poor decision-making ability in that I take too long to arrive at the *correct decision*. The upside of this is that I rarely regret any decision I make as it often is clearly calculated. I also think I matured quite early in my life although I still regard myself to have been a late bloomer as interest in boys emerged quite late which saved me from many misfortunes that often befall teenagers along the growth path. *Sixthly*, when I could afford it, buying music labels was my biggest extravagance which changed over the years to include intensified buying of books across a variety of subjects but lately biographies and autobiographies. As an example, I have learned a lot from these selected yet very diverse writings: Firstbrook, (2006) on the untold story of an African family in reference to the Obamas.

Juska (2004, 2007) on an elderly woman that decided to engage in late life adventures including on sexuality; Obama (2007) on his passionate political career; as well as Retief (2011) that gave me insight on how murderers and social offenders think. The selected few show how life-career stories weave-in a number of critical personal qualities almost similar to those I highlighted above. I also subscribe to newspapers and to various magazines to broaden scope of learning resources which enables me to determine my own *news hour* since scheduled television slots remove one's control over when one can watch and listen. *Seventhly,* it took me a while to figure out my real purpose in life which eventually crystallised after reading Monroe's (2011) book which describes "personal authority as the intrinsic gifts a person or thing possesses in order to fulfil the purpose for which that person or thing was placed on this earth" (p. 19). As an intrinsic quality, personal authority indicates that every individual "has the ability to fulfil his/her/…authority in the area, or the domain, of his/her…gifting" (Ibid).

Furthermore, Monroe (2011) identifies four fundamental principles for understanding authority among which is the principle of authenticity explained as one's full understanding of "what one was born to be" whereby one is "real, or authentic, while you are being who you were meant to be and doing what you were meant to do" (p. 20). The stated understanding forced me to purposefully reflect on what consisted of my personal domain, in the area of my personal authority whereby I had to discern a link between all the formal roles I have played thus far in my life-career experiences, i.e. librarian; career guidance counsellor; educator; academic and industrial psychologist. I came to understand myself as a people developer and a nurturer of human potential, which all constellate to pave what became my career path as a librarian (*for much needed information-skills base, for myself and those I have been engaging with over the years*), an educator (*for grounding me on the education needs of myself, my community and society*), an academic (*for the opportunity to stretch the minds of students at tertiary level*). The industrial psychologist role resonates well with having once functioned as a career guidance counsellor. It consolidates all prior roles in an effort to contribute (through individuals) to the development of SA's economy by improving workplace relations towards better productivity and competitiveness levels.

The effort embedded in being an industrial psychologist is geared towards alleviating what I captured (Gama-Chawana, 2013b) as the poverty trap emanating from the country's perpetual economic underperformance and human capital underutilisation. The outcome is what I regard (Chawane, 2005) as my personal and professionally sensitised profile that was earned from engaging people as individuals of worth, regardless of their station in life. Truly understanding the plight of the many students I have had the privilege to jointly pave my career path with and doing all I could to empower them with a sense of personal value. Consequently, it is Kohl et al.'s (2013) resonance with Monroe's (2011) conception of personal purpose that I also believe that "my purpose is to use that which I have been given as best as I can and live my best life possible" (p. 116).

4.11. The end

I noted Muncey's (2005) assertion in an earlier part that autoethnography embodies a celebration. In the end and thus to celebrate, I borrow first from Lira's (Kohl, et al., 2013, pp. 122 – 123) deeply resonant insight which belies the mere three decades of her existence in this life as follows:

> I am an African child, truly raised by this country. I want you to be proud as Africans. I'd like you to be proud when you look at LIRA: a daughter you raised. As I embark on a journey to develop my career even more internationally, I want to reach even further, still maintaining the pride and the uniqueness that is African in a world where other countries have made their mark. Believing that the average African child will see this and realise nothing is impossible, she or he too can make an impact on the world and be celebrated as an African. We as Africa need this: to carve our own space in the world, to tell our own story. To create our own legacy and our unique contribution to the world. These are dreams and ideals that I hold dear (Kohl, et al., 2013, pp. 122 – 123).

The foregoing excerpt resonates eloquently with Mbeki's (1996) poem: *I am an African* from which I also borrow as follows:

> Whatever the circumstances they have lived through and because of that experience, they are determined to define for themselves who they are and who they should be…All this I know and know to be true because I am an African! (Stanzas 36 & 30)

4.12. Concluding summary

The foregoing life-career story gained acceptability in the academic space due to postmodernism as an era in qualitative scholarly approaches which subsumes autoethnography as a process, a method and a product as in this story. It is also consistent with developments in the field of careers in that stories are acknowledged as significant components with which to define and explain constructivism that forms part of the third paradigm in the career field. Given that storying is recognised more within counselling relationships in the field, autoethnography enabled the researcher-researched approach as in this story. Cited authors' acknowledgements indicated that the best approach to such an exercise: was to start from the beginning which enabled a presentation of my origins whereby I highlighted my family background within a socioeconomic, cultural and political environment as the setting. The story traced my school life highlighting school performance in the absence of actively focused career development strategies from the formal education systems. It captured historical episodes which had potential to derail and destroy both life and career over and above the inherently threatening socioeconomic circumstances. It emerged that much needed relief came about with selfless intervention from my elder sister who is celebrated throughout the story as an epitome of personal sacrifice. She evidently embodied *ubuntu* as a vital value among Africans. Without this collectivistic orientation, this story would definitely not have emerged as I believe my life-career would have been a non-starter.

The story also captured various workplace experiences from when I was age 13 as a helper at a family friend's house who were learned and thus also became significant interveners in my family by lighting a candle which assisted a lot in carrying us through to better educational experiences. Further highlighted are my eventual career outcomes as a librarian, an educator, a career guidance counsellor, an academic within the field of industrial psychology: roles through which I enacted lived-career management experiences. A significant challenge for me is to continue on the path my sister carved with her sweat, and ensure the light is shared with many others I may be fortunate to work with in my family and in my community as well as in SA as a whole. The story concludes with celebrations in being an African, without which, again there would not have been a story to start with. The story's relevance was analysed in Chapter 4 and interpreted in Chapter 5 of the thesis.

Appendix E

Focus Group Interview Questions

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES:

SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Date: 07 March 2015

Participants:

Participant 2 | Participant 5 | Participant 10 | Participant 13 | Participant 15

Explanatory notes

o   Self-introduction of participants

What is a focus group interview?

It's a qualitative research data collection method

- Ideal for groups of six to ten
- Focuses group discussions on a specific topic
- All participants hold expert opinion
- Four to six questions: we have seven because one question is the reverse of the other
- Between one and three hours long and we are targeting to finish in two hours

- An audio-recorder will also be used to support written notes towards ensuring accuracy of captured utterances
- All notes and audio-recordings will be transcribed to textual data for use in compiling the thesis document

Focus Group Structure

Original research questions	Focus group questions
1. *What career management approaches can possibly be discerned from lived experiences of one inxile in South Africa as a developing economy?*	1. Is it important for individuals to know their strengths and weaknesses? Why? 2. What is your understanding of the concept 'career management'? 3. What personal qualities have you observed on my career management processes?
2. *What prevalent socio-economic, educational and political/historical complexities still persist and impact on individuals' career management processes in post-apartheid South Africa?*	4. Which socio-economic, educational and political factors would you say impact <u>negatively</u> on career management processes of South African individuals post-apartheid? 5. Which socio-economic, educational and political factors would you say impact <u>positively</u> on career management processes of South African individuals post-apartheid?
3. *What insights can possibly be discerned from lived experiences of South African inxiles towards enhancing career management theories in developing economies?*	6. Which individual characteristics have you observed (from older generation) that may have enabled their successful career management processes?
4. *What critical inputs can possibly be derived from career management experiences of South African young graduates and inxiles towards enrichment of the South African education system?*	7. Which individual characteristics (from the younger and older generations) do you think can be included in South Africa's career education system towards its improvement?

Thank you for your participation

Appendix F

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APPENDIX F –

PHASE 2 FINDINGS | THE WINNERS

Appendix F Introduction

It was mentioned in Chapter 3 and in Chapter 4 that data collection and data analysis were done in two phases covering autoethnographic data and participants' interview data whereby resulting findings are respectively captured as *Phase 1* and *Phase 2*. Thus, the present *Appendix F* accounts for *Phase 2 Findings* emanating from responses to the four research questions which were broken down into 23 sub-questions forming part of *Appendix A* as the guiding interview schedule for individual participants as well as *Appendix E* consisting of seven questions for facilitating the eventual one focus group session. The appendix is basically presented in self-explanatory Tables that enhance comprehension regarding each question asked as well as which participant responded, to eventually yield narrative threads from which utterances and thus meaning patterns emerged as major thematic domains captured as Table 4.7 in Chapter 4. Overall, all following Tables bear significance for interpretations, sense-making and discussions in Chapter 5 leading to the study's conclusions.

Appendix F.1 Phase 2 Findings

Seeing that the subject of inquiry centred on the phenomenon of career management which reviewed literature regarded a sparsely defined scholarly subject (Baruch & Peiperl, 2000; McIlveen, 2009), it seemed worthwhile to draw understandings of the phenomenon from participants as a strategy to also orientate findings according to each participant's understanding of the phenomenon. Thus, Appendix Table F.1 provides an overview on what each participant regarded as their understanding of the phenomenon which helped in sense-making of findings.

Appendix Table F.1a Group 1 **Family members' (FM)** understanding of the career management phenomenon

Participants	Understandings on the career management phenomenon
FM 8	"a process whereby to develop a career needs to be managed or controlled in order to see through or to see progress and the results in the end…if its not managed…free-flowing…like anything (else it) needs to be managed"

FM 9	"just means managing your career"

FM 10	"how an individual takes on the responsibility of their life in the sense of the decisions they make and what means they go to, to equip themselves to get a desired outcome…and its also a path which an individual will choose to take to reach that destination…so its how one reacts to their environment and what means one puts in place to reach a desired destination…its not something that you think of actively…its probably a passive thought…something that you live out on a daily basis…so in bringing emphasis…focusing…giving yourself time to think about…meditate…it sharpens that skill"

Participants	Understandings on the career management phenomenon
FM 10	Additional viewpoints from Focus Group participation

"a game plan for your life… not a three year thing…your entire life…what you will start with…what you will do to build on that…knowing from point to point… not necessarily a destination…sitting and focusing on something that you want…a desired outcome…getting all the tools you need to get there"

"there's the job and the passion aspect…both are intertwined…moving from job to job…it's a job…meeting the needs like paying the bills…career has many shades…many elements…have a job by the time you leave school till you die…another job moving up and down…or have a career moving up and down doing something you love…there's a passion aspect…where you want to be happy…all those parts form a career…every other thing is just a job" |

Appendix Table F.1b Group 2 **Recent graduates' (RG)** understanding of the career management phenomenon

Participants	Understandings on the career management phenomenon
RG 1	"Nelson Mandela said you are the master of your own destiny so you are responsible for your own career progression…how one acquires competency through education or through the number of work years experiences…through skills…keeping abreast with latest trends in my profession…attend conferences…choosing industries I work for"

Participants	Understandings on the career management phenomenon
RG 2	"means managing your career in terms of the job that you would want to do for a living for the whole…rest of your life…it's a career journey from one job to another…knowing what you are good at to optimise career" Additional viewpoints from Focus Group participation "career management is taking into account your strengths and weaknesses in order to take on the challenges…a chosen career path that you keep managing…different jobs that you will go through in order to get to your ultimate career…much like life because you will be doing it for the rest of your life…you may be an accountant at the starting point and want to be a photographer …you have retirement…(where you may then) be a photographer" "you can change industries…and change careers…you become a singer…that's a career in singing or in mining…those are different careers…then manage them"

Participants	Understandings on the career management phenomenon
RG 3	"it has to do with your planning in terms of your career…where you want to be, your goal, how you want to get there and the role you play while getting there…trying to reach wherever you want to…the way…you manage your career for you to get to where you want to be"

Appendix Table F.1c Group 3 **My Peers' (MP)** understanding of the career management phenomenon

Participants	Understandings on the career management phenomenon
MP 6	"its exactly to manage your career…you want to pursue something that must be inclusive of talent and abilities…from the angle that these are what I want to do and excel at…people must be passionate…passion must also be guided…not dictated to by external circumstances…making an impact and being successful…being able to bring out your individuality"

Participants	Understandings on the career management phenomenon
MP 12	"it's a commitment to what I believe to be my career…to give it 100 percent focus and to know that I' m the one who is responsible for this career in order to give it birth…I have to be there a 100 percent"

Appendix Table F.1d Group 4 **Self-proclaimed inxiles' (SPI)** understanding of the career management phenomenon

Participants	Understandings on the career management phenomenon
SPI 4	"understanding the choice of the career…being clear of what career you want to follow…what makes a person to choose this particular career…is it environmental influence…somebody has to nurture it…either teach that person so that the career he is following, is properly informed about it…the person has to be perpetually trained to maintain…there has to be sustainability…further in-service training…lifelong learning"
SPI 5	"knowing what you going into… having been guided unlike when you go into a career you are just thrown in…for whatever reasons…like most of us… you go into that career because it offers a bursary…I am a specific example because my sponsors wanted someone to do commerce…career management means you must do what you like…you can stay in that career if you are guided" Additional viewpoints from Focus Group participation "managing within an environment external and internal…ensuring that you reach the pinnacle you (perceive) as your career…(confronting) challenges and positioning yourself to manipulate yourself out of those challenges focusing on your career…(managing) your strengths and weaknesses"

SPI 5	"excelling where you are strong…push in your career…there must be passion…taking charge…as you move forward you may lose control…being in control of the circumstances…abiding by the (requirements) of your career to be successful…whether you change it every two years it doesn't matter…being in control"
SPI 11	"I took upon myself to attain my independence that I so desperately needed because before finding employment I thought I was going to attain my freedom through education but the system made it impossible to pursue my academic dream…I operated on instinct on my business requirements at that particular point in time…I (ensure) succession planning…so career development is something that one does…its not really looking at it from an academic point of view…you look at it from a practical point of view ensuring that there is sustainability in my business…because it is critical…I run my life…my business on the basis of tomorrow because…I have no full control over…I don't manage today…I am already here…I've already pre-planned for it the previous day…I get more sleepless nights when things are good…somewhere along the line there's got to really be a crisis and those are the things that I try to really manage…manage all these risks…at the end of the day there's growth…I do things for myself…love yourself (and) people around you will be very safe because I am not going to do anything stupid that is going to hurt me…people go into business for themselves and their families first"

Appendix Table F.1e **Additional focus group members**' **(AFGM)** understanding of the career management phenomenon

Participants	*Understandings on the career management phenomenon*
AFGM 13 (*Additional intergenerational participant*)	"there's an active or pro-active engagement…planning ahead…figuring out the life-plan…reactive aspect…what you actually do in the process when things don't go the way you want them…career management is about being pro-active about what you want to achieve in terms of your career goals …also being reactive in the actual process of the everyday experiences" "career is a technical term in that my life passions don't have to be focused on my career…a very specific path that might have a destination if that's the only thing I want to achieve…it might just be part of my life that coincides with my passions…I love books, reading and knowledge…all those things… working at the university is a great career move"

AFGM 13 (*Additional intergenerational participant)*	"that can be a career in a technical sense…the academic sense…but I can use that same knowledge in a different industry" "I guess career management is most like job management"

AFGM 14 (Additional youngest participant)	"not having your eggs in one bag…sorting out your life…your stepping stones…making sense to you…moving from primary, high school, varsity…a path one picks…managing that path of career"

According to foregoing explanation that resulted in Table Appendix F.1, and in view of that the construct of *self-awareness* is also regarded as fundamental in a number of theoretical formulations, particularly content theoretical frameworks, it became opportune to enquire from participants about this construct. As such, Appendix Table F.2 provides participants' observations of personal strengths and weaknesses which they thought had influenced their respective life-career processes that thus accentuated the role of the construct. Also captured are focus group participants' inferences relating to the role of self-awareness as a construct that may have influenced the researcher's career processes.

Appendix Table F.2a **Family members**' **(FM)** responses on aspects of self-awareness as a pertinent construct in career processes

Participants	Strengths Observed in me	Weaknesses Observed in me	Pertinent for career success - shared during Focus Group
FM 8	- Concern for others' well-being - Kind - Loving - Supportive - Knowledgeable - Forgiving	- Humanitarian (too much of it) - Straight-talker (can hurt others with good intentions) - Over-indulge others - Too generous	*Did not participate in focus group*

FM 9	- Consistency - Persistent - Spirituality	- Stubbornness - Too strict	*Did not participate in focus group*

Participants	Strengths *Observed in me*	Weaknesses *Observed in me*	*Pertinent for career success - shared during Focus Group*
FM 10	- Well-composed - Educated - Well-organised - Perfectionism - Driven - Resourceful Shared during focus group - a game planner (even to watch soapies and tennis) - knowing where to get resources for the game plan - knowing what she wants - didn't progress by chance… influenced the outcome through (all) circumstances - life happened but she still had plan A, B and C - was in control	- Decisive/rigidity	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "the most important years of a person are in childhood…being exposed to poverty and begging paralyses the child…they will grow up expecting things rather than giving things to the world" "so many people are not made for academic part of schooling…not excelling in that one thing put on a pedestal…maths and science…so much pressure to pass matric…there's so many dimensions to life" Critical input – enabling experience (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "matric is very important…but we reach it without knowing what we want…we can't even say no (when pressured)" Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "having the end in mind"

			"enlighten about actions and consequences…both positive and negative"
			<u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u>
			"we are taught that two plus two equals four but we also know that one plus three also equals four…explore different avenues… there are multiple possibilities"
			<u>Critical insight – ideas (career management theories)</u>
			"I don't fully agree with you (referring to *Participant 14's* concern on apartheid) even though we are in the same age group…we need to acknowledge the past in order to move forward wiser and better…its so easy to repeat the same mistakes even if its not a replica…similar situations can be avoided…we need to embrace all elements of the struggle…great life lessons came from that era…its effects cannot be overlooked…the state of the nation and its mind-set are a reflection of the debilitating past"
			"address the inequalities with an eye of understanding and having a teachable spirit to harness the right attitude towards being solution oriented…it will teach us about a humane trait of forgiveness…more importantly, humility and gratitude"

Appendix Table F.2b **Recent graduates' (RG)** responses on aspects of self-awareness as a pertinent construct in career processes

Participants	Strengths	Weaknesses	Pertinent for career success - shared during Focus Group
RG 1	- Lifelong learner - Maximizer[35] - Influencer - Achievement orientation	- Impatience	*Did not participate in focus group*

| RG 2 | - Strategic planner
- Interpersonal skills
- Need for more personal exploration

<u>Shared about me during focus group</u>

- passionate
- hard-working
- sacrificed a lot for career
- very disciplined | | <u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u>

"poverty…begging children's career development is already being derailed…correct that as there is still a chance for such children"

"maths is not bad…its basic…you can't put up a curtain without knowing its length or width or how many pins you need to hang it…its part of life-skills…financial management…that's why universities are rejecting some students… they cannot absorb everyone"

"passion, hard-work, achievement orientation, desire transformation (in self)"

"if you think you can do it, you probably can and will…don't give up…perseverance…self-efficacy" |

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[35] *Participant 1* described a maximiser as an individual who is specially talented and able to focus on strengths in a way that stimulates personal and group excellence. They are said to seek to transform something strong into something superb.

			Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system
			"at school you don't experience the effects of the past…you are protected but get to the world of work and you will feel it (in response to Participant 14's reference to an angry 'apartheid generation')… there are still privileges to white people and they are passing it to their children…youth must be treated equally…which doesn't happen out there in the real world…apartheid happened and can't be wished away" "the Apartheid Museum and Constitution Hill should be part of educational tours to educate the youth about the past…you can't just forget it…its part of memory…history"

Participants	Strengths	Weaknesses	Pertinent for career success - shared during Focus Group
RG 3	- Tolerance - Hard-worker - Persistent - Perseverance - Resilience - Approachable - Very patient - Very understanding	- Perfectionism - Presentation (shy) - Straight-talker	*Did not participate in focus group*

Appendix Table F.2c **My Peers' (MP)** responses on aspects of self-awareness as a pertinent construct in career processes

Participants	Strengths	Weaknesses	Pertinent for career success - shared during Focus Group
MP 6	- Purity of my thought about others - Truthfulness - Honesty - Sincerity - Openness - Not imposing myself	- Seeking approval from others - Seeing good in others	*Did not participate in focus group*
MP 12	- Hopeful - Persistent - Hard-working - Loving - Trusting - Embraced life	- Too trusting	*Did not participate in focus group*

Appendix Table F.2d **Self-proclaimed inxiles' (SPI)** responses on aspects of self-awareness as a pertinent construct in career processes

Participants	Strengths	Weaknesses	Pertinent for career success - shared during Focus Group
SPI 4	- Self-reliance	- Poor delegation - Inability to work with other people - Technological advances	*Did not participate in focus group*

Participants	Strengths	Weaknesses	Pertinent for career success - shared during Focus Group
SPI 5	- Education orientation - People orientation	- Minimal self-development	

	- Selflessness - Non-confrontational Shared about me during focus group - short to long term planning about career - worked to get required experience - improved your qualifications - sticking to the career you like - you prioritised - (overlooked) a lot of nice things - knew how to position yourself to be successful in your career - kept yourself up to date - you read a lot - draw strength from your spirituality - when you are down you read the Bible (ha ha ha)	- Shared about me during focus group - too perfectionistic	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "hard work, great discipline, spirituality, forging through all the hardships…professionalism…include other languages such as Portuguese, French, German to encourage business relations especially through entrepreneurship…good manners, respectfulness, selflessness…fighting for others (as exiles did to fight apartheid)…enough (personal) leadership qualities to challenge the status quo…listening empathetically to others…taking criticism constructively…life skills" "motivation is lacking because of graduates roaming the streets…it increases drop-out rate… discouraging to see products of our education not being used" "South Africans are children of slavery…we are still the working class even though we have big cars…move from that to being employers through entrepreneurship as a mind change imperative…dream big…beyond just a job…stop coming to work at 08:00 and leave at 16:00…take share ownership…be envious of a big slice…as an example, Zimbabweans don't come looking for a job…they say I have this skill…how can I use it at your company"

			<u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u> "being brainwashed by apartheid…and being robbed of self-confidence…the belief that we can't achieve anything…can't face challenges…we feel useless…lots of stereotyping…apartheid was the mother of all evil…(reverse that)" "single parenthood…promotion of women takes men out of work…it's a serious problem…they roam the streets…in the Northern Suburbs of Johannesburg…groups of men just sit by corners…suddenly you have rape incidents…the elderly and children are being raped…because many men are out of work…economy is not growing…high crime rate…grab and smash due to hunger" "psychology (as a field) needs to come in…any field of it that will help… we underestimate the damage caused by apartheid and the struggle…many exiles came home unexpectedly and unprepared…my cousin was in exile…she knows nothing…she comes to work (at my company) and at 15:00 she just leaves without notifying me…I then realised that her life orientation especially about work needs to be psychologically reoriented…treat others as you wish to be treated"

			Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "regain our humanity… poverty did not teach us to kill and steal…it teaches you humility" "protect our environment…what are we leaving for future generations"
SPI 11	- Self-belief - Responsible for own actions - Realist	- Drawing from others' strengths	*Did not participate in focus group*

Appendix Table F.2e **Additional focus group members**' (**AFGM)** responses on aspects of self-awareness as a pertinent construct in career processes

Participants	*Strengths*	*Weaknesses*	*Pertinent for career success - shared during Focus Group*
AFGM 13 (*Additional intergenerational participant*)	- I am a strategist - I am a philosopher at heart Shared about me during focus group - sense of commitment to yourself and to (helping) others - able to draw from people around you (as resources) - desired broader and personal transformation	- I am a perfectionistic too	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "dispassionate teachers…they don't care about careers… politicians care about what will benefit themselves…few role-models (correct that)…opportunities are there…some people take them in a negative way…faking qualifications" Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "not knowing what to study post-matric is not a South African problem only"

	- persistence and passion - sacrificed - stumbled but still pushed through - you know yourself enough that you will do whatever it takes to get what you want		<u>Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system</u> Canada still has a problem with what is good education…some of my students can't even write but have finished high school…it's a basic human problem…design an education system that develops the whole person" <u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u> "putting a lot of money into training good teachers…for after-school programmes…creating flexible opportunities for life skills development…even the USA is asking why the focus on maths and science…Canada as well" <u>Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system</u> "unemployed graduates is a global phenomenon…academic work requires a PhD…only in SA do I notice masters level academic workers…abroad…they don't even look at a masters graduate because there are so many PhDs waiting in line"

			Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "being focused…knowing what you want…working tirelessly on a goal…sense of research about **everything** you aim for…fearlessness/boldness…fail and stand up again…be loyal and flexible" Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "encourage self-awareness, self-consciousness…give yourself a chance to reflect on who you are…what you are about (as a person)…sense of responsibility for yourself…selflessness so that we don't always start afresh every time" "enforce a sense of wealth creation / saving money…determination… drive / passion/idea that (a goal) is possible…remove blinkers and established conditioning to viewing life and careers…look beyond… outside the blinkers…gasp and get some fresh air" "memory is historical (in response to *Participant 14* about doing away with apartheid box)…it can also be very short…next 20 years there's a possibility that you won't know/hear anything about apartheid…we need a good balance:

			"we need to know where we come from…amnesia is not the best form of healing" Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "strike a balance between honouring the past without being stuck in a trap…that's the hardest thing for us to do…that same anger affected your grandfather, parents, uncles, aunts" "you have a responsibility to ask them why they are angry…then you will understand…I find myself in the midpoint of the two generations…apartheid is not so much my issue but it affects me and I care about it…I carry it with a different attitude…I can't run away and say its not my problem"

Participants	Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)	Pertinent for career success - shared during Focus Group
AFGM 14 (*Additional youngest participant*)	Shared about me during focus group - time management - planning - goal-setting - able to reshuffle your schedule and attend to whatever needs done - focused on what you want		Critical insight – ideas (career management theories) "sometimes it's the individual himself not pursuing their goals…there are people who are currently overcoming all social ills…at times its just the person standing on his way of career management"

			Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system
	- figured pieces of the puzzle together making the bigger picture		"education department cares about students when they are in matric…focus more when the child is still at primary phase and build on the 11 years preceding matric…there's technical subjects too"
			Critical input – individual qualities (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system)
			"persistence, passion…consistency"
			Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system
			"one plus one does not always equal two…or two plus two equals four…it can be equal 44…its ok…its your interpretation of whatever you are doing"
			"encourage self-exploration…get in touch with who you are…what you want to become…grow your inner being…let the inner child grow with you…don't think outside the box…throw away the box altogether"
			"stop linking/blaming everything on apartheid…lets rectify what happened and move on to the future…teach learners to move away from blaming other people…they must look into themselves"

				Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system
				"we were raised by an angry generation…they implanted that on us…we are now carrying something we don't know about…we didn't live through it (apartheid)"
				"give us a chance to start on a new slate…something fresh to show that this is the rainbow nation…democracy"
				Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system
				"opportunities that were not there are here now…let's stop dusting the box of apartheid and keeping it close to our hearts…let it go"
				"I hear you…(in view of others' responses to her concern about apartheid)…point is made and point is taken…disregard crime, poverty …corruption…sucking education and go for what you want…claim your individuality no matter what"

Furthermore and in order to authenticate inferences, I extracted narrative threads to derive utterances that yielded findings. I then compiled Appendix Table F.3a to Appendix Table F.5d$_4$ as guided by the conceptual framework presented in Table 4.1. Therefore, I structured separate Tables according to each research question to capture narrative threads pertaining to each group of participants as follows:

- o Appendix Table F.3a: detailing findings relating to the researcher's career management approaches as a South African inxile and the subject of focus
- o Appendix Table F.3b$_1$; Appendix Table F.3b$_2$; Appendix Table F.3b$_3$ and Appendix Table F.3b$_4$: capturing findings relating to prevalent socio-economic, educational and political/historical complexities persistently impacting on individuals' career management processes in post-apartheid South Africa
- o Appendix Table F.4c$_1$; Appendix Table F.4c$_2$; Appendix Table F.4c$_3$ and Appendix Table F.4c$_4$: capturing findings relating to discernible insights from lived-career experiences of South African inxiles towards enhancing career management theories in developing economies, as well as
- o Appendix Table F.5d$_1$; Appendix Table F.5d$_2$; Appendix Table F.5d$_3$ and Appendix Table F.5d$_4$: capturing findings relating to critical inputs derivable from career management experiences of South African young graduates and inxiles towards enrichment of the South African career education system

Appendix Table F.3a **Family members' (FM)** responses relating to career management approaches as discernible from lived experiences of one inxile in South Africa as a developing economy

Group 1 Participants:	Narrative vignettes
FM Participant 8	<u>Intra-personal systems</u> <u>Personality</u> "you are very kind, loving, supportive, knowledgeable… a sort of a humanitarian" "you are very straightforward…you don't think twice how a person would feel…your intentions…intend good…come out as a harsh person" "you over indulge people at your own expense…too generous…you don't know where to stop…you are too forgiving" "you take your career very seriously and do not take short cuts" "you want the authenticity of your career to be as pure as possible" "you want to be as genuine as possible in what you are doing" "you sacrificed a lot…took risks" "you are a focused type of a person…you don't want to let external things interfere with your goals"

	"you've been consistent…you've been determined"
	"you are a go-getter…you push…you don't quit easily…you are a visionary type of a person…you've got a vision in terms of what you want"
	"those things are factors that may have propelled you towards maintaining or…developing your career"
	"you see things as they are and you follow your heart"
	Environmental/Societal System Historical trends
	"not being a political person…politically you are very critical…you are impartial…you don't discriminate"
	"you have been exposed to the country as far as possible…you know the ins and outs of the happenings…you will have those limitations…you won't compare with somebody who has been in other places"
FM Participant 9	Intra-personal systems Personality
	"your consistency…when you pursue something you don't give up"
	"you make other people feel good…you kind of make a difference"
	"an element of stubbornness…you disagree with other people's opinions"
	"you are too strict"
	"your positive mind always kept you going"
	Intra-personal systems Spirituality
	"your religious beliefs are very strong"
	Social system Workplace
	"you were a librarian…you switched into teaching"
	"you became a teacher, a parent as well as their friend…you always cared to help wherever you can"
	Environmental/Societal System Historical trends
	"you became aware that education is the only weapon…you need to free yourself"
	"you as an inxile had to do the rest by yourself whereas they relied on their name and where they came from to succeed in life"

FM Participant 10	<u>Intra-personal systems</u> <u>Personality</u> <u>Recursiveness</u> "you are well composed, educated…organised…strive for perfection…have no room for mistakes…everything is bound to have a positive outcome" "you are driven on doing things 100 percent…there's no room for failure" "you are resourceful…you will not be defeated by a situation" "being decisive about something…gives you a sense of direction…but if you focus too much on it you miss other things that could help give the same outcome with less effort and strain" "throughout life there has been personal challenges that you faced which wear (down) on a person…you still needed to go down, regroup and then regenerate…things…that hindered your career management" <u>Social system</u> <u>Workplace</u> <u>Recursiveness</u> "you worked around the clock, from work then straight to school and studying and always being on your books" "setting goals for yourself…equip yourself with knowledge by going to school…associating yourself with people in similar profession to get a holistic understanding of the profession" <u>Social system</u> <u>Family</u> "to study what she (sister) felt was best for you which was a detour…it also helped build the individual that you are…being able to butter your bread, getting the bread and then getting your own butter" "what you said about your elder sister…that you studied at university based on what she thought would have been best for you could have disturbed your plan…altered, enhanced, changed the way you view things" "came from a background…parents that had to work three or four jobs just to keep a household running" <u>Social system</u> <u>Education institutions</u> "going to an Afrikaner University as an African and as a black person, it must have posed a few obstacles…transitioning and adapting and studying in an environment that is different…could serve as an obstacle to your career management"

	"to want something different and more for yourself…understanding that the only way to do that is through education…making a commitment to yourself to go to school and make the most of it"

Appendix Table F.3b₁ **Family members' (FM)** responses relating to prevalent socio-economic, educational and political/historical complexities regarded as still persistent and impact on individuals' career management processes in post-apartheid South Africa

Group 1 Participants:	*Narrative vignettes*
FM Participant 8	Social system Community groups "if some sponsors didn't pay" Social system Spirituality "looking at your background…ubuntu…under the influence of a Christian type of religion in the family" Complexity at an educational level Social system Family Environmental/Societal System Socioeconomic status Change over time "the values from your parents…prepared…contributed…towards you fulfilling or managing your career…education is key…it needs emphasis…looked at seriously to advance the country…poverty…is a daily experience…even children at school…get feeding schemes because at home there is no food" "a child may be good at school without support from family" "if somebody cannot access education through to varsity… there are FET[36] colleges…they are a buzz word…used as an alternative to acquire education, skills" "children today are not channelled properly… (on) careers they are choosing… "not suitable for them…find themselves wrongly placed career-wise" "person busy studying for something but the passion is not there" "a lot of potential is lost through lack of funding…lots of individuals cannot access higher education…or gain skills because of lack of funds"

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[36] Further Education and Training colleges.

Complexity at societal level

"unemployment…could be a blow in the development of individuals' careers"

"there's a division between the haves and the have-nots"

Developing economy   Environmental/Societal System   historical trends

"to advance you need partners…favours from certain associates…you need to know someone"

"there's a term…whereby family members can pull family members to put him into a job structure…nepotism…the political affiliation…is very evident"

"you need to align yourself with that party…it impedes the development of a country or of an individual because…only those who have access to those favours…if you are unknown then nobody is going to look at you"

"nepotism impedes the development…of one's career…same development of the country as a whole"

"corruption…mismanagement of funds...by leadership in the country"

"people who went into exile…had the feeling of entitlement…all the juicy things in life or positions are given to them…they are preferred compared to…inxiles"

"if…you haven't been in exile during the struggle you are not regarded as having participated in any manner"

"eliminate corruption, nepotism…leadership of the country can wake up and realise that they are not doing any good in political terms…they create a situation…we are now uncertain…whether the country is going forward or what"

Complexity at personal level

"to advance in a particular career…you can do voluntary work…while trying to find your feet"

Knowledge of the world of work

"NYDA[37]…the youth may be able to access funds to further or progress small businesses"

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[37] The National Youth Development Agency.

	Developing economy "resources like scholarships, bursaries and sponsorships…for people who are prepared…to use those privileges…when a particular child or individual shows potential for himself or for the country…there are those opportunities" "those are positive things I see happening at the moment out there" "there's political fights and everything is around politics" "basic things contribute to realignment of the way forward with regards to this developing economy"
FM Participant 9	Complexity at a familial level Environmental/Societal System socioeconomic status Chance "if you were not very strong, your career would have been a definite non-starter considering the background that we come from…we come from a poor family" "if you did not want to pursue your education it would have been fine…nobody would have blamed you…people would have understood that there was no money to push you further" "lack of funds…could have had a negative impact to pursuing your career" Social system Family "in the family we had a strong leader in a sister…you always looked up to her for guidance" "we had a good role model…to this day…she never let us down…you wouldn't be where you are had it not been for her" "the parents we had pushed us" Complexity at an educational level "high school exposed (us) to politics…organisations like SASO[38] and black consciousness"

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[38] South African Students Organisation.

<u>Developing economy</u>

"people have begun to doubt the aims of the present government"

"there are good…NGOs…helping people"

"there are people who have decided that if they don't do things for themselves, things will not happen for them…have decided that working hard is the only way to success"

"there are those government sponsored…related bursary schemes…the NSFAS[39]…the ANC related…NYDA and there are families who acknowledge that they benefit from social development…that tries to improve policy that advances careers"

<u>Complexity at societal level</u>

"people believe that to succeed in life you have to know somebody somewhere"

"people at high positions are hired without qualifications"

"people do not see opportunities…people don't read…they want to be spoon-fed and rely on others' opinions"

<u>Environmental/Societal System</u>   <u>Historical trends</u>

"you saw it all from the beginning to where we are today…from apartheid to the new dispensation"

"you have been the victim of everything that happened…it was difficult for you to do"

"you did not see that you are deprived from seeing the world as a whole"

"people in the country…always believe that elsewhere in the world life is just a bed of roses, its nice"

<u>Complexity at a global level</u>

"the influx of foreigners into the country…how does it impact on us…are they adding value to the socio-economy of our country…are they here to take away what we have…I don't know whether the country benefits from them"

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[39] National Students Financial Aid Scheme.

FM Participant 10	<u>Complexity at an educational level</u> <u>Complexity at a familial level</u> <u>Chance</u> "losing two years of your schooling" "you come from a family that wasn't well-off…so you couldn't look out just for yourself" "given the bare minimum education so that they remain inferior to a certain group of people…your parents…couldn't get a decent education…seeing how that impacted their lives…and your lives…decided to take that…and use it as ammunition…as fuel to your fire" <u>Complexity at an educational level</u> <u>Complexity at societal level</u> "look at different schools…you can see the type of support-structures that certain schools offer to children from a young age and the pool of knowledge that certain individuals are exposed to…there's lack of resources" "other schools only start discussing career choices and career development at high school…a child needs to be cultivated from the beginning… that's what is lacking…the responsibility is passed on to the next level…in between the child is not getting the necessary tools to know themselves better…to know what's waiting out there…at school…you are told that if you think you are a big fish in a small pond you'll realise that you are actually a small fish in a big sea and that doesn't help to build the child" <u>Environmental/Societal System</u> <u>Historical trends</u> "the whole mind-set of…the apartheid era was to suppress black people…to manipulate them using the most powerful weapon which is their minds" <u>Intra-personal systems</u> <u>Personality</u> <u>Recursiveness</u> "you hungered for more knowledge…and ways to better yourself and the situation that you were in kept you grounded and focused on what you wanted…it reminded you why you were doing it" <u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u> "its not urgent…there's no sense of urgency in terms of career management…its emphasised that education is important but then the bigger picture and the end in mind is not kept…you need to develop skills in a person…how to be industrious, be entrepreneurial…those things are neglected…there's just focus on education in itself…in a box and not in relation to everything else"

Critical insight – ideas (career management theories)   Change over time

"being exposed to positive role models could propel an individual and make them want more out of life than the mediocrity that most people settle for…there's more mentors and role models that different people can identify with…successful people are not one type of person…there's more of that evident"

Complexity at personal level

"latter day South Africans have a sense of entitlement feeling like something rightfully belongs to them because of injustices that happened to people during apartheid…there's a sense of expecting things to be done for you…unlike the same drive and…passion that a person in the apartheid time had…we are more lazy…laid back…want something to be given to you"

Knowledge of the world of work   Change over time

"there's more knowledge available to people now…a person knows that a child needs to be taken from as low as crèche and developed from that point as opposed to focusing on matric or high school…there's better understanding of the cycle that a person needs to go through and putting channels in place to ensure that a desired outcome is reached…parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's lives…there's more options than just being a doctor or lawyer…there's a broader scope"

Environmental/Societal System   Historical trends

"the approach would have been…inxiles are more fight as opposed to flight"

"the principle is going to school and working towards something that is still the same…its the way one chose to react towards that situation…others chose to fight others chose to flight…the principle of career management remains the same"

"(inxiles have) boasting rights…bragging rights…in being able to stick through something…it says a lot about a person's character and about their drive"

"there were fewer opportunities and more opposing factors as opposed to being in exile…there would be more support structure in exile as opposed to inxile"

	"as an inxile…your neighbour is aspiring for marriage to get out of a situation…those type of things you wake up to…are your reality…it makes it hard…in exile…it is encouraged for you to wake up and go to school and want to be something of yourselves" Social system Family "being inxile you were exposed…you were at home…able to draw from that…as opposed to being in exile where things are probably different in terms of the way you will see the world"

Appendix Table F.3b₂ **Recent graduates' (RG)** responses relating to prevalent socio-economic, educational and political/historical complexities regarded as still persistent and impact on individuals' career management processes in post-apartheid South Africa

Group 2 Participants:	*Narrative vignettes*
RG Participant 1	Social system Education institutions Complexity at an educational level "it (Vista University) was a previously disadvantaged institution…the number of strikes that took place…talks to close the university…rumours that the degree I was going to acquire was inferior" "to be recognised by private corporates in Africa you still had to go and upgrade that degree in the likes of Wits and RAU at the time" Complexity at an educational level Complexity at a familial level Self-management Socioeconomic status "I was raised by a single mother…doing second year my mother got retrenched…if I did not put an enabling environment to become a student assistant…able to pay university tuition fees I wouldn't have acquired my degree…I would have been a drop out"

Social system   Workplace   Environmental/Societal System   Political decisions
Historical trends   Self-management

"having good legislation like the BEE[40] in place…one became an EE[41] candidate and I was able to get a job at the Reserve Bank…that was a boost…they used to employ white people only…because of the EE…legislation black people got an opportunity to be appointed in those positions…I learned a lot…it was a kick-start…I now work for a higher education (institution)…I am exposed to research…there's budget for us to go for seminars and conferences which I think is playing a crucial role in terms of my career development…flexible legislation…affirmative action … enabling environment the government has created for black people…to be promoted without any red-tape"

Complexity at a global level Developing economy

"unstable economic growth…too much hypocrisy and red tape…political connectedness in order to make it to the top…political uncertainty…higher education is expensive…I want to do an MBA…they told me I need R200 000"

Environmental/Societal System   Employment market   Developing economy

"the spirit of entrepreneurship…everybody wants to be rich quickly… tenderpreneurs[42]…people want to climb the corporate ladder quickly"

"people without formal education being appointed into very strategic and senior positions…sometimes you feel our government isn't for formal education"

Environmental/Societal System   Political decisions

"there's EE targets that companies have to comply with…comply with women empowerment…50/50 by 2020 in terms of ratios"

Environmental/Societal System   Historical trends   Developing economy

Change over time

"those that went to exile…are entitled…even though some of them don't have formal education…Nelson Mandela said himself that exiles will get preferential treatment…I feel they get preferential treatment"

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[40] Black Economic Empowerment.
[41] Equal Employment.
[42] A **tenderpreneur** is a South African coinage referring to a person in government who abuses their political power and influence to secure government tenders and contracts for family and/or friends.

	Environmental/Societal System Geographical location Developing economy "I learned the qualification in English…didn't have to study in another language like people in exile…who had to learn…in foreign language which they had to…had to adopt that particular culture" Complexity at personal level Environmental/Societal System Socioeconomic status Self-management "I had to fund my own education compared to people in exile…funded by private donors…I had to earn during the struggle" Psychosocial status Complexity at societal level "I was exposed to violence in the township where I grew up"
RG Participant 2	Intrapersonal System Knowledge of the world of work Complexity at personal level "I haven't managed my career too well" Developing economy Complexity at an educational level "in high school during Life Orientation they prompted us to display what we'd like to do…that was when you've had to research" Intrapersonal System Interests Individual's self-awareness Recursiveness "I used my interests to drive me…to keep assessing this interest whether it is something I would like to do long term or not…you must have a goal…I took initiative…to explore myself properly…wanted to see…where can I fit in" Complexity at personal level Social System Family "I was not knowledgeable about tertiary education…what it is…what I can study…the influence was from my parents…they wanted me to have a job that brings in money…they selected for me quickly saying these are your options…these are the ones that will give you money" "If I had best marks…you have variety of things to select from…I think that counts"

"typical in my age (a person can become) a lawyer, teacher, policeman…there's lot of things in engineering…lots of fields such as corporate governance…I feel education lacks awareness"

"you would have chosen to study further and join the world of work much later but because of funds… you were limited"

"I believe people are pressured to study certain things for the benefit of their family…where they come from…there isn't a bridge to rural areas regarding education on career management…for the rest of South Africa people are not able to study because they do not have a lot of money…a person has to get into a good organisation for them to pay their studying…because life is moving…you can't wait to start…you have to make a living"

Developing economy   Change over time   Knowledge of the world of work

"there are more scholarships…more access to funds…there's also a level of awareness regarding education that it is important because it impacts on your career management…they are trying to make people aware that it is important to manage your career…there's an increase of exposure of the necessity for people to manage their careers"

Developing economy   Complexity at an educational level   Complexity at societal level   Environmental/Societal System   Socioeconomic status

"I believe that the education system fails the children…you need to own your education career…30 percent then you pass…the only way to own it is knowing your goals…you can't wait to finish because it feels like you are being forced to study…that has an impact in your tertiary education where you now have to make choices…you fail because you haven't done the right thing…you fail to make the right decisions…you are never prepared…you are just there…that way the education system fails

"(young) people become too pressured and they feel too burdened with life's challenges…they don't have career management processes…they need to know that…career can advance (even) when you are older…they wait for the next person to give them a promotion or to create a career for them…you have to create a career for yourself…you must know yourself in order to manage your career properly"

	<u>Developing economy</u> <u>Change over time</u> <u>Knowledge of the world of work</u>

"one can access funds…many people can access funds…NSFAS and the education department…there's also the green one…Edu-loan[43]…if you get the right job the employer might say she's willing to pay for your studies which will help to manage your career…they can do skills development"

<u>Environmental/Societal System</u>   <u>Historical trends</u>

"I don't think there are differences regarding that matter (exiles/inxiles)…I imagine… that I am home and everything I need is here…they have different goals and different career choices…they would always remember about home…because you miss home…there would be a different environment…exposed to different cultures that would influence the way you manage your career…I don't have such influences…but career is not about home…its not such a big factor…that person could have managed their career as much as myself…but I think it would be more vigorous on their side"

<u>Self-management</u>   <u>Individual's self-awareness</u> <u>Intrapersonal System</u>

<u>Change over time</u> <u>Recursiveness</u>

"now I strive for the drive…the thing that pushes you…that do or die…I think not having it is a disadvantage…being exposed (to how other people are doing it) is what I need for me to manage my career better…that pressure that a person studying in exile would have…would be a great advantage for me…I think their worldview should be different…they should feel they have access to more…jumping from one country to another…you already have the funds to do so…(which was) a disadvantage on my side…I would have had a better insight on career management…from that world view" |
| RG Participant 3 | <u>Complexity at a familial level</u> <u>Environmental/Societal System</u> <u>Socioeconomic status</u>

"I struggled financially…I applied for funds…to help me finish my studies…decided to look for a job so that I'll be able to do my honours which was not easy because I had to travel to work and manage my career because I wanted to become an industrial psychologist" |

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[43] **Edu-loan** provides financial access to education for students in South Africa. http://www.studentfunding.ukzn.ac.za/financial-support-incl...loans.aspx.

Developing economy   Self-management   Individual's self-awareness Intrapersonal System   Change over time Recursiveness

"then I realised that I was confused because I had criminology and psychology…I couldn't decide between the two…I fell in love with criminology…it seemed very attractive to me but it wasn't what I really was…I entered the (organisation) and worked… I was able to engage with psychologists which gave me a better perspective…it reminded me that this is what I wanted…I think I managed it (career) through other people…being motivated by other people …reading stuff about psychology took me back to the fact that this is my passion"

"actually not giving up on my career…I still studied while I was working…I was paying my fees…this year I got a bursary…I tried to work hard so that I would have a bursary…I knew that I won't afford all my fees and take care of all other responsibilities…that was a way of managing my career to get where I want to be"

"finding people that have the same courses as I wanted and then trying to get clarity from them…went on projects at work…there were psychologists who would do assessments…that exposure…I learned that this is how it is…then I fell in love with psychology…had to now start working hard to pay for my fees"

Social system Workplace Self-management Recursiveness Complexity at personal level

"in the (workplace)… there was a programme…you have a supervisor that helps you manage your career…they have to know where you want to go then they give you…courses that would relate to whatever you want…they gave me HR courses...but it was not what I wanted…I would still go for the course…but I still felt that no, let me pay for my fees then I can have exactly what I want…industrial psychology, a subfield in psychology"

 "the financial crisis…it's a bit stressful when you know you don't have enough money to study…ignore that and concentrate on your studies…it doesn't come really easy…you lose hope"

Developing economy Environmental/Societal System   Socioeconomic status

Self-management

"unemployment rate…because when I finished I had to go and look for a job…as young as I was I didn't get a job that was actually in line with my degree…even in the (organisation)…even today what I am earning now is equivalent to a matric person"

"It was fine because I knew where I was going…people end up having degrees and they end up with no work or end up with what they are not aligned with…so from finance…then it ends up being the fact that you don't get the right job for your qualifications or you don't get the right salary…those things are very disturbing"

<u>Complexity at societal level</u> <u>Environmental/Societal System</u> <u>Socioeconomic status</u>

"you will continue hearing a lot about unemployment rate…there's no employment"

"but you keep hearing politics…president Zuma has something…Nkandla this…where did the money come from…there's corruption…causing people not able to manage their careers…how do you manage a career when you don't have a job…you not sure if you'll get a job…this high unemployment rate leads to…high HIV, high poverty…you cannot really expect a person to be healthy in their mind…healthy with their careers if they don't have the right structures…I left schooling in 2001 but I feel like (today) they are just being spoon-fed…I feel like the LO thing…Life Orientation…they dropped the level…they've dropped the standard…for them to just enter varsities…get there…can't cope in their first year…they don't prepare them with relevant knowledge to compete with"

<u>Individual's self-awareness</u> <u>Change over time</u> <u>Recursiveness</u>

"I have always known that I'm going the psychology route…I can manage it because I have knowledge of where I come from"

<u>Knowledge of the world of work</u>

"the school system as well…what I have realised is that with high schools…my grandmother gave me that book…she was a teacher…I went through the stuff…I remember I saw psychology but not knowing…I was like…earmark that as well…not having enough knowledge or information…that is a disadvantage"

<u>Complexity at societal level</u> <u>Developing economy</u> <u>Socioeconomic status</u>

"I went into the university thinking it's a three year degree…honours is your choice…masters is your choice…the fact that I had nothing…no information…so I think we don't have programmes in high school that will try to give you all the information"

Social system   Family

"my parents don't know…my mom is the one who is a teacher…once you have a degree they think…oh she's done, you can go to work… and they don't know that you still have a mile to go…I think those are the challenges…lack of knowledge as well…I am not sure if its African people or black people…when you finish your degree you can just go and work…which makes you feel under pressure…they want to see you bringing in money to the house which actually disrupts your career…you want to show them that you can afford…in the meantime you know…I can't compete on the outside there…those are the challenges"

Complexity at societal level   Developing economy   Socioeconomic status

"poverty as well…some people choose to go to work…like my friend if I can bring in his story…because the family couldn't help…he couldn't study going for masters and honours…we are dying here please go bring food"

"if I had enough money…I think I would have finished earlier…I am sure I could be a professor by now…the high school I went to allowed me to be where I am…and the fact that I worked (and gained exposure)"

Complexity at societal level   Social system   Workplace

"in my masters' research study as well…I've noticed that even though women are trying as much to advance in their careers…they are still blocked…seen as subordinates…you just feel…I might as well give up"

Developing economy   Knowledge of the world of work   Change over time

"there are scholarships and bursaries…opening ways for people who want to study…when you have a bursary you already have a job…that means you already have a plan with your career…the government is trying…the NSFAS I feel like it's a way of motivating people to show them that careers are important…I am not sure if the bursaries and scholarships are enough…there's something at teaching…they even get money while they study…that's the motivation now for people to get something or a career…you'll have to make sure you work hard…there's competition…remember to always have high grades…because its not everybody that gets it"

Knowledge of the world of work   Complexity at societal level

"I feel like a job and a career are two different things…I can go to Shoprite and work…a career is something I have planned…I have goals…I can say in this time I want this and if it doesn't work I will do this…you plan around it even though it may not be what exactly you have planned but you can play around with it…so I think the government is concentrating on building jobs which is what South Africa needs…so I think they are trying…careers are just left to the people who can afford…afford entering university…finishing…then you know you can manage your career…but If you can't get a job (you can't manage your career)…my career is my passion…I imagine myself there…I don't think all people at Shoprite have imagined themselves there…I don't think they would sleep and imagine themselves working there…that would be the last option because there are no jobs…let me get this to put food on the table"

Complexity at societal level   Social system   Workplace

"I think the glass ceiling…preventing women from entering the top management positions…people that are higher there are not allowing people on the ground to catch up…corruption…a lot of people that would even be CEOs, SABC[44] for example…those are things that discourage people…people don't get there because they have a career…they get there because I know the next person…so nepotism…blocking people from even wanting to get there"

Developing economy   Complexity at societal level   Environmental/Societal System

Socioeconomic status

"the main problem is finance…people in rural areas want to come to varsity but there's just no money…universities want admin fees…people end up giving up…if your dad gives you R1000…you know you need money for registration, money for food, for textbooks…all that are just in line with people not wanting to feel motivated"

Environmental/Societal System   Historical trends Geographical location

Change over time Recursiveness

"I think I had better education unlike them (exiles)…I could have been so exposed…maybe more advanced than them…I think there were not enough bursaries…I feel about exiles… it was tough then"

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[44] South African Broadcast Corporation.

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<u>Individual's self-awareness</u> <u>Self-management</u> <u>Knowledge of the world of work</u>

<u>Intrapersonal System</u> <u>Ability</u> <u>Skills</u> <u>Change over time</u> <u>Recursiveness</u>

"I feel now I have more choices…I can manage my career according to my passion…not forced or limited…even choose the year…come back, start over…and I see a lot of people in top management, female role models…I am very motivated…I see that this is doable"

<u>Individual's self-awareness</u>

"I feel that whatever I know now is limited to South Africa…I am knowledgeable within my comfort zone…they (exile) are able to adapt…coming this side they are able to view this country in a different perspective unlike me who has one perspective"

<u>Developing economy</u> <u>Complexity at societal level</u>

"I think a lot of people…don't know how to manage their careers"

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Appendix Table F.3b$_3$ **My Peers' (MP)** responses relating to prevalent socio-economic, educational and political/historical complexities regarded as still persistent and impact on individuals' career management processes in post-apartheid South Africa

Group 3 Participants:	*Narrative vignettes*
MP Participant 6	<u>Complexity at an educational level</u> <u>Complexity at societal level</u> "something crucial…in my entire schooling I don't remember having someone who guided me for career advice…I don't even remember if we had guidance teachers at school…teachers were dealing with girls' menstruating and pads…those are the only areas (I would say) there was a guidance teacher…but to broaden our minds to say these are the careers…or to say look if you want to be a social worker…you can be because of A B and C" <u>Complexity at personal level Environmental/Societal System Historical trends Chance</u> "I can't say I've managed (my career) in the true sense…I was 'led' into a particular career though there are links with what I wanted to pursue…it was dictated by what was available…my husband did not want me to go to Fort Hare University"

"Vista University was available…a new university in 1984…it was cheaper and they were giving us books freely…actually he (husband) was the one who was paying…we had just gotten married…so basically I can't talk of career management that I've been focused on…its always been what's happening on me and not the other way…I was not pursuing what I loved most…strangely I also enjoy teaching because I was dealing with human beings from different backgrounds…most of all the same background I grew up in…I could relate and gave them support"

Environmental/Societal System   socioeconomic status

Social system   workplace   Developing economy   Psychosocial status

"I've always felt cocooned…there were other things I wanted…as an example: to counsel learners…I couldn't because syllabus was to be covered…putting time aside at lunch (didn't help as) they wanted to have something to eat…after school some are supposed to fetch their younger siblings from wherever…you are also not safe yourself being alone in that environment"

Complexity at an educational level   Complexity at societal level

"when I started teaching the school needed a maths teacher in Grade 8…I was misplaced but because I wanted to earn something, I agreed to take that class…my younger brother who did maths in matric and my husband who teaches maths would teach me at night…nothing should happen to disturb that crammed everything"

Complexity at an educational level   Complexity at societal level

"I did not understand…it was just cram work…the following day I would aim to dish out to the learners…if a learner had asked me to interpret what I was saying I was not going to be able to 'budge' (dig deep)… at least I could fall back on what I had passion for…history as a subject…I was also teaching my African language…then I was teaching Biblical Studies…I used to love the history part of it…I didn't have it in my qualification…fortunately for us from Standard 1 …(we) were taught the Bible… had to scream some verses that we did not understand…that made me able to have a proper lesson (in quotes)…its not something you would be proud of…the school's needs dictated what one could teach"

self-management   Environmental/Societal System   Historical trends

Complexity at an educational level   Complexity at societal level

Social system   Workplace

"for me to survive I had to get more information from other people (family members) who could help till the end of the year…(with history) as a black person sometimes you disagree (with the subject content) and the irony is telling the learners this is what the textbook is saying and this is what you are expected to say when you respond but *this is the truth*…teaching learners about the ANC you would actually be expelled from school because you are saying something outside the curriculum…so that was dictated to me by what was available"

Complexity at personal level   Knowledge of the world of work

"I've done African Politics…I loved it so much…but where was I to use it for interest sake and to amass my knowledge"

Complexity at a familial level   Environmental/Societal System   Historical trends

Geographical location

"I didn't have money to pursue what I loved…be a social worker…now here is a husband…just gotten married…suggesting that I become a teacher…he said the opportunity has just opened up near (home)…we knew during apartheid era that there were careers solely for black people…a teacher…a police and a nurse…security guard…were main careers…dictated by the era the person grew up in…social work is not different from others I've spoken about…at the same time I would have had to leave the province…and the whole question of money …accommodation…I settled for what was available"

Complexity at an educational level   Environmental/Societal System

Political decisions

"with history you always have an interest but you fail a million times as a black person…had to do Roman Law…Roman whatever…Dutch Law…Afrikaans and Latin…killed the interest particularly Afrikaans because of the background we come from as a country"

Developing economy   Environmental/Societal System   Socioeconomic status

Individual's self-awareness

"positives…we've always been a close community…you would have other family members…wanting to know how you are doing at school…you felt supported somehow…even parents…were trying their level best…saw the importance of education because of their own background…wanted us to go to school…even without resources there was always that push to achieve…the background issue…from this poverty I don't want to see myself in (it)…you had the eagerness to see yourself succeeding…being the first matriculant in the family…being the first teacher…first graduate…all those you wanted to see yourself achieving in spite of (difficulties)"

Developing economy   Complexity at an educational level

Complexity at societal level   Environmental/Societal System   historical trends

"we still do not have people…who are career guidance teachers or psychologists …today they call them LO teachers…I don't see our learners gaining anything from that with regards to careers in particular…they still make the same mistakes that we made…pursuing something…the number of learners doing teaching today… because of this Funza Lushaka[45]…because they could not be admitted in what they wanted to pursue…all flock to that…whether they love teaching is another thing…they are not even interested in it like myself"

Developing economy   Complexity at an educational level

Complexity at societal level   Environmental/Societal System   Historical trends

"there's always been that this is the first (choice)…if you fail you do the second one…if you fail… the third one is available…without looking at the talent, interests and capabilities…but because soon they will be earning a living they go in knowing very well that I am just here for whatever years from there I am going to pursue what I really love"

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[45] **Funza Lushaka** Bursary: Full-cost bursaries are available to enable eligible students to complete a teaching qualification in an area of national priority.
http://www.sastudy.co.za/article/how-to-get-a-nsfas-loan.

Developing economy   Complexity at an educational level

Complexity at societal level   Environmental/Societal System Historical trends

"if only there could be a thorough understanding of the importance of really pursuing what you are cut out for…this will be minimised"

Developing economy   Change over time

"(available) opportunities are just a stepping stone"

Complexity at societal level   Environmental/Societal System Historical trends

Complexity at an educational level   Change over time

"because we are in a democracy…the doors are open but when you say there are no stumbling blocks…will sound not being realistic…lack of knowledge in as far as what one needs to pursue is number one (stumbling block)…sometimes we go into things thinking that its going to be simple…once faced with difficulties you lose interest"

Developing economy Complexity at societal level Complexity at a global level

Environmental/Societal System Historical trends

"I see graduates loitering…sometimes you get that in the newspaper when they write about South Africa being compared to other countries…even those north of Limpopo you see us failing badly…for instance literacy and maths…are the backbone of the economy…there has not been much difference compared to where we come from"

"I think they (exiles) got different education and approach…you see Zimbabwean teachers…they know their subject 'mathematics' and we are struggling even if we are number 1 economically (in Africa)…SA can't be compared with neighbouring countries…I want to believe there is something that other countries are doing (right) that we don't do…that we are failing at"

Environmental/Societal System Historical trends

"(exiles) were uprooted…found themselves pursuing available careers even if that was not their interest…worse they were foreigners in those countries"

Developing economy   Environmental/Societal System Socioeconomic status

"the advantage is that I was here when people were suffering I suffered with them and I am not taking away what others did abroad…the sacrifices they made"

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"but breathing the air of South Africa…with my siblings, parents and that close knit community…that closeness…my child would be a neighbour's child…it was a positive of being around…we are not glorifying the past…just being home has always been a positive"

Environmental/Societal System Historical trends Developing economy

Complexity at personal level

"the negative is that I pursued something I was not that much cut out to do…being here at home with your parents…can't be a disadvantage…the disadvantage can be that you were always reminded…being politically aware of what is happening around you…other people have family members abroad…uprooted…killed…we felt what other people were going through…but bottom line is that home is home…it can't be a disadvantage"

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Developing economy   Complexity at personal level   Complexity at a familial level

Environmental/Societal System   historical trends   Socioeconomic status

"there are so many…finance was a problem…we lived out of nothing…totally nothing…some of my age mates left school…but because of the value (I put) in education I never thought of leaving school…in Form 2 I didn't have school shoes for three months…I walked a distance to school…I mean a distance without shoes…I don't know why I was registered in Zone 1 because there was a school in Zone 2 where I passed (by) but that was not discouraging me…my mom said she does not have money…poverty stricken… was just (the order of the day)…sometimes I would go to school without eating…not having anything to buy during lunch breaks but it did not bother me…I would rely on my friends…that was tough"

Complexity at an educational level Complexity at societal level

Environmental/Societal System Historical trends Developing economy

"Bantu education…the standard was very low…I started to learn English in 1977 and I was surprised to hear that Johannesburg, Soweto, started with English at primary (schools)…I don't have a good English foundation but because I am a hard worker I tried so much to improve myself…you coming from a home (with) no one enlightened as far as education is concerned, I didn't do well in maths in Form 3…I was struggling…I didn't have help around…if I didn't understand at school I didn't have anyone at home that will say let's check on your homework…it was a struggle"

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Social System Family   Developing economy

"my mom valued education even though she went to school up to Standard 1…she always encouraged me to go to school…always giving examples that the only thing that will help us is going to school…sometimes she would give us *kheri*[46]"

"our teachers…even if the standard was low they were showing so much commitment as far as students were concerned…I remember we used to have early morning classes, afternoon classes…the environment was motivating and encouraging"

Complexity at an educational level Complexity at societal level

Environmental/Societal System   Socioeconomic status

"(today) poverty is the main thing that is disturbing children to learn…illiteracy from the parents…because my general observation is that young girls…children…seem not to have values from home that would guide them to take education very seriously…especially girls…end up being pregnant at a very early age which also adds to poverty"

Change over time   Developing economy   Recursiveness

"I think as far as poverty in South Africa…it has been improved…the government has done a lot as far as taking care of the basic needs…housing is a basic need… there is ABET[47]…children are given a chance to do their matric even after (school going age)…feeding schemes…transporting children…offered buses to take them to school and home…the grant[48]…has been increased (made available to children up to 18 years)…(also) in the area of emotional care…we didn't have during our time…there are psychologists now taking care of that…even those learners not doing well at school…get remedial education…facilities have improved"

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[46] *Kheri* is a township concept referring to pocket money *carried* to school.
[47] Adult Basic Education.
[48] This *grant* refers to the social services financial aid from the South African Social Security Agency. http://www.sassa.gov.za.

Developing economy   Environmental/Societal System Historical trends

Complexity at an educational level Complexity at societal level

Environmental/Societal System   Socioeconomic status

"our political situation in South Africa does not seem like they are giving education a priority…because they would be making enough funds available for students…each and every year there are strikes all over tertiary (institutions) because (students) do not have money to go to school…it's a concern to me"

Change over time   Developing economy   Recursiveness

Environmental/Societal System   Political decisions   Change over time

"one of the changes…is freedom in the country…children are allowed to study anywhere they want to…there are career guidance…in our days there were few"

"there is a lot of career guidance…students are given a chance to be explained to about different courses…there is a wide choice now than before"

Environmental/Societal System Historical trends   Chance

"those that went to exile had more support from other countries that were against apartheid…structures were set even financially…regarding developing their careers…unlike us here…we struggled to get resources…they were very scarce"

Developing economy   Environmental/Societal System Socioeconomic status

Social System Family

"advantage of managing my career in the country…its my home…support from family…the community in general…its better than to be in a foreign country…ya, they were supported but sometimes I believe there were obstacles because they were not home"

	Environmental/Societal System Historical trends Developing economy
	Environmental/Societal System Political decisions
	Complexity at an educational level Complexity at societal level
	"disadvantage of managing my career in the country was the low standard of education…English is a medium of communication for me…not teaching learners English from the lowest Grade…has brought the standard of education very low…I was not allowed to be broadminded…I was made to believe that there are certain careers that one has to take in order to make a living tomorrow…I grew up knowing that being a teacher…a nurse…social worker…policeman…are the professions that will help you…hence I ended up being a teacher"

Appendix Table F.3b$_4$ **Self-proclaimed inxiles' (SPI)** responses relating to prevalent socio-economic, educational and political/historical complexities regarded as still persistent and impact on individuals' career management processes in post-apartheid South Africa

Group 4 Participants:	Narrative vignettes
SPI Participant 4	Developing economy Complexity at an educational level Change over time
	Environmental/Societal System Socioeconomic status Recursiveness
	"I changed careers because it was like I was floating around…(due) to certain influences…the issue of money…I had to leave what I thought was supposed to be my career…I realised I am not meant for that…somebody identified the inner me (and said) you like talking…like interacting with people…marketing should be your trade…I have hopped around from one industry to the next"
	Social System family Developing economy Complexity at an educational level
	Complexity at societal level Environmental/Societal System Historical trends
	"each and every parent wanted you to be a doctor…nurse…teacher or policeman…each was a wish of the parent…we were not exposed to other careers…we couldn't identify these other careers…if one had an opportunity to go to university…there was only one medical school in the country"

"for you to qualify…you had to be one of the brightest students…your parents were supposed to be financially (well off)…(without all that) you were doomed"

Environmental/Societal System   Geographical location Complexity at a familial level

Social system   family   Environmental/Societal System   Historical trends Individual's self-awareness

"your social part as well…depending on which environment you lived…your parents must be working in Johannesburg but because of accommodation…you had to leave them…forced to live with your granny…you get this separation where there is no parental caring or guidance…your parents have certain wishes…where they cannot enhance those wishes to guide you towards a career path…you stay in rural areas up to primary education…there's no high school in rural area…I changed to township life for the high school…then parents saw that this child is lost (in the township)…you've spent three or five years…then they send you to boarding school"

"When a person is still in a mother's womb there's an environmental impact… parents always want the best for their child…then you want to go to university and there's only four…University of the North…Fort Hare University… University of Zululand and the Wentworth medical school"

Environmental/Societal System   Geographical location Complexity at a familial level

Social system   family   Environmental/Societal System   Historical trends Individual's self-awareness

"later I realised that I was supposed to be groomed to be a civil engineer or structural engineer or an architect because those are things I enjoy the most in the (construction) industry but you find you don't have formal basics (foundations) on that…that's why you find that you are not even groomed to be a business person…supposed to be run with some business management…you become a business man that has no strategies and planning is by fluke…a lot of us belong to what they call…BBT…*Born Before Technology*… or before the new South Africa…its worse"…(all had potential) to derail (my career)"

Developing economy   Environmental/Societal System   Historical trends

"the guy who did medicine…started his own little surgery…started counting pennies every day…same as someone who started a supermarket or a fish and chips…(they learned) how to run a business…if I give someone a *vetkoek*[49]…he will give you money (alluding to entrepreneurial skills)"

Environmental/Societal System   Historical trends   Socioeconomic status

political decisions   Complexity at an educational level   Complexity at societal level

Social system   Education institutions   Chance

"every school holidays I used to spend with my mother who was working *ko di kitchening*[50] where (I got) exposed to the white man's children, their lifestyle, how they were going to school…you wished you were also having same facilities… fortunately for me this way I was influenced unlike other people that never had an opportunity to come and live three weeks with a white family…what happened was better than for other people because you had to emulate *abo madams*'[51] children…at times the madam would help and say (he) must go to school…some of the black kids had the opportunity to be adopted by their mothers' employers…they negotiated with the University of Witwatersrand for those kids to study there but some of us did not (get that opportunity)…for me to do chemistry practicals…just the practicals…a minister of education had to be written a letter of request…not (attend) the whole chemistry class…just practicals…these things made some of us not to have specific qualifications…because you couldn't focus (due to) politics"

"I happened to go to Turfloop (University of the North)…some of us were kicked out because we were anti-the-system that was happening there…they made it very clear…we don't want you here…when you voice your political opinion they reject it and then you were side-lined and you were told…sorry you can't come back…you end up studying all over the place"

"as such you don't have a definite career you could follow…resulting in one hopping from one industry to another…its only now I realise that I was supposed to have been guided…it's a bit tricky"

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[49] Afrikaans version of a fat-cake or *igwinya* in isiZulu.
[50] A township description of domestic workplaces, derived from one having worked in the 'kitchens'.
[51] *Abo madams*' – a combination of a Zulu word (*abo* – of) and the English word (*madams*') and in this instance refers to white female employers' children.

Developing economy   Environmental/Societal System   political decisions

"presently I think we have a half-hearted government input…they are supposed to be streamlining careers…in the past the police…teachers and nurses were sent to boarding schools (colleges) for *mahala*[52] …that's why there were more teachers produced…if I look at my (present) career in the construction industry…we've been trying to seek these people (career guidance counsellors)"

Complexity at a global level   Environmental/Societal System   socioeconomic status

political decisions   Developing economy   Complexity at societal level

"we have a lot of foreigners who consume or utilise the facilities that are meant for local people…we never used to have drug abuse in the past…the worst thing that happened would be that of dagga…(I think) the drug-lords are politically connected …now they (drugs) have influenced the situation badly that even the government has to spend money to educate people about drug use…the results are serious …(go) back to influx control…our area is so badly 'influxed'…we have more people removed from normal living conditions…which are worse…purely because of the (lack) of influx control…when I say (that) I mean improve the lifestyle of people in the rural areas…they should remain in the rural areas…if I was the president I wouldn't have done anything in the townships at all…I would improve rural life where people don't speak accommodation…(they were) growing food for the people in the urban areas…if they come here…who is (growing) food there …nobody … you've got to import food from China…Brazil…people are coming to Johannesburg …which careers can they follow…its all IT…what about people that are going to be food producers, food management…now the government has to spend money for the people that are not working…they don't build houses for people that are working"

"take all these big universities and education centres to the rural areas…a lot of students come from Limpopo…when they live here they will squat…will they study well in a crowded environment…they won't…but if we have that university in that area (Limpopo)…they will live comfortably…I bet you some of those Vista students are staying in a squatter area…people should just forget about coming to the urban areas because (even there) there is no growth in any industry"

"there's plenty of land in the rural areas…(government) must grow industries there…redirect the people…that will have a positive impact on education…career is not about a teacher…you need producers because without food there's no life"

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[52] Vernacular for not paying anything for the service as in: *free boarding facilities.*

Developing economy   Complexity at societal level

"building of houses is a simple thing…because there's a need for houses…you change the environment of a human being…that person will have stability…that house creates a lot of work for other people…there is money for the family that buys food…(in the pipeline) how many careers are developed…if we build houses for the next 20 years…the minister of human settlement (should) target the construction industry as a sector…fortunately for me its very interesting"

Developing economy Complexity at an educational level Complexity at societal level
Social system   education institutions   Social system   Workplace

"passing rates are very bad…government is pumping money into (education) but if (the children) are on drugs most of the time how will they pass…maybe they will pass because now there's a lot of ticks… but deploy them into industry…they can't deliver"

Environmental/Societal System   Political decisions

Change over time   Developing economy   Recursiveness

"the FET colleges will boost career development…infrastructure development has an impact on young people…there's improvement…moving from Bantu Education to what you call the *Model C arrangement*[53] I think we are doing well…I didn't have a computer…I had a typist…now I've got an iPad…IT is accelerating (careers)"

Developing economy Complexity at societal level

Environmental/Societal System   Political decisions

"political instability influences educational management because change of direction…when this political party comes in…the transition from apartheid…if I was the person that decided: I would say leave the (education) system that was applied …run the system…improve (it)…don't just change it abruptly…don't just keep on changing things…in the African countries people say you have to be a Mugabe (for being a long serving state president in Zimbabwe)…at the end of the day people want to be stable…with us…every five years it changes… when he comes in he changes the whole department…do you think promising students will want to listen to what is happening in parliament…its disgraceful"

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[53] The post-apartheid mixed-race government schooling dispensation is referred to as *Model C*.

"it causes a lot of damage to the children…(a child) sees you swearing at the president …and they say…people never used to say this to Mandela…we love our Mandela (but) this was Mbeki…people must know that this guy is a president…he has to be respected irrespective of what he has done"

Environmental/Societal System   Political decisions   Historical trends

Individual's self-awareness Complexity at an educational level   Chance

Complexity at societal level

"(there is a difference between inxiles and exiles except) for those that were just in armed struggle…those that studied had the opportunity to be influenced by the international world…their way of doing things is different…they were exposed…their career management is far better compared to the (militant ones)…I don't know whether there was a real career there…but those that remained here are steadfast because you've got to live…I still maintain that the (inxile) guy that stayed behind…confronted with managing the past…are the best…the guys that were inside (the country)…there was still career guidance but people were not given everything they needed to know…it was a half-hearted service…the little that we got is concrete"

Environmental/Societal System   Geographical location   Change over time
Recursiveness

"the advantage is that you are home based…what you have studied you can follow up…when you are overseas you develop your career in that environment…when you come to South Africa its not (relevant) because the places are different… someone was paying for them"

Environmental/Societal System   Political decisions   Historical trends

 Psychosocial status Complexity at an educational level Complexity at societal level

"the disadvantage is that we were always under threat of the then government …they were not supportive…scrutinizing your activities…not giving you freedom to do things the way you wanted to do them…studying where you wanted to develop your career…there were lots of restrictions"

SPI Participant 5	<u>Environmental/Societal System</u> <u>Geographical location</u> <u>Political decisions</u> <u>Environmental/Societal System</u> <u>Historical trends</u> <u>Social system</u> <u>Family</u> <u>Complexity at an educational level</u> <u>Social system</u> <u>Workplace</u> <u>Individual's self-awareness</u> "we lived in a mining area…my parents were teachers there but the school ended in Standard 4…there's a high chance that I could have left school at Standard 4…my friends went to work in the mines after Standard 4" "had it not been for my parents…I would have joined them (friends)…I had to leave home to live with my uncle for a year…then I went to live with my grandmother…I asked my parents to take me to a boarding school because something told me I was getting out of line as sometimes I went to school for two days and other two days I am off" <u>Complexity at personal level</u> <u>Complexity at a familial level</u> <u>Complexity at an educational level</u> <u>Individual's self-awareness</u> <u>Environmental/Societal System</u> <u>historical trends</u> <u>geographical location</u> <u>Social system</u> <u>family</u> <u>Psychosocial status</u> "I was going to lose direction…needed discipline and guidance as a teenager but I was basically guiding myself…in the evening no one checked if you were studying…did homework…checked your health it was picked up at varsity that I was short-sighted…everyone said I should have consulted an eye specialist a long time ago…I could have failed just because I could not see (poor visual sight) but I normally sat at the front row not knowing that it was because I couldn't see I was motivated by the fact that if I fail then I would not go beyond matric…still the boarding school should have been researched to see whether they encouraged students to learn or not…they discouraged us to study anything quantitative…we were just being misled…not given a chance to even be sent to an African school…it was a battle…a matter of adapt or die…enlightened parents could have researched a better school because there were some highly rated schools…I was sent to this one because it was near (home)"

Complexity at an educational level Environmental/Societal System historical trends

"for several days we were taught to watch-out for terrorists and to report if we saw anything…our Tswana teacher used to teach us politics privately…told us that people who are called terrorists are not terrorists…they are children and happen to be outside the borders…that was political education…he took it upon himself to re-educate us…we came to know that (terrorist information) was propaganda…I didn't do maths in matric because I believed that blacks were not good at mathematics…nobody did mathematics at high school…one black professor said blacks do not know mathematics and our teachers believed that…it was a disadvantage already when I went to varsity...just taking commercial subjects…also had a disadvantage in that I came from an Afrikaans medium school…sudden(ly) the medium was English at varsity…had to learn and adopt English as quickly as possible…my first year at varsity I was allowed to write in Afrikaans most of the subjects… I think I was managing my career so well"

Environmental/Societal System Historical trends Geographical location

Environmental/Societal System   Socioeconomic status

Social system Education institutions

"I could have been sent to the North West University…if you are a Motswana like me you are confined to North West…I just had a choice of the University of the North…my parents didn't have money I had to opt for a bursary that channelled me to commercial subjects"

Environmental/Societal System historical trends political decisions

Complexity at an educational level Psychosocial status   Intra-personal systems

Individual's self-awareness

"wanted to learn politics quickly (in) my first year…1974…when Mozambique got independent…we celebrated (the independence)…that was my first contact with the police…we were chased (around) campus…I managed to pass my first year…every year we were sent back home (due to politics)…and we studied among those upheavals…had to stay focused…I knew I had a bursary and knew that if I did not study I would lose the bursary…whether sent home or not I would still study privately…from 1976 political upheavals were severe…laboratory was burnt…hall was burnt…got sent back home"

"unfortunately I got arrested in that year…police said they saw me in front but I never saw me in front…we were thrown in jail…luckily I was released after three days because I could not be identified…in a parade the whole day…police had to identify if they saw you…luckily I was one of the guys who kept short hair…those were the hippie (afro hair) years…based on that I was released…we were suspended for five years"

Social System   Workplace   Community groups   Recursiveness   Chance

Intra-personal systems   Interests

"worked for an auditing firm…1977 lots of young students were roaming in the streets of Soweto…I was asked to help with lecturing them…(employers) released me to help (with accounting and economics)…I volunteered to join the Committee of Ten led by Dr Motlana…my first contact with community involvement…since then people ask me to help matric students…my love for assisting the community (members) that could not assist themselves came to the fore"

Developing economy Social system   Family Peers Knowledge of the world of work

"me and my colleagues were not employed…that is where I lost my career management because I took a decision never to go back to varsity again…I stayed home…my late father intervened…pleaded with me to finish my studies…I don't know why but I listened to him and went back…because of my track record my sponsors felt that I could qualify…went back to repeat…my career was focused to become a chartered accountant"

Complexity at an educational level Complexity at societal level Social System

Environmental/Societal System Historical trends Political decisions Workplace

After my BCom I ended up at UCT[54] in 1979…one underestimated the extent of racism…we thought UCT was a liberal university but first day…there was no accommodation…ran around the township looking for (back rooms) accommodation and Cape Town…a Coloured dominated place…I was called a coloured…in fact I was a coloured…Muizenburg (advertised) a room…that weekend boarded a train (to get there)…I had been staying in a little hotel room for two months…it was noisy with parties everyday…my interview lasted for one minute just because when I opened the door they said there was no space for coloureds…they shoved the door close"

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[54] University of Cape Town.

"I did not pass that year…came back to work as I had a three year agreement to work for them (the organisation)…I was in their finance department and was told I was the first black man in finance…we will see if you will last…I was very meticulous…within a month they could see the difference…I was a trainee doing all sorts of general work"

Developing economy   Environmental/Societal System Historical trends

political decisions   Complexity at societal level   Change over time Recursiveness

Social system Education institutions   Psychosocial status   Chance

"I left after five years to add more to society…in 1985 we opened a company to assist blacks with taxation law…the year the state of emergency was declared…I was always followed by police and our taxation company did not last…got work at Baragwanath Hospital…*foundation* side…did books for them…felt underemployed because everyday by midday my work was finished…did part time studies…applied at Wits to do Advanced Management Programme (an eight months course) …did not know much about it…wanted something to keep me busy and to improve my management career…passed the course…university management called me…to say we believe you can do well in MBA[55]…promised financial assistance… was accepted to study MBA fulltime in 1988…I thought this was what I would love to do because of a broader exposure to management…I was mainly in accounting and auditing side and looked down upon areas like HR, social sciences…they meant little to me until I did an MBA…first I took finance and they asked…are you sure you are in the right class…I passed every course (including statistics – remember I didn't have maths in matric)…I think through hard work and dedication"

Social system workplace Intrapersonal System   Individual's self-awareness

Knowledge of the world of work   Ability   Developing economy

Environmental/Societal System Historical trends Political decisions

"I went back to work…mainly in mining industries (due to having worked for this organisation)…in the *internal audit* side…thought let me sharpen my skills in this field (auditing)…registered for BCom Honours with UNISA…passed that as well…now I am comfortable in the auditing field…I am very versatile…I am good in accounting, finance and on the soft subjects (as well)…at (employer) I was asked to mentor young blacks who came after me as I was the first black in administration"

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[55] Master of Business Administration post-graduate degree qualification.

"most of them came from the rural areas and were bursary holders (for organisation)…most of them are successful and it makes me happy…then I worked for (organisation)l…had an Afrikaans speaking environment…luckily I knew Afrikaans…it contributed to my success…I got recruited out of the accounting field…people knew I was good in conflict management…big corporate groups recruited me specifically to handle conflict between blacks and whites because after 1994 most blacks were pushed into positions and most whites were not very happy…rejecting transformation…my background in languages also helped me…had to speak to blacks in their own languages…went to whites and speak their own languages…it was a division of about 400 people…in the end the department was harmonious…I was trying to undo what we were taught by apartheid…hatred is a bad thing…rather love one another"

Social system   Workplace   Developing economy

"then I joined (organisation) …then (organisation) (1997 – 2004) where there was a lot of conflict…was quickly moved from audit to management…(left Transnet in 2006…I was not well)…went into entrepreneurship still to address challenges facing South Africa…challenges of unemployment and poverty…to pull us out of being employees and become employers…our education has taught us to be employees…with the advantage of freedom it is wise now that blacks should move out of being employees to being employers…that is why I am involved with a lot of entrepreneurship development with the belief that we can have better resources to better manage our careers"

Complexity at a familial level Complexity at societal level   Social system   Family

Developing economy

"today children are affected by their parent's lack of education…we are still unable to advance children…the divorce rate is high in South Africa…most children are catered for by grandparents…who are ill-prepared because they apply old disciplinary measures …they lose track because there are no parents"

"that is where self-discipline should come to play…until we get a push from that poverty trap through bursaries and whatever support…poverty is exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS epidemic"

Developing economy Complexity at societal level

Environmental/Societal System   Socioeconomic status

"political freedom (seems) to give entitlement…you don't need to work hard anymore…that is where I think current liberation is nothing without economic liberation…still being in poverty after 20 years of democracy has led to all these social ills in our country…there is crime in general…white collar crime is also impeding our development as a society…people fake degrees…who of our children can go and study further if anybody else can claim his degree and pass…that is fraud and corruption which must be tackled head-on"

Environmental/Societal System   Political decisions

"there is political will to move from political independence to economic independence…so many political parties that have the freedom to fight to lead this country…we have a constitution that is protecting every one of us…I think it supports people in their career management"

Psychosocial status   Complexity at an educational level

"you had to be very exceptional to achieve what (exiles) achieved…they depended on scholarships from outside the country…they were under threat…always on the run…many were bombed because they were followed…they were exposed to sicknesses because they had to adapt…I suppose they lived stressful lives…not knowing if one day they will be coming home…never had that fall back support (in terms of parental guidance especially)…had a challenge to adapt to a new language before you could study…imagine if you were in Russia and had to study in Russian"

Social system Family   Developing economy Complexity at an educational level

Environmental/Societal System   Political decisions

"inxiles had social support from parents and extended family…accepted in the community…your friends are around you…it was easier to study"

"the disadvantage was a divisive government…if you had a darker skin it did not impress them if you wanted to study further….even force you to study in a language you did not like…Afrikaans language for instance…teachers were not well equipped…resources were not equitably allocated…those who were oppressed were forced into ill-equipped schools…packed in a classroom while other classrooms (elsewhere in the country) were half empty…students lived far from schools"

	"separate development was not right for the country"
Participant 11	<u>Intrapersonal System</u> <u>interests</u> <u>Individual's self-awareness</u>

<u>Complexity at a familial level</u>   <u>Developing economy</u>

"I remember vividly in 1976…I was in Form 3…I wanted to be a motor mechanic…because I did not have money I didn't think I will have money to continue to university…those days you could go to a technical college from Form 3…I could see in our townships…the village people who had scrap cars…I thought this could be a great opportunity…because cars will always be here and will always have a problem…I thought this could be a niche to protect my future and make a living…be independent"

<u>Environmental/Societal System</u>   <u>Socioeconomic status</u>   <u>Historical trends</u>

<u>Complexity at an educational level</u> <u>Individual's self-awareness</u> <u>Chance</u>

"it so happened and I proceeded to Form 4 and 5…in matric I applied to university to study law…by that time I needed to go to university as much as I did not have the funds…fortunately I managed to raise the money…was not allowed to pursue a legal profession because my Afrikaans marks were bad…law is something I thought I was going to do…within a week of orientation I discovered that I couldn't (study law)…I didn't know much about options…the university gave an idea of things that could relate to you…I opted for a B Admin, majoring in Public Administration and Political Science…I didn't know those subjects well but I knew I used to like History…I fell in love with political science in particular and for the one and a half years I was at university I thought I was going to become a Professor Political Scientist…at the time the dream was to leave the country and look for opportunities outside the country…down the line the university was shut down…life happened to me all the time…I had to navigate life…its difficult to plan in advance…my educational dream was interrupted in my second year of studies"

<u>Social system</u> <u>workplace</u> <u>Environmental/Societal System</u>   <u>Socioeconomic status</u>

<u>Change over time</u> <u>Recursiveness</u> <u>Environmental/Societal System</u> <u>Political decisions</u>

"I ended up working 30 months for two companies…I decided to go into business…unfortunately the apartheid government said no…it's a black person…you can't go into business…I decided: to hell with you…I am going to do it anyway…I had nothing to lose" |

"ya, I became a business person by pure chance and not something I ever had in my upbringing...it was farfetched"

"I don't come from a family with anyone with a business experience…life happened to me and I just responded accordingly…I became a Commission Sales Representative…sold haircare products…and I said 'hey man please go out and and make money'…you must do it yourself…that's why in 1984 I conceived the idea…put together a team to work with me and executed those plans"

"in 1985 we had our own factory in Mabopane, Garankua…formerly Bophuthatswana (a homeland)…my business experience over the last 30 years has been hands-on because I've never really gone for formal training"

Change over time   Recursiveness   Developing economy   Social system   workplace

Complexity at personal level   Complexity at an educational level   Self-management

"the following year the business was growing at a phenomenal rate…I convinced my partner and said…we need to empower ourselves and register with Damelin (College) to do some business management courses…we paid…didn't attend more than five classes…it was impossible because of our work demands…you couldn't be home as you wished…it ended up being just losing money and we moved on"

Developing economy   Complexity at societal level   Complexity at personal level

Environmental/Societal System   Socioeconomic status   Political decisions

"in our context the economy is not growing…the underperformance of our economy has stifled career development…for people to grow…the economy has to grow…I think the underperformance is a result of our political decisions…the high unemployment is not good for the future…people and careers don't develop in isolation…its part and parcel of the economic machine"

"the whole disadvantage was apartheid that made it difficult for us to fully exploit our talent as South Africans"

Appendix Table F.4c$_1$ **Family members**' **(FM)** responses relating to insights discernible from lived experiences of South African inxiles towards enhancing career management theories in developing economies

Group 1 Participants:	Narrative vignettes
FM Participant 8	Critical insight – predictions (career management theories) Change over time Recursiveness "individuals…get career guidance…are put in proper path from the beginning and then developmentally step by step…will be able to follow careers…then gets that success…to have financial independence" Critical insight – successful outcomes (career management theories) "individuals…able to manage their own careers…be successful…the country as a whole will be elevated…those individuals make a collective whereby the whole will benefit" Critical insight – predictions (career management theories) "the country…will be able to compete…globally…do business competitively…it will be a global player" Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "the study…ultimate goal…would have contributed because it highlighted factors towards the development of the country…factors that are basic for the economy …and the educational…form the basis of any existence in a particular country" Critical insight – predictions (career management theories) "South Africa…a developing country…has got some advantages compared to the rest of the continent…other developing countries can learn from a perspective of the study based on the South African experience" "for a developed country… nothing is absolute…there could be pockets that set development hasn't reached…portions…sections of the country…they can take this small effort…and apply it to further improve…develop themselves…while they are so called developed countries…you can't say…satisfied…its enough…no information is irrelevant…you can still learn"

	Critical input – enabling experience (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system) "the study can be used as a wakeup call…it's a reminder because some of these things…are easily forgotten"
FM Participant 9	Critical input – enabling experience (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system) "teaching exposed you to the shortcomings…exposed you to more disadvantaged children" Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system) "availability of professionals…(in) the career that one wants to pursue…readily available and accessible"
FM Participant 10	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system) "a lifestyle thing…shouldn't be looked at as a privilege…the whole point of going to school…is to have a career but then you miss that because you are focusing on going to school" Critical insight – predictions (career management theories) "(career management, career success and economic wellbeing) are interlinked…one can't exist in the absence of the other…do a SWOT analysis…see the strengths and weaknesses and improve…which is necessary for success" "there needs to be a certain formula or certain direction that you are heading towards and that's what career management is…in turn reaps its own fruits" Critical insight – successful outcomes (career management theories) "economic wellbeing is being an active member of the economy…contribute something that you specialise in…to offer…positively…in order to do something on a greater scale you need to start small…in individuals having career management they are able to contribute to society…it's a cycle…the economy is not self-propelling…it is propelled by individuals"

Appendix Table F.4c₂ **Recent graduates'(RG)** responses relating to insights discernible from lived experiences of South African inxiles towards enhancing career management theories in developing economies

Group 2 Participants:	*Narrative vignettes*
Participant 1	<u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u> "one needs to acquire education in a particular field of interest"
RG Participant 2	<u>Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system</u> "in the past people owned their education…because they wanted to be out of the struggle…education was the way to go…now people are just stuck…they need to know that you not just in a job…its a career"
RG Participant 3	<u>Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system</u> "I went to a high school which was multicultural…I had enough exposure to things that were out there…in terms of career…I know they would bring…for an example …they brought the military…to tell us the careers that are in the military…that opened my eyes…I knew I had to finish and then go there…the information that was given to me did build me up…I was in matric" <u>Critical insight – predictions (career management theories)</u> "If you are able to manage your career…it's a motivation to succeed…to advance…contributing to the country's economy…you bring your own contribution to society…I often think Trevor Manuel…an economist…he's no longer one…no longer the governor but he always shares his knowledge…that's his career success…its now contributing to society…the economy of South Africa" <u>Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system</u> "it gives you self-actualisation…I've reached where I want to be…not even realising that I am contributing…you feel the need to be noticed, acknowledged…I can help reduce HIV and poverty…start a business…create jobs…employ people…help other people get to where I am…leading to economic wellbeing…career management helps you know your niche…you are an expert in your field"

"productive employees are happy employees…they've got networks where they would be able to work in other countries and create jobs"

Critical insight – ideas (career management theories)

"I am very interested in this study…the fact that you are bringing this up there's a lot of gaps…from primary school to way back I can see that there's a need…people don't know what career means…people don't know how to manage careers…am I entering a job or a career…the perception of running away from poverty…if only I can get a matric certificate then I can get a job"

"other countries may also have a gap in terms of what you are looking for…this can be an answer…Africa itself may be able to use some of the knowledge acquired from the study and findings…developed countries will definitely learn something…even if you are a master of chess you can still be beaten by your student…developed doesn't mean they've got the best systems…I am sure there are loopholes that we don't know of…they will be able to grab something from the findings…there's always something to learn…that's why we have research"

Critical insight – ideas (career management theories)

"from what you have found they will be able to do other studies that will see a gap in yours and they will be able to add more…this will be an eye-opener for something that is lacking at the moment…findings will enrich more knowledge into the theories…allow more research in future…for the education system as well… whatever that is implemented is based on those views…not necessarily South African…research exposes people to knowledge"

"it actually voices out what we think…when you are sitting there as a minister you don't really know…it doesn't mean that you know everything…they are talking about life skills…at primary school…teaching children about life itself…they can teach…groom (the children to be) well advanced careerists"

Appendix Table F.4c$_3$ **My Peers'** **(MP)** responses relating to insights discernible from lived experiences of South African inxiles towards enhancing career management theories in developing economies

Group 3 Participants:	Narrative vignettes
MP Participant 6	Inextricably embodied in App Table F.3b$_3$
MP Participant 12	Inextricably embodied in App Table F.3b$_3$

Appendix Table F.4c$_4$ **Self-proclaimed inxiles'** **(SPI)** responses relating to <u>insights</u> discernible from lived experiences of South African inxiles towards enhancing career management theories in developing economies

Group 4 Participants:	Narrative vignettes
SPI Participant 4	<u>Critical insight – ideas (career management theories)</u> "do some planning…there's no way you can just go into the work or career without really planning…then review…to check that what you have put in place (initially) is the right thing" "the issue is consistency (personality) NB. Related narratives inextricably embodied in App Table 6.3b$_4$
SPI Participant 5	Inextricably embodied in App Table 6.3b$_4$ narratives
SPI Participant 11	Inextricably embodied in App Table 6.3b$_4$ narratives

Appendix Table F.5d₁ **Family members**' **(FM)** responses relating to critical inputs that can possibly be derived from career management experiences of South African young graduates and inxiles towards enrichment of the South African career education system

Group 1 Participants:	*Narrative vignettes*
FM Participant 8	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "South Africa is a developing country…skills from outside…can be integrated… experiences from outside can be used to steer the country in the right direction" Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "do not underestimate our own potential…we still need support…guidance of the outside world" Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "education…be funded or free education because there is a lot of potential that slips through…because of lack of funding"
FM Participant 9	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "government…to make followup…(on) policies…it looks like policies are made but there is no followup" Critical insight – predictions (career management theories) "you cannot divorce (career management, career success and economic wellbeing for South African individuals)…it impacts on the majority…if practiced correctly… South Africa on its own is making a mark globally in the economy of the world" Critical input – enabling experience (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "if there were no studies like these people in government…or high positions would always think that they are doing something right" Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "if there is enough noise being made about it (the study)…it must be out there in the media…to reach people who would notice it…if it can be published and distributed…accessible to the NGOs and relevant bodies"

	"it can contribute to the awareness of the people out there who care about the development of our country…not everyone will see it and say nothing can be done...the country needs people to do things for the country instead of always looking at what the country can do for us" Critical insight – predictions (career management theories) "they can learn…they come across…carry themselves like people who know it all but if they look at the study they can learn something out of it"
FM Participant 10	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "demand is greater than supply…there are more children in need of guidance…focus on individuals and see where they lack" "make it (career management) part of the curriculum as it is a small aspect of Life Orientation (subject)…make it a priority…make someone think…how each decision relates to something else…to link it to your maths and your sciences" "the people have spoken as far as the government…bring the element of facts…things that can actually give life" Critical insight – successful outcomes (career management theories) "even if it doesn't impact things on a greater scale…it will be the beginning of something" Critical insight – ideas (career management theories) "the more you know – there's more to know…saying you are developed doesn't mean you have reached the peak…take the study for what its worth then reinterpret…regenerate into something else" "(the value of the study) it's a reflective thing…then polish and improve going forward…in reflecting you are able to not repeat the same things going forward…brand new things"

Appendix Table F.5d₂ **Recent graduates' (RG)** responses relating to critical inputs that can possibly be derived from career management experiences of South African young graduates and inxiles towards enrichment of the South African education system

Group 2 Participants:	Narrative vignettes
RG Participant 1	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "government must create internships in order for people to acquire experience…corporate South Africa needs to come up with…mentoring…and succession planning…hard work must be rewarded…political connectedness must be taken away…you will get a job because of…credentials and competencies…lose favouritism" "(career management must begin) from the onset…from basic education…teach children…curriculum must include entrepreneurial skills so that we become creators of employment…not dependent…not have this mentality of I have to look for a job…you are going to create your own employment" "financial management should be taught from an early age" "right now…people progress into their careers its all about money…how much is in it for me…you start hopping from one job to another in search of money instead of career development" Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "if you acquire good formal education you can become…a subject matter expert… get a good job…you are able to contribute…must be remunerated accordingly…you pay tax…that tax goes towards the development of roads…that's how the economy grows" Critical insight – successful outcomes (career management theories) "the study is about self-actualisation…about self-recognition…once you know oneself you are able to excel in whatever…it is trial and error…you just achieve"
RG Participant 2	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "there should be exhibits in high school…there's meteorology out there…there's industrial psychology…typical in my age…a lawyer, teacher, police"

"because we live to work…it should be instilled at a young age that you are going to be working for the rest of your life…what is it that you'd like to do…should be discovered from a very young age…investing in young people having to understand themselves and having to choose their career according to what it is they are good at…they can do their best…you may think you like copyright but what is copyright… what kind of jobs will you be doing…are you that person that cannot sit in an office for too long…that counts when you think of career management…having access to that information would be great for all South Africans"

<u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u>

"career counselling should be done at a younger age…compulsory for all South Africans…because people change…repeat it after perhaps five years or the relevant number of years that would constitute an understanding that a person may have changed…there should be a place where people can get information…but obviously career management is up to yourself"

"at a young age…in primary school…in high school you choose compulsory subjects…its already late…children are not aware of their strengths and their goals"

"twice in high school (career counselling)…because you come into transition in high school…and then you become whatever it is you want to become"

"assess that child's interests because the person may be great in maths but they have other interests…maybe you want to do carpentry…even if you are great at mathematics…you should explore that as well"

"you need education in order to get into certain jobs…managing your career properly is going to give you better access…better avenues…could be more economically well…therefore we can contribute to the economy…because South Africa has a lot of poverty…when you have a career goal you can develop the country from wherever you are (educational level) because they will be doing their job very well…one thing can lead to another…they will have career success…economic wellbeing…and contribute to the global economy"

"(career guidance education) creates awareness…it can definitely have a positive impact"

	<u>Critical insight – ideas (career management theories)</u> "I think the study and its findings will help developing economies…learn from it… see what they would like to adapt…looking at their own country first" "they would take lessons learned…even if you are a developed country you always want to better your economy" <u>Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system</u> "I think it can also add value to ordinary South Africans…not just the policy side but (to) a person if they were to read it…they can know the importance of managing their career…just from reading this study…it doesn't have to wait for South African policy processes because that would be slow…we don't have to depend on the government…start a movement of having to manage your career properly…my heart is with the children…we start there and plough but obviously we would have to build our way up ourselves"
RG Participant 3	<u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u> "bring maybe people who are psychologists…people in different kinds of professions…brought into the system…every week at least…they could introduce something to the matrics or even Grades 10 because that's where you start choosing subjects…give a rule…a policy that says we need to introduce this from this…let it be part of your subjects…for your career in high school" "I feel like the education system…their priority is on science and maths…if they can do that on other fields I think I would know more…that could have helped me choose a proper career…not everybody knows science and maths" "what about social work…people that love history…kids as old as 10 years will tell you I want to be a social worker…a doctor…at that early stage…at high school you already know how to drink…smoke…you've probably lost track of who you are" "start working on this (career management) even from Grade 3…from Grade 8…career management theories…people get to know about it when they go to tertiary…I cannot manage something I do not know…but if I've been told a hundred times like in biology…I am already an expert in that thing…I even know the disadvantages…even that I can come around and help (volunteer/vacation job)"

	"Grade 8s to be given a guideline on how to manage careers…give it as a subject …a priority for the education system…there could be policies…(part of) curriculum while in high school…enforce it…when you are in tertiary its a bit too late…how to manage it…(with not enough) guidelines…its something that happens accidentally …well I think my career is this (an accident)…introduce exhibitions…bring different professionals to talk about how to manage careers…enforce policies…it can be done in the work environment as well…where there are policies…implement it…stick to it the way they stick to their vision and mission…the organisation itself has to help me manage my career"

Appendix Table F.5d₃ **My Peers**' (**MP**)responses relating to critical inputs that can possibly be derived from career management experiences of South African young graduates and inxiles towards enrichment of the South African career education system

Group 3 Participants:	*Narrative vignettes*
MP Participant 6	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "it starts at school…we need teachers who know what they are doing…well conversant with what they are supposed to put across…teach in class…(be trained on) curriculum…I am reminded that just before NCS was introduced…Professor Jonathan Jensen said you can't have a hit and run kind of situation…(let) teachers go back to school for three years…we took advantage of the fact that parents did not know (what was best)…they were howling saying how could a whole professor say learners should be without teachers for (such) a long time…but having gone through the crash-course I still maintain that had that happened there would be better understanding…we would be doing better putting across what was in the NCS" Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "nothing is stable…NCS was replaced with something else…I want to believe that not everything is bad if it can be understood…teachers go back to the classroom with that struggle…with learners who are struggling…frustrations with resources… stay with something and improve on that"

"if you do away with an education system state as to where it failed…we were told OBE failed in other countries…because it needed resources…in first world countries and we are in the third world country…we were aware that it needed resources… what was expected of us?"

"you can have the best policies but if you can't back them up with implementation and (required) resources it becomes a struggle…if you've got resources…human capital as well…the passion on what you want to pursue…looking to where you want to see your country…that can actually help"

"we want to compete globally (but) at some point you have blackouts because there is no electricity…we are told (the reason is that during apartheid) electricity was given to a section of the South African population…those reasons are not helping the situation…we are supposed to compete globally…its negative on the economy… introspection is very key if we want to move forward.…be open-minded"

<u>Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system</u>

"don't view the study as an attack on the government or education system…we are doing an introspection as a country…where are we failing…where do we need to improve…let us go to the people on the ground to find out how they see us going forward…that can benefit us as a country"

"incorporate the findings…if there are no studies for our own improvement …people in education don't reflect and say where did we go wrong...how can we improve our education…(people in education) have good intentions but they are not on the ground so its very important for us as a country to be able to reflect…say where did we go right…even on that we can improve…if we are going to take everything as negative and being critical we won't go anywhere…let me not go into that…I will start my own revolution…studies are there to correct…nobody can write something just to criticize…for what good reason?"

"sometimes people try something and it works out without knowing it…if we are on the right track…this is how this country…can be able to understand our neighbours … understand where we come from…be sympathetic as well…and be helpful"

	Critical insight – successful outcomes (career management theories) "I don't see this study confining itself to career management only…(it can contribute a great deal) even in other fields if the bottom line is how can we work best…even the right people having the right information… resources… attitude… ability… capability…understanding…passion…it runs across all spheres…you can even apply it to your family…how best can we manage ourselves"
Participant MP 12	Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system) "I believe that what I want will come as long as I focus on what I believe in…always go an extra mile to see to it that my career becomes what I want it to be today… getting help from whatever source…I believe that there's someone out there who can help me and knows better around my needs…someone more knowledgeable… but first thing is that I must go out and look for help…research around (my need)" Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system) "I grew up believing that education is the key for success…where I grew up things were not well and I always told myself that I need education…I've done everything to make sure that I get my education…studying very hard…I am not gifted…I am a hard-worker…I am an average student…I have realised that if I don't give it my whole attention I may not make it…I go overboard…when I was studying my masters I struggled with statistics…three of my colleagues dropped (out)…there was this young lady at Vista and she understood statistics…I tried by all means to come closer to her…most of my Saturdays I was sleeping on the floor at her place…she offered me the bed but I said no, I will sleep on the carpet…for almost one year… that was the extra mile" Critical input – individual qualities (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system) "I am not ashamed to go to lecturers after class and tell them that I did not understand…sometimes I would feel embarrassed because they would explain and I will find myself not understanding but that did not derail me to stop because I've got the belief that at the end I will get what I want"

Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system

"the government, business community has to look into financing education in South Africa…give education a priority…even a child who grows up in the rural South Africa must be able to access that…just the way they are doing with this grant thing…if they can give it attention that each and every child who wants to develop his career must not be limited because of finances"

Critical insight – ideas (career management theories)

"when you are educated you might be successful…there is a belief that when you are educated you will be successful…but its not always the case…you (may) find a person with a PhD not employed…having a degree but not employed"

Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system

"If people in South Africa are not learned obviously the country's economy will go down…we need education in order to contribute positively to our country…the government must not spend money by accessing resources outside…(although) it is very important for us to be able to interact with outsiders because of our economic standing and education standard"

Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system

"I believe this study can help so much…improving…adding into the policy…the study is about research obviously they will use the findings in order to improve conditions…of careers in South Africa…improve whatever is lacking in as far as career management is concerned in our country"

Appendix Table F.5d$_4$ **Self-proclaimed inxiles' (SPI)** responses relating to critical inputs that can possibly be derived from career management experiences of South African young graduates and inxiles towards enrichment of the South African career education system

Group 4 Participants:	Narrative vignettes
SPI Participant 4	Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system "whatever one man can do…give him the right ammunition…I was honest in my teaching the children according to what they were supposed to get…spend more time with them…give them extra lessons…do the work perfectly…you should enjoy working…work with other people externally…you learn a lot when teaching other people…you must know product (career) knowledge" "then execution of the work…supervision is important…have (in-service training)" "doing good work forms an integral part of success in somebody's career…invest in manpower…look at training…remunerate them correctly…listen to their requests… (to avoid) issues like strikes…(provide) customer care" "channel the children at high school…give them direction in that (construction) career…sponsor them…put them under one roof…in the past (Afrikaners) once they passed Standard 10 were conscripted…channelled to change their mind-set… building their character…because they come from different communities…take them on one year after matric…give them the correct conducive environment…those are my wishes" "channel the children…lock them into an environment of education…and at tertiary level…lock them for six months" "in the curriculum…the approach is the problem…run it for at least 10 years… then review" Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "I've influenced my own children…my daughter has an environment (management) organisation…it's a body that controls all the building professionals…they need mentors…practically do the work…show the guy how to fit tiles, manufacture cupboards…that way we are creating entrepreneurs…more careers (through which they) will be making money…its all laborious work…dedication"

"focus on those industries that create a lot of careers…I keep boasting about my construction business…it can change (a lot of people's lives)…architects, structural engineers"

<u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u>

"a teacher should be versatile (all must be career guidance specialists in their subjects)…our approach is not there yet…we need people that can identify children's abilities…with vast experiences of careers…groom career experts… create a curriculum for career guidance specialists…it should be an ancillary subject to teaching for all teachers…should be able to identify students' (abilities)"

"workshop (career management) as a specific topic…have career management seminars…your thesis should be used as a guideline towards development of career guidance…it should be a course on its own…it will create specialists…more children can be directed…it should be a policy…because even at third year level students are still not sure of what they have chosen…they are just studying for the sake of getting a degree"

"matriculants write matric without knowing where they are going next year…your document should be a course on its own…we've got more ABET, now you can have this, and this, and this"

"if South Africa is doing well (because of careers that are managed well) then we should do well globally…put into practice (the career guidance opportunity) for a year then gauge the results…then concentrate on those students each year…these are some of my wishes…they will work together as a small group…the results of that will have greater influence…focus and vision…we need to check on these…we need to be specific because we want economic growth…once there's a success story…by the time you turn around (the economy shall have changed)"

"the government can because they want creation of employment…this is a mechanism to create employment…guide the people…(help) manage their careers…train them…at the end of the day they will come out self-employed…the only thing is to tabulate (keep measuring progress)…put them into various FETs and monitor them (but keep them in a controlled environment where they can focus)…your research must be practical"

	Critical insight – successful outcomes (career management theories) "place the findings in everyday places…in Limpopo…Mpumalanga…before you place the fifth one…its in Botswana and you target countries that are developing on their own economically…you will just fine-tune them" "the development of other successful countries follows the same pattern (influenced by others' research findings)…the British…the Americans are always belittling (South Africa)…some of them had a model for guiding and training their employees…that's why they are doing well" "the (research findings) will change people's lifestyles…it can prolong people's lives because now…(its all about careers)…how many of them are focused…80 percent of them are in those careers for the sake of (employment)…they don't like it but the fact is it (the job) is bringing money"
SPI Participant 5	Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system "strategies developed through the situation…in matric my parents told me in advance that we will not be able to take you to varsity…we cannot afford it…be prepared to look for a job…driven by the fact that we had to do well" "I studied very hard to ensure that I remained in the top five…basically the first spot …after formal studies together with a group of friends…go back to classes at night to study…I think the Department of Education asked for whoever was number one…I was just called to the principal's office and told you have been given a bursary for matric…I passed my matric with first class" Critical input – individual qualities (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system) "I chose subjects that were challenging…(those) that would enable me to be employable…commercial subjects…these were new…corporates liked people who did commercial subjects and I passed them all…I knew I was one of the best…for tertiary I applied and got three bursaries…had to choose one…preferred one from Anglo American Corporation…transferred one to my sister and one was cancelled…not everyone qualified for those bursaries…my parents never paid anything for me…I ended up helping others…even today I think I am still not confident (in maths) but if you are focused you can do well"

"managing a career (is) to be good at what you are doing…even now I am still learning to manage my career better…will do my Doctoral studies soon…but I think (in that) one needs to put in even more effort…I think I will be doing that very soon"

Critical input – individual qualities (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system)

"I know not to blame somebody but to take responsibility…we should do more than what is expected from government…I have observed that if you do something…government notices you…they can help you…but if you just sitting and not doing anything that means you are getting nowhere…push yourself to the limit"

Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system

"today the government is pro-education…lowering the pass-rate is well intended but at end of the day it has negative outcomes…quality is not good…the will to have everybody educated is there…government has got bursaries…access some grants…many schools were built post-independence…introduced free education…recruitment of teachers from outside our borders helps…most universities have been integrated…they work at full capacity…those days we had resources which were underutilised…signing of agreements for children to study overseas is boosting their careers"

Critical insight – ideas (career management theories)

"education system is still not aligned to the work environment…we produce graduates but they still do not get jobs…government has to promote FET colleges"

…they are still focused on academics and neglecting technikons…we still need that balance…another weakness is the SETAs[56]…because of high unemployment children take whatever internships or learnerships…without being assessed if they are the best (candidates)…hence they leave them as soon as they get something better"

"most of us still cannot afford houses nearer to schools or cities…government is still battling with infrastructure…there are still students learning from shacks, under the tree but we want them to compete (with students from urban areas)"

[56] Skills Education Training Authorities in South Africa. http://www.vocational.co.za.

<u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u>

"children should be assessed to guide them as to which careers they will prefer…education should not be in isolation…there should be an alignment between industry and education…what we are teaching should be ploughed back into the economy…education should give an opportunity for practicals…it should be a condition during holidays…teachers should be assisted to improve themselves"

<u>Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system</u>

"there should be committees or boards (on career management) that can make recommendations to the ministry…from all political backgrounds…a platform from every province…if there are, I am not aware of them"

<u>Critical insight – ideas (career management theories)</u>

"where there is poor career management there is a poor result in the end…if you are meant to be a doctor and you did mathematics at high school, already you are directed…the chance of passing is there because you are not confused…this is impeded in a developing country like South Africa…by all the social ills…government must address the social ills…in our country the pass rate between private and government schools is not the same…we get 75 percent and 98 percent from the same South Africa…that they live a first world style (in private schools) is a clear indication and the result is very bright…students come out with confidence"

<u>Critical insight – predictions (career management theories)</u>

"many youngsters in finance have been recruited overseas…we are losing bright stars and we remain where we are…we can even go down…we are not competitive globally….if you look at today's matric results, that is 25 percent…80 percent of it cannot even go to varsity…we are not global competitors…we lose our few bright stars…whoever remains here are still disadvantaged…unemployment rate is still high…people are there but are unemployable"

<u>Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system</u>

"the (study's) findings are intended to be published…they may reach the Minister of Education…it will help those who write policies to improve their policy…the current government should be receptive to positive suggestions…it will be good for this government to think outside the box"

	"come up with an education policy that will help us out of this position of no employment…they have to open up and listen to such ideas"
	"the value (of the study is that) when policy is drafted, it will take into account social and economic background of those who want to better their careers…especially those not in exile, and post 1994…it will teach the government not to relax…not be complacent…and take things for granted…current government needs to produce quality students if they are to win the battle against unemployment and poverty…a lot has to be done to reverse the situation…all those young mothers who are given free support (through grants) should one way or the other be retrained and re-educated for them to be contributors to the economy…they must be forced to equip themselves because (the grant) is not sustainable"
	<u>Critical insight – successful outcomes (career management theories)</u>
	"most European communities share a similar history like South Africa…subjected to rules by other countries…not called apartheid…we share a common background…they can learn from our experiences…we live in a global world…developed economies who are active in developing economies will use it as a benchmark for them to stay relevant…if not, they will become irrelevant in that they will come with first world solutions for third world problems...for them to understand developing country's problems…only then can they make sense of what problems we are facing and they can suggest better solutions"
Participant SPI 11	<u>Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system</u>
	"I took a decision that I needed to go into business…the first step…I identified the opportunity while I was working…(you really need to cover yourself)…I needed a car…from the strategic point of view I said to myself…if you buy a car at your age (22 years old) with the kind of background and society and friends you've got around…it would be very dangerous…as much as I think we were victims of apartheid our women provided some kind of sanity in our lives…boys growing up in the township we were under the impression that girls were our God-given gifts for us boys to enjoy…we didn't think we were doing anything wrong…having the cows (money) was another advantage…so I thought I don't want to buy the car for other boys…I decided…to protect myself…let me get married first before buying a car so that guys must understand (it's a family car)…I've got responsibilities…I am so grateful, yesterday (24th February 2015) was our 33 years anniversary of our marriage"

"I think it was a strategic move…my wife plays such a key role in protecting me…honestly if I did not stabilise my life I would not have made it…I still invite guys to pursue this business interest with me…their biggest weakness is this womanising issue…it's a huge challenge because of your image…running a business…women disrupt your business…I always believed from day one of my business career in being surrounded by business partners"

"to complement me I actually invited a white business partner in 1984, having equal shareholding…this white partner could bring technical expertise that I needed for doing my business…to help me with official issues…you don't just go into business blindly because you've recognised an opportunity…you need to put the fundamentals right…those are some of the things I feel so grateful for…I recognised the need from a strategic point of view"

<u>Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system</u>

"even up to today I spend so much of my time and money ensuring that I can give others, particularly black South Africans…an opportunity…encourage them to not take education for granted…without education we stand no chance…it's a biggest weakness (in us as a black race) we are not treating education in the kind of manner it requires…much more than just going to school…it needs a long-term commitment…for us as black people…internationally…to a large extent I think we are failing to capitalise on educating our (black race)"

"I hope that one day we will have the political leadership that can respond to such challenges…understand that its important to provide proper education…right now its quite sad"

"the other day I heard in the news…one black professor talking about the transformation of UNISA…I didn't understand…my concern was where is Turfloop today, where is Fort Hare…and Ongoye (UNIZUL)…those are the places we should really be transforming to excellence…they should be universities we want to send our people to…I hardly hear (any talk) about them…are they still around…we are focusing on universities that are successful…we want to transform them…what do you mean by transformation…do we want them to be like Turfloop because that is where you see a concentration of black people…where black people need to prove that we are capable…best brains…best effort must be put into those universities…the others are already functioning"

Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system

"these formarly black universities created some of our leaders (should be a priority)…make them functional…I thought…the first thing in transforming UNISA is the change of name…transformation is not superficial…these are the issues that are important for me…let's bring them into the public discourse…let's look at ourselves…we are not the first people to have been oppressed…yes…we were the last ones to get independence…we should be using experiences of others…to say 'how do we ensure that one day we can be really (be a) respected people'…people are not going to respect us for being black or white…people respect you for what you have achieved…for how you conduct yourself…your value system…on your character…(those) are things I feel we are not putting too much effort on…succeeding on being best…opportunities are there…let's move on with our lives because there's no way you can expect us to reverse 300 years of colonialism…one thing that we have an opportunity to do is shape the future…take personal responsibility…its one fundamental aspect that's missing in our country's discourse at the moment…we are focusing too much on the past…things won't change"

Critical input – individual qualities (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system)

"to complement my office…I read a lot…I am a prolific reader…I read things that I like…especially autobiographies…biographies…about other people…I will buy a book…if I don't like it…put it aside and buy another one…fortunately the books that I have bought…90 percent I enjoyed reading them"

"when I started my business and working life it was still under the evil system of apartheid…as a black person you had every legislation against you…but once you've got a bad law you don't expect someone like me to comply…I believe very strongly in the rule of law but if the law is bad I'll always find a way to ignore it…that's what I did under apartheid"

Critical input – individual qualities (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system)

"I am not a victim of apartheid…I've never been throughout my life…I've always rejected it…that's why I am not a prisoner of my past…that's why I could in 1984 at age 24/25 I could invite a white partner because I realised the value of this particular individual to get me moving to the next level…some people are different"

"they believe that their success is dependent on emphasising what happened (in the) last 300 year…I don't know how they think that is going to change"

"I was always future focused…always concerned about claiming the future…I am not going to sit here and cry about people who burnt down my factory…its behind me…my survival is on one thing: tomorrow is coming…the responsibility is mine to say how am I going to survive tomorrow…the majority of us as black people…are slaves of our past…we believe we can't survive without thinking about yesterday"

"one of our biggest enemy is affirmative action…this race based legislation…we all embraced in at the beginning of democracy because it was necessary to find creative ways of transforming our society…(we now have) 20 years of experience…what has it done for black South Africans…and the devastating effects for me as an employer…I often hear black kids complaining that they've got to work two or three times harder than their white counterparts for them to succeed…what's wrong with that…if that's the case, work 20 times harder than the next person because life is about competition…its not just here in South Africa between black and white or black and black…win the war for yourself to succeed in life"

"be prepared to put in more than the next guy if you want to be better than him…its got nothing to do with race…its about saying: for me as an individual to succeed I've got to work harder…accept that as a notion it will be easy for you to succeed because working hard becomes part and parcel of your life…you get rewarded for working hard…complaining that you work harder than the next person…nobody recognises you…whose problem is that…I've had the experience of so many people who think they work hard but honestly when you look for results…there are none"

Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system

"life is also about strategic thinking…being smart in what you do…hard work alone is not enough…if you fail to attract the attention of other people…its not their fault…look at yourself…every time something happens, look within yourself for answers…for me its always easy to find answers whenever I've got issues"

Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system

"from management point of view…affirmative action legislation is not doing us a favour as black people…it is actually retarding our progress…Section 32[57] of the Labour Relations Act makes it difficult for our people to work…government is literally stopping people from working because they believe that they can do it better than people doing it for themselves…its unfortunate that people believe this…our people are totally convinced that our government is doing a great job by giving them social grants…they don't realise that politicians are civil servants…they work for us as a community…its holding this country's development backwards…we did so well under Nelson Mandela's leadership…focusing on reconciliation…recognised the need to bring us together as one…what has been happening these past few years…everything that Mandela has built has been destroyed…the economy is not going to support (divisive initiatives)…you know the consequences if the nation fails economically"

Critical insight – predictions (career management theories)

"we are lucky as a country we have constitutional democracy…its something we should not take for granted at a macro level…we need to protect it…our free, robust and fearless media…which is helping to keep politicians in check…we have a strong well-established business community that can help propel this country…in the last 20 years we have created a strong black and white middle class…like in every civilised society…you can't just take it for granted…you can't just exploit and give T-shirts…I always hope this black and white middle class is going to save this country…the recent voting patterns (show) the middle class realise that the future of their children is not dependent on T-shirts and food parcels…the future depends on bigger agenda…the emergence of a strong opposition parties is quite positive…it will help employment and careers because for career development to happen you need stability in the country"

"its abnormal in a democratic dispensation to have one dominant political party with such massive power"

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[57] Section 32 refers to a clause in the Labour Relations Act No.66 of 1995: Extension of collective agreement concluded in bargaining council. http://www.gilesfiles.co.za/04-high-court/change-must-to-may-in-s-32-of-lra/.

Critical input – individual qualities (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system)

"I managed my career by my own initiatives…doing things on my own…those who went into exile to a large extent were in a political environment…unfortunately trained by socialists…upon their return they still have a socialist (way of thinking) even when they are in business…I am a full blown capitalist"

"I always tell South Africans: don't judge people by what they are saying (due to contradictions in socialist ideologies and misrepresentative lifestyles)"

Critical input – enabling experience/strategy (to enrich career process(es) in SA education system

"I believe that (exiles) contributed more to the collapse of apartheid…at the beginning I used to say unfortunately my contacts did not get me out of the country because I was an angry young black man that really wanted to make a difference…now I look (around) and say to myself: I was really fortunate that I stayed around…no one took away my dignity, personality and self-worth"

Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system

"the first thing that I believe we should do is to improve economic performance…spend more money efficiently strengthening our education system…every township and village (should have facilities) for our kids to be measured at an early age…at childhood centres …that's where we need the biggest investment as a country…we've got the money…there's no point intervening at university…its already too late…I believe this country is missing a big point….our political leadership in not really interested with education and improvement of the black children…we need the best educationalists…starting from there (young age)…our performance can't really happen in isolation…it can't happen overnight…start aggressively at a young age of development…by the time they go to matric and varsity and employment level…their foundation would already be solidified"

Critical insight – successful outcomes (career management theories)

"these issues are interrelated…(career management, career success, economic success, individual/national economic wellbeing)…its through economic development that people's careers will blossom"

"people grow in a business that's making money…people are happier…look forward to going to work…its easier to be enthusiastic…business will afford to put money into training programmes"

Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system

"an economy that is growing…progressive (attracts) foreign direct investment…international companies will invest in our country…local South Africans will get an opportunity to be trained outside like in Japan, Germany, USA and so forth…important for our country to be part of the global economy…its an opportunity to exchange skills"

Critical insight – predictions (career management theories)

"you need to share openly…we can learn from these type of studies and really reflect…look at ourselves fairly in the mirror (without being political)"

Critical input – strategies (to enrich career process(s) in SA education system

"our government…will they…should they (incorporate in policy formulation)…lets go to church and pray about this…my own personal feeling is that there is no commitment to the development of the country…I don't judge people by what they say…but on what they do…based on what they say…they are committed…what they do…is totally different"

Critical insight – ideas (career management theories)

"case studies are important learning tools/instruments…that's how we learn…from the American, Japanese, Zimbabwean experiences…it will be good for Zimbabweans to write (about themselves) what really happened…I am sure there will be good things about South Africa that other countries can emulate…we learn from others as well"

"there's a lot that developed countries can learn as well…not to make same mistakes as us…government (should) stay out of your (business) life as much as possible…there's a lot that we can learn from one another"

Appendix F Concluding summary

Appendix F presented *Phase 2 findings* from participants whereby their understandings of the phenomenon of career management were shared as a means to orientate responses towards the study's areas of focus.

Their individual conceptualisation of career management as a phenomenon also served to bolster existing knowledge on what the phenomenon entails particularly given its sparse coverage in reviewed literature and the field's quest for indigenisation of career knowledge. Findings also yielded participants' evaluation of the construct of self-awareness as also inseparable from career knowledge particularly in that the construct is fundamental in career theories. Overall, the findings are presented in tabular formats following a detailed data analysis processes as explained in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 presented in Chapter 4. The resulting Tables in this appendix embody participants' voices that formed a vital part of the study's multi-voiced perspective within cultural studies such as this one. Thus, the voices' significance was interpreted and discussed in Chapter 5 where its collective meaningfulness is also contextualised in relation to the extent to which the research questions and objectives have been addressed.

Appendix G

Personal Credo

For as long as I am in this office...

- I will practice my work with utmost professional integrity, honesty & dedication
- I will do all that is good without harming anyone – emotionally, physically, mentally & psychologically
- I will treat others with dignity, respect & compassion
- I will be fair & just to all; & adhere to the ethos of my work & chosen profession
- I will make my department, my faculty & the University of Johannesburg a pleasant place to work at, simply because of my presence.
- I WILL LIFT, as an obligation to my conscience, AS I RISE...

Thabile Chawana, 2009

Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management

Appendix H

Newspaper clipping on the debate activity at PJ Simelane High School, Dobsonville, Soweto

Appendix I

Newspaper clippings on the Launch of the Culture of Teaching and Learning at PJ Simelane High School, Dobsonville, Soweto

... President Nelson Mandela came to the Culture of Learning and Teaching Campaign in Soweto yesterday, accompanied by Graca Machel, the widow of former Mozambican president Samora Machel. The subsequent arrival of Mandela's former wife, Mrs Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, who sat on the extreme right, four seats away from the President, breaking tension. Mandela is seen here flanked by Gauting education MEC Mrs Mary Metcalfe and Graca Machel.

PIC: LEN KUMALO

Bengu launches culture of learning

By Victor Mecoamere

TEACHERS who are lazy were among the obstacles to an effective and efficient education system, Education Minister Sibusiso Bengu said in Soweto yesterday.

He was speaking during the official launch of the Culture of Learning and Teaching Campaign at PJ Simelane High School in Dobsonville.

and a hunger for knowledge".

The launch of the campaign in Soweto by President Nelson Mandela was significant, as it was there that black pupils revolted against the National Party government's bantu education policies, which included the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction.

"I hope that we will turn things around (with the campaign)," said Bengu, adding that "those who died then did not die in vain".

Mandela has a lesson for schools

By GILLIAN ANSTEY

RESIDENTS of Dobsonville in Soweto sat on their rooftops to get a peek of President Nelson Mandela when he visited one of Soweto's proudest schools this week.

Addressing 250 dignitaries and pupils at P J Simelane High School, whose matriculants attained a 91 percent pass rate last year, Mandela launched the government's Culture of Learning and Teaching campaign.

The subject was serious but his approach was humorous and anecdotal.

He related how he had seen a group of people watching a man cross the street in a town near his village in 1933.

Curious, he had asked an old man who the person was. He had responded: "That young man has read many books — read and read and read — until he passed this book called Matriculation."

Mandela said: "Coming from the countryside, I did not know what matriculation was.

"But I saw from the way this man was walking he indeed had matriculation. Cars stopped for him. He had obtained the highest qualification during those days.

"Today, matriculation counts for nothing. Not even the first degree is important. Many of your peers today have masters degrees and doctorates."

The President's message was clear: pupils, teachers and parents had to ensure that schools were places of learning, not loafing. "To students," Mandela said, "this campaign is a call to make learning your main, if not your only, priority. Punctuality, attendance and diligence in study must be the order of the day.

"We can no longer afford to sit by while some schools are turned into havens of drug abuse, violence or vandalising of valuable property.

"We can no longer sit and watch while many of our country's children are held back in the mire of ignorance and lack of skills which apartheid decreed should be their lot."

The launch focused on the campaign's ideological stance. The more practical component, which ensures the campaign gets off the ground, is a resource package "to guarantee the foundation of a decent learning environment".

Professor Sibusiso Bengu, the Minister of Education, said these packages would be planned at provincial level.

The campaign will encompass universities and adult education.

Mandela attended the launch with his companion, Graca Machel, who laughed heartily at his anecdotes.

Also on the podium was his ex-wife, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, who arrived 90 minutes after the function had started and left after his address.

Palesa Tgobeka, the campaign's programme manager, said on Friday that Madikizela-Mandela had been included in a blanket invitation to all MPs. "Someone panicked when they saw her and ushered her onto the podium, but it was not planned that way," Tgobeka said.

Sunday Times

The system must le the learning begin

TO THE sweet sound of children's choirs and to some rousing speeches, the government this week launched its national "Learn, Teach and Serve" campaign at Dobsonville's P J Simelane High School.

The objective of the campaign is to restore a "culture of learning" in our society.

Let there be no mistake: there can be no more important mission for our country than this one.

The P J Simelane High School was chosen as the venue for the launch of this campaign because 91 percent of its matriculants passed last year. The year before it was 85 percent.

It stands, thus, as a symbol of what happens when commitment, care and discipline come together under one roof. It stands as a rebuttal of the doomsayers who believe our public education system is terminally sick and our country's education system is sentenced to a future of dire crisis.

That there is a huge challenge is undisputed.

In the very week the campaign was launched there was factional violence among teachers at private schools in Gauteng; there were student protests in Durban; there was yet another muddle in the re-marking of matric papers; and there was an admission by the authorities that the teacher retrenchment programme was failing to meet its objectives. New doubts were also raised about the speed with which the government was implementing its "outcomes-based" curriculum.

It is because of the manifest failings of the system that it is more necessary than ever for a national campaign to sweep enthusiasm for learning. On success depends our future modern country.

All the major role players in ucation — unions, student bo professional associations, ents, private sector and polit parties — have committed th selves to the campaign.

It is now imperative that move beyond the speeches and choirs to the implementatio the scheme.

The Sunday Times has pressed its views on how achieve an improvement in educational system before an make no apologies for advan our four-point plan again:

First, convert the rewards tem for educators from bei qualifications-based one to which is concerned with res Pay good teachers more and get the bits of paper.

Second, build technical s training into the curriculur every stage so as to enable young people to be both kn edgeable and productive.

Third, extend as a priority ence and maths academies fo most promising pupils to mee desperate shortage of tech skills in the country.

And fourth, make greater u distance education to siphor the failing candidates in the two years of education from formal system, unblocking path for those coming up. 1 nology now makes this possi

The P J Simelane High Sc has proved what can be done launch of the Learn, Teach Serve campaign gives a foc what must still be done. It is over to all of us to help ma work.

Appendix J

My ode to ▉▉▉

I remember when...

I remember when, in 2002, I met you for the first time

I saw a young man grown beyond his time.

I remember when, in class...

You proved to be beyond your class

Because, I gave a first test

You succeeded, like you had set the test.

I remember when, it was time for you to be punished.

You proved dedicated, to never be punished.

I experimented with everyone's character.

Yet, you preserved yours because it was in your character

To be different, and prove you can lead

Yes, in many challenges, you did lead.

I remember once, you were really in trouble

Still, you proved to me, you were no friends with trouble.

You said your confessions

Because trouble was not one of your possessions

You bravely stood up in class, on your own!

Because, you were in a class of your own.

You asked for forgiveness

Your classmates offered you lasting forgiveness.

On that day, to me, you ceased being a boy

Your deeds proved you had ceased being a boy

You became a young man of great character

As, maturity belongs, only with young men of great character

Still, in 2002, I am losing you

Yet, I believe, I am not losing you

Because, in my heart, there will always be a you!

By Mrs Chawane

Epilogue

TO MY FAMILY	ECCLESIASTES 3 (NIV)
*Ma Gama	Nkosi	Mlangeni* *Wena wakusa nelilanga* *Sidwaba sinothuli.* *Singabangcwaba seza* *Nomlandakazi* *Nina basengongwaneni* *Enaqeda lubombo ngokuhleketela* *Nina bama hinkohla enahlokota timbila* *Emgedeni* *Zaphuma buhlakalala zayodla amasimu amadoda.* *Wena owagongoda umuntu ngomshiza* *Wagongoda amafoyo nama gongo* *Wathi:* *Maloyi ungangibulali!* *Ngithumbe Ngizokulimela!* *Ngiyakwazi ukuluma.* *Maloyi Gama!!!*	*A Time for Everything* ¹ *There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:* ² *A time to be born and a time to die, A time to plant and a time to uproot,* ³ *A time to kill and a time to heal, A time to tear down and a time to build,* ⁴ *A time to weep and a time to laugh, A time to mourn and a time to dance,* ⁵ *A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,* ⁶ *A time to search and a time to give up, A time to keep and a time to throw away,* ⁷ *A time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak,* ⁸ *a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.*

THANK YOU!